

## I don't like him(his) comingの動名詞について(英文)

名本, 幹雄

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# *I don't like him (his) coming* の動名詞について

名 本 幹 雄

On the Gerund in Sentences like

*I don't like him (his) coming*\*

Mikio Namoto

## 1.0 Introduction

The difficulty of telling whether the *ing*-form in such sentences as *I don't like him (his) coming* is a participle or a gerund is seen from the fact that Sweet called it 'Half-Gerund',<sup>1)</sup> which means 'a half-gerund and half-participle'. In spite of the fact that the sentence '*I don't like him coming so often*' (gerund) seems to have the same construction as the one '*I saw him coming*' (participle), we can not have the following paraphrases, '*He is coming so often and I don't like it or He is coming so often when I don't like him*'. In this case it seems to be appropriate for us to explain that this sentence has the same meaning with the sentence '*I don't like his coming*'. It is said that the use of the possessive case is found earlier than that of the objective case in this sentence from a historical point of view. Furthermore, can't we understand this *ing*-form by any means as a present participle functioning as a complement?

Considering this interpretation to be correct, a past participle with the same function might be put in place of the *ing*-form, but this is not the case, with the result that we can not help recognizing the *ing*-form as a gerund in this sentence.

Generally speaking, there might be no denying that gerunds were not analyzed fully in traditional grammar, as Yasui<sup>2)</sup> points out, though it explains that English gerunds have two characteristics, namely, those of noun and verb. It is not until the analysis of transformationalists such as Lees,<sup>3)</sup> Chomsky,<sup>4)</sup> Wasow and Roeper,<sup>5)</sup> Thompson,<sup>6)</sup> and Schachter<sup>7)</sup> appeared that we paid our attention to the internal structure of English gerunds.

In his discussion of gerunds in the sentence '*I don't like him (his) coming*', the author argues in this paper that the internal structure of the gerund in '*him coming*' is different from that of the gerund in '*his coming*'.

## 2.0 On English Gerunds

According to Jespersen,<sup>8)</sup> one of the typical traditional grammarians, an English gerund has the following characteristics.

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### Nominal Characteristics

- (1) It can be the subject, predicative, or object of a sentence, also the regimen (object) of a preposition.
- (2) It can form a plural.
- (3) It can form a genitive.
- (4) It can be used with a definite and indefinite article.
- (5) It can take other adjuncts.
- (6) It can have a subject and an object with it in the same way as other nexus-substantives (genitive, preposition).
- (7) It can enter into compounds.

### Verbal Characteristics

There has been for centuries a growing tendency to treat the gerund syntactically like the finite verbal forms, thus

- (1) By using adverbs freely with it.
- (2) By forming a perfect.
- (3) By forming a passive, also a perfect passive.
- (4) By taking an object without a preposition.
- (5) By taking a subject without a preposition.
- (6) By being preceded by *there* as 'lesser subject'.

Strange to say, as also can be seen from Yasui's paper,<sup>9)</sup> we can not find out the gerund which has both the above-mentioned nominal characteristics and verbal characteristics. Some gerunds have only nominal characteristics and other gerunds have only verbal ones from the point of view of traditional grammar, while within the transformational framework we can observe two distinct classes of English gerunds, namely, nominal and verbal gerunds.

## 2.1 Nominal Gerund

Nominal gerunds have the following characteristics

- (1) They can be introduced with articles.  
Jon enjoyed *a* reading of *The Bald Soprano*.
- (2) They can be preceded by any adjective which can also form as adverb by adding -ly and a possessive form can be replaced by an article.  
I don't approve of his (*or* the) careless driving.
- (3) They can be pluralized.
- (4) They express the grammatical relation of direct-object-of in a prepositional phrase.  
The killing of *his dog* upset John.
- (5) They take *no*.
- (6) Only action verbs can be action nominals.
- (7) As for the internal structure of nominal gerund, we find two analyses. One of

them is the transformationalist position such as Fraser,<sup>10)</sup> and Newmeyer,<sup>11)</sup> the other is the lexicalist hypothesis such as Wasow and Roeper<sup>12)</sup> or Chomsky.<sup>13)</sup> In this paper the author is in favor of the lexicalist hypothesis.

## 2.2 Verbal Gerunds

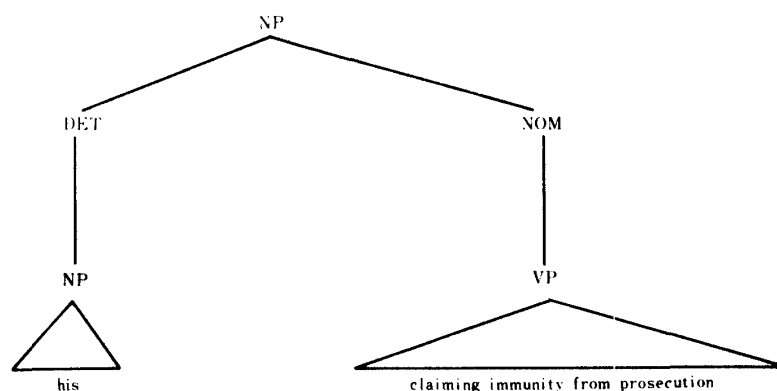
Verbal gerunds have the following characteristics.

- (1) Most of English verbs can be verbal gerunds.
- (2) They can not be introduced with articles.
- (3) They can be preceded by not any adjective but adverbs.
- (4) They can not be plurized.
- (5) They can take an object without preposition 'of'.
- (6) They take *not* instead of *no*.
- (7) They permit a tense marker, while nominal gerunds do not.
- (8) The possessive form in front of verbal gerunds can be deleted but not be replaced by any other determiner.
- (9) According to Thompson<sup>14)</sup> there are two kinds of verbal gerunds: those with expressed subject and auxiliaries, which she calls *fact gerunds*, and another type without subject and auxiliaries, which she calls *activity gerunds*.
- (10) Lees' analysis,<sup>15)</sup> a transformational analysis, of the internal structure of verbal gerunds has been adopted by all subsequent investigators such as Rosenbaum,<sup>16)</sup> Chomsky,<sup>17)</sup> Kiparsky and Kiparsky,<sup>18)</sup> and Stockwell, Schachter, and Partee,<sup>19)</sup> even if we find a variety of relatively minor modifications among them.

But Schachter<sup>20)</sup> proposes that verbal gerunds should be assigned an underlying structure more like that of ordinary noun-headed noun phrases, and, in particular, that the basic constituent structure of verbal gerunds, like that of noun-headed NPs, should be provided by a phrase structure rule of the form (5)<sup>21)</sup>

$$(5) \quad \text{NP} \rightarrow (\text{DET}) \text{ NOM}$$

where DET is a determiner, and NOM (for nominal) represents the remainder of the construction. In the case of verbal nominals, NOM is rewritten as VP.



Although this proposal is very noteworthy in that verbal gerunds are asserted to be not transformationally derived from underlying sentences, we can not help having some questions, which I shall argue in what follows.

### 3.0 On *I don't like him (his) coming*

As can be easily seen from the above-mentioned characteristics in 2. 2, the *ing*-form *coming* in this sentence is accounted for as a verbal gerund. It is pointed out by many scholars such as Poutsma,<sup>21)</sup> Curme,<sup>22)</sup> Sweet<sup>23)</sup> and Nakashima<sup>24)</sup> that there is much difference in meaning between verbal gerunds with an initial possessive NP and those with an initial nonpossessive NP before them. One of the typical explanations of them is Nakashima's.<sup>25)</sup> He explains that verbal gerunds with an initial possessive NP has nominal nature, which is conceptual, fixed, rational, and introspective, while those with an initial nonpossessive NP has verbal nature which is descriptive, realistic, emotional and picturesque in the surface structure.

This explanation Nakashima has proposed seems to suggest that the internal structure of verbal gerunds with an initial possessive NP should be different from that of verbal gerunds with an initial nonpossessive NP. Judging from the great differences in meaning in the sentences *I don't like his coming* and *I don't like him coming*, the author proposes that verbal gerunds with an initial possessive NP should have the internal structure of Schachter's<sup>26)</sup> analysis, the nontransformationalist's position, but verbal gerunds with an initial nonpossessive NP should have the internal structure of Chomsky's proposal,<sup>27)</sup> which asserts that verbal gerunds are derived from underlying sentences [s NP *nom* (Aspect) VP]s. Furthermore, we must consider the distinction between *I don't like his coming frequently* and *I don't like his frequent coming*. The former sentence is an example of nominal gerund just like *I don't like his coming*. The *ing*-form of the latter, however, is not a gerund but a pure noun just like *arrival*. There are, therefore, three types of *ing*-forms in English according to the author's interpretation. The reason why the author rejects Schachter's proposal<sup>28)</sup> in the case of verbal gerunds with an initial nonpossessive NP is that *\*the rain cessation* is not an acceptable noun-headed NP, while *the rain stopping* is an acceptable verbal gerund. If we accept his analysis, the occurrence of initial nonpossessive NPs in verbal gerunds must be accounted for only on an *ad hoc* basis, as Schachter himself acknowledges, : that is, by optionally suppressing the rule that possessivizes a determiner NP just in those cases where the NOM that follows this NP is realized as a gerund.

### 4.0 Conclusion

In this article, the author argues that the gerund of the sentence *I don't like his coming* has a different internal structure from that of the sentence, *I don't like him coming*, as he observes the great differences in meaning of the surface structures in the two sentences, though transformational grammar takes for granted that the gerunds in them are the same verbal gerunds.

Schachter proposes that all the verbal gerunds have an underlying structure more like that of ordinary noun-headed noun phrases. Although his proposal, a nontransformationalist position, is worth noting, there seem to be lots of problems remaining yet to be solved.

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