

The distinction between Nominal and Verbal Gerunds and their syntactic functions as subject, object, and complement: A Field Study of University Students

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التمييز بين المصدر الاسمي والمصدر الفعلي ووظائفهما النحوية بوصفهما فاعلاً ومفعولاً ومتمماً: دراسة ميدانية على طلبة الجامعة

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تاريخ الاستلام: 2026-01-15، تاريخ القبول: 2026-03-01، تاريخ النشر: 2026-03-10.

المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الي بيان الفروق بين المصدر الاسمي والمصدر الفعلي في اللغة الإنجليزية، مع تحليل وظائفها النحوية المختلفة داخل بنية الجملة. يعد المصدر صيغة فعلية غير تامة تؤدي وظيفة الاسم في التركيب النحوي مع احتفاظها ببعض الخصائص الفعلية. ونظرا لهذه الطبيعة المزدوجة تعد هذه الفية النحوية مهمة ومعقدة في الدراسات اللغوية الخاصة باللغة الإنجليزية.

تعتمد هذه الدراسة المنهج الوصفي التحليلي لدراسة المصدر الاسمي والمصدر الفعلي وتوزيعه داخل الجملة مثل: الفاعل، المفعول به، والمتمم، ومفعول حرف الجر. أجريت دراسة ميدانية من خلال استبيان وزع على 50 طالبا جامعيًا من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية جامعة سرت وجامعة طرابلس 2024-2025. تشير النتائج انه علي الرغم من ان الطلاب يتعرفون عموما علي الوظائف الأساسية و لكنهم يواجهون مشكلة في التفريق بين المصدر الاسمي و الفعلي بسبب التداخل بين الخصائص الفعلية و الاسمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: صيغة المصدر، المصدر الفعلي، المصدر الاسمي، تركيب الجملة، التركيبات غير المنتهية .

Abstract

This study investigates the differences between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds in English and analyzes their various syntactic functions within sentence structures. Gerunds are non-finite verb forms ending in -ing that function syntactically as nouns while retaining certain verbal properties. Due to this hybrid nature, gerunds represent an important and complex grammatical category in English linguistic studies.

The study adopts a descriptive analytical approach to examine the grammatical characteristics of gerunds and their distribution in different syntactic positions such as subject, object, complement, and object of a preposition. In addition, a field study was conducted through a questionnaire distributed to 50 undergraduate students 2024-2025. The participants were students from the English Department at the university of Tripoli and Sirte University, selected to investigate learners' understanding of gerund constructions and their ability to distinguish between nominal and verbal gerunds.

The results of the study indicate that gerunds demonstrate significant syntactic flexibility in English sentence structures. The findings also reveal that although students generally recognize gerunds and their basic functions, many still experience difficulty distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds due to the overlap between verbal and nominal features.

The study concludes that understanding the structural differences between gerund types contributes to a clearer analysis of English sentence structure and provides valuable insights for both linguistic research and English language teaching.

Keywords: Gerund, Nominal Gerund, Verbal Gerund, Non-finite Constructions, English Syntax.

Introduction

Non-finite constructions are one of the pivotal topics in contemporary grammatical studies, because they play a fundamental role in constructing the English sentence and expanding its expressive potential. These constructions include different forms such as the infinitive, the participle, and the gerund, which is one of the most common and complex constructions in the English language. The gerund is usually defined as a derived form of a verb that ends with the suffix -ing and performs a nominal function within the sentence, which makes it occupy a distinctive position among traditional grammatical categories, as it combines the morphological properties of the verb with the syntactic functions of the noun (Escobar, 2023).

This structure has received wide attention in modern linguistic studies because of its dual nature, which combines actual and nominal features at the same time. The gerund, although it performs a nominal function within the sentence, retains a number of pragmatic properties such as the ability to take an object or modify circumstances, which has led a number of researchers to consider it a hybrid linguistic category or an intermediate between the verb and the noun. Studies based on modern linguistic corpora analysis have confirmed that this overlap between morphological and syntactic properties represents one of the main reasons for the complexity of analyzing gerunds in contemporary English (Seifert, 2023).

The gerund is also characterized by clear functional flexibility within the English sentence, as it can occupy several grammatical positions, such as being the subject of the sentence, object, or complement, in addition to being used as a complement to prepositions. This diversity in grammatical functions reflects the important role that this structure plays in organizing syntactic relationships within the English sentence, and it also contributes to the formation of more concise linguistic structures compared to complete verbal sentences (Anas et al., 2025).

Within the framework of analyzing this structure, linguistic studies distinguished between two main types of gerund, namely the nominal gerund and the verbal gerund. The first type tends to acquire clear nominal characteristics in structure and composition, and may appear in structures close to the structure of nouns, while the second type retains a greater degree of actual characteristics, such as its direct connection to the object or adverbial elements. This distinction helps understand the nature of gerunds as a linguistic structure that combines nominal and verb features, which constitutes a fundamental focus in contemporary grammatical studies of English (Heyvaert, 2019).

Research Problem

Despite the widespread use of the gerund in English, its grammatical analysis continues to present several challenges in modern linguistic studies due to its dual nature, combining characteristics of both verbs and nouns. Formally, the gerund is derived from a verb and ends in the suffix -ing, but in many contexts, it functions as a noun within a sentence, making its precise grammatical position not always clear.

This challenge is compounded when attempting to distinguish between two main types of gerunds: nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds. Some constructions exhibit clear nominal characteristics, while others retain verbal characteristics more akin to verbal sentences. This overlap between nominal and verbal properties makes it difficult to define the boundaries between these two types, especially in constructions that combine the grammatical features of both verbs and nouns. The problem also arises when studying the different grammatical positions that a gerund can occupy within an English sentence. It may function as the subject, object, complement, or after a preposition. This diversity in grammatical functions raises questions about the nature of the syntactic relationships that govern the use of gerunds and the extent to which grammatical position influences their type and function within the sentence.

Therefore, the problem addressed in this research is to clarify the differences between nominal and verbal gerunds and to explain their usage in various grammatical structures within English sentences. The focus is on the syntactic functions that a gerund occupies, such as being the subject, object, or complement, with the aim of achieving a more precise understanding of the nature of this structure and the limits of its grammatical properties in English.

Research Questions

Based on the research problem, this research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is meant by a gerund in English, and what are its basic grammatical characteristics?
2. What is the difference between a nominal gerund and a verbal gerund in terms of grammatical structure and syntactic properties?
3. What are the most important features that distinguish both nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds within an English sentence?
4. What grammatical functions can a gerund perform within an English sentence?
5. How is a gerund used in different grammatical positions, such as subject, object, and complement, in a sentence?
6. What is the relationship between the type of gerund used and the grammatical position it occupies within the sentence?

7. To what extent does distinguishing between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds contribute to understanding the grammatical structure of an English sentence?

Research Objectives

This research aims to achieve several objectives, the most important of which are:

1. To define the concept of the gerund in English and explain its basic grammatical characteristics.
2. To clarify the difference between nominal and verbal gerunds in terms of their structure and function within a sentence.
3. To analyze the syntactic characteristics that distinguish each type of gerund in English.
4. To explain the different grammatical functions that a gerund can perform within an English sentence.
5. To demonstrate how gerunds are used in different grammatical positions, such as subject, object, and complement.
6. To highlight the importance of distinguishing between types of gerunds in understanding and analyzing the grammatical structure of an English sentence.

The Importance of This Research

The importance of this research stems from its focus on a crucial topic in English grammatical studies: the gerund. Gerunds are linguistic structures that combine nominal and verbal characteristics. This interplay of different grammatical features has garnered significant attention from linguistic researchers due to their crucial role in interpreting the syntactic structure of English sentences and analyzing grammatical relationships within them.

Furthermore, this research is significant because it attempts to clarify the differences between nominal and verbal gerunds, highlighting their respective characteristics in linguistic usage. This contributes to a more precise understanding of the nature of this structure in English. It also helps to elucidate how gerunds are employed in various sentence structures, particularly in grammatical positions such as subject, object, and complement.

The research's importance is further underscored by its highlighting of the multiple grammatical functions that gerunds can perform within English sentences, thus enriching linguistic studies related to non-finite constructions. This research can also be beneficial in the field of English language teaching, as it helps to clarify the various uses of the gerund more precisely and systematically.

The importance of this research can be summarized in the following points:

1. Contributing to clarifying the nature of the gerund as a structure that combines nominal and verbal characteristics in English.

2. Explaining the differences between nominal and verbal gerunds in terms of their grammatical structure and function.
3. Clarifying the various grammatical functions of the gerund within the English sentence.
4. Contributing to supporting linguistic studies related to indefinite structures in English.
5. Providing scholarly material that can be used in the field of teaching English grammar and analyzing grammatical structures.

Search Terms

1. **Gerund (infinitive ending in -ing):** This is a verbal form in English that ends in the suffix -ing and functions as a noun within a sentence. It can occupy various grammatical positions, such as subject, object, or complement, while retaining some verbal characteristics, such as the ability to be linked to a direct object or modified by adverbs.
2. **Nominal Gerund:** This is a type of gerund that tends to acquire clear nominal characteristics in its structure and syntax. In many cases, it is treated as a noun within a sentence and may be linked to nominal elements such as determiners or adjectives. It performs an explicit nominal function in the grammatical structure.
3. **Verbal Gerund:** This is a type of gerund that retains more pronounced verbal characteristics compared to the nominal gerund. It can take a direct object or be modified by adverbs, making its behavior more similar to a verb while remaining in a nominal position within the sentence.
4. **Subject (Agent):** This is the element that indicates who performs the action or possesses the quality within the sentence. A gerund can be used in this position to function as the subject, as in constructions beginning with verbs ending in -ing.
5. **Object:** This is the element upon which the action of the subject is performed in the sentence. A gerund may be used in this position to function as the object after certain verbs that require a gerund in the grammatical structure.
6. **Complement (Complement):** This is a grammatical element used to complete the meaning of the sentence or to clarify the meaning of the subject or verb. A gerund may be used as a complement to complete the meaning after certain verbs or grammatical conjunctions within the sentence.

Previous Studies

Several linguistic studies have examined the gerund construction in English from different perspectives. Some studies have focused on its grammatical nature, while others have analyzed its syntactic functions within the sentence or the distinction between its nominal and verbal forms.

1. (Heyvaert ,2019) This study investigated the distinction between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds in present-day English. The research aimed to analyze their syntactic and semantic characteristics and to explain how each type behaves within sentence structure. The study found that verbal gerunds tend to retain more verbal properties, such as taking direct objects, whereas nominal gerunds show stronger nominal features and behave more like noun phrases in sentence constructions.
2. (Seifert ,2023) Seifert conducted a corpus-based analysis of gerund constructions in English, focusing on the structural patterns associated with gerund usage. The study demonstrated that gerunds represent a hybrid grammatical category combining both verbal and nominal features. The findings highlighted that this dual nature is one of the main reasons why gerunds remain a complex topic in modern syntactic analysis.
3. (Solano-Escobar ,2023) This study examined the use of gerunds and infinitives in English, particularly their distribution and syntactic roles within sentence structures. The results showed that gerunds frequently occur in several syntactic positions, including subject, object, and complement, and that their use is often influenced by the lexical and grammatical properties of the verbs that precede them.
4. (Anas et al., 2025) This study analyzed the use of gerunds in both academic and informal texts. It focused on identifying the grammatical functions that gerunds perform in English sentences. The study found that gerunds commonly function as subjects, objects, and complements, demonstrating their flexibility and importance in English syntactic structures.

Commentary on Previous Studies

The review of previous studies shows that many linguists have examined the gerund construction from different theoretical and descriptive perspectives. Most of these studies focused on explaining the grammatical nature of gerunds and highlighting their dual characteristics as forms that share both verbal and nominal features. These studies also emphasized the importance of gerunds in English syntax and their role in forming flexible sentence structures.

Furthermore, several studies have attempted to distinguish between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds, identifying the structural and functional differences between these two types. Such research has contributed significantly to understanding how gerunds behave within sentence structures and how their verbal and nominal properties influence their syntactic distribution.

However, despite the valuable contributions of these studies, many of them have focused primarily on either the structural characteristics of gerunds or their syntactic roles independently. Fewer studies have attempted to examine the relationship between the type of gerund (nominal or verbal) and the

syntactic function it performs in a sentence, such as subject, object, or complement.

Therefore, the present study attempts to build upon previous research by providing a more integrated analysis of gerunds in English. It seeks to clarify the differences between nominal and verbal gerunds while simultaneously examining their syntactic functions within sentence structures, with the aim of contributing to a clearer understanding of gerund constructions in modern English.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive analytical method to investigate the differences between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds in English and to examine the different syntactic constructions of gerunds within sentences. The descriptive method is used to present the grammatical characteristics of gerunds and their various forms, while the analytical method is employed to analyze their functions in sentence structure.

The study also incorporates a field component in order to explore learners' understanding of gerund constructions in English. For this purpose, a questionnaire was designed to collect data about the participants' ability to recognize the differences between nominal and verbal gerunds and to identify their functions in sentences such as subject, object, and complement.

The Participants

The participants are students from the English Language Department at the university level, as they are expected to have prior knowledge of English grammar and non-finite verb constructions. This group was selected because they are familiar with grammatical concepts related to gerunds and are able to identify their syntactic functions in sentences.

Field Study

In order to investigate learners' understanding of gerund constructions in English, a field study was conducted using a questionnaire distributed to students of the English Language Department. The aim of this field study is to examine students' ability to distinguish between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds and to identify their grammatical functions within English sentences.

The questionnaire consisted of a set of grammatical questions related to gerund constructions, including identifying gerunds in sentences, distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds, and determining their syntactic roles such as subject, object, and complement.

The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 50 undergraduate students from the English Language Department. The collected data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistical methods based on frequency and percentage,

in order to determine the level of students' understanding of gerund constructions in English.

Research Instrument

The main instrument used in this study is a questionnaire designed to evaluate participants' knowledge of gerund constructions. The questionnaire consists of several questions that focus on identifying gerunds in sentences, distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds, and recognizing their syntactic roles such as subject, object, and complement.

The collected data will be analyzed using simple descriptive statistics in order to determine the participants' level of understanding of gerund constructions and to identify common difficulties related to this grammatical structure.

The Differences Between Nominal and Verbal Gerunds and Their Functions in Sentences

1. Gerunds in English

Gerunds are non-finite verb forms ending with the suffix –ing, derived from verbs but functioning syntactically as nouns within a sentence. Because of this dual nature, gerunds represent a hybrid grammatical category that combines both verbal and nominal properties. They may retain some verbal characteristics such as taking objects or adverbial modifiers, while simultaneously occupying syntactic positions that are typically associated with noun phrases in English grammar (Escobar, 2023).

In English sentence structure, gerunds can occur in several syntactic positions. They may function as the subject, object, or complement of a sentence, and they frequently appear as the object of a preposition. This flexibility in distribution shows that gerunds play an important role in forming complex sentence structures while maintaining a close relationship with both verb phrases and noun phrases (Anas et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the hybrid nature of gerunds has attracted considerable attention in modern linguistic research. Scholars often describe gerunds as constructions that share features of both verbs and nouns, making them difficult to classify within traditional grammatical categories. This dual status explains why gerunds are considered an important topic in syntactic and morphological studies of English grammar (Seifert, 2023).

2. Nominal and Verbal Gerunds

Modern linguistic studies distinguish between two major types of gerunds: nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds. The distinction between these two types is based on the degree to which the gerund preserves verbal features or behaves like a noun phrase. While verbal gerunds maintain many characteristics of verbs, nominal gerunds behave more like nouns in sentence structure (Heyvaert, 2019).

2.1 Verbal Gerunds

Verbal gerunds maintain many properties of verbs even though they appear in positions normally associated with nouns. They may take direct objects, be modified by adverbs, and allow clausal negation using the particle *not*. These characteristics demonstrate that verbal gerunds are structurally closer to clauses than to simple noun phrases (Seifert, 2023).

For example:

- *Nancy's cleverly selling the jewellery.*

In this example, the gerund *selling* takes the direct object *the jewellery* and is modified by the adverb *cleverly*. Such constructions clearly show the verbal nature of this type of gerund (Heyvaert, 2019).

Another important feature of verbal gerunds is their ability to assign accusative case to their objects without the need for the preposition *of*, which further distinguishes them from nominal gerunds. This property confirms that verbal gerunds maintain internal syntactic structures similar to verb phrases (Solano-Escobar, 2023).

2.2 Nominal Gerunds

Nominal gerunds, in contrast, behave more like nouns than verbs. They are often referred to as *-ing* noun constructions because they exhibit typical nominal features such as the presence of determiners and adjectival modification. In these constructions, the object of the gerund is usually introduced by the preposition *of*, forming what is commonly known as the *-ing-of* construction (Heyvaert, 2019).

Example:

- *Nancy's clever selling of the jewellery.*

In this sentence, the gerund *selling* is modified by the adjective *clever*, and the complement appears in the form of a prepositional phrase (*of the jewellery*), which indicates the nominal nature of the construction (Seifert, 2023).

Nominal gerunds typically lack verbal properties such as tense, aspect, or auxiliary verbs. Instead, they function structurally as noun phrases and may occur with determiners such as *the*, *a*, or possessive forms like *John's*. This pattern confirms their stronger nominal status compared with verbal gerunds (Heyvaert, 2019).

3. Functions of Gerunds in Sentences

Gerunds can perform several syntactic functions within English sentences. One of the most common functions is acting as the subject of a sentence. In this case, the gerund phrase occupies the same position as a noun phrase and functions as the grammatical subject of the clause (Anas et al., 2025).

Example:

- *Swimming is good for your health.*

In this sentence, the gerund phrase *swimming* functions as the subject of the sentence and behaves like a noun phrase even though it is derived from a verb (Solano-Escobar, 2023).

Gerunds can also function as direct objects after certain verbs. Many English verbs require gerund complements, particularly verbs expressing preferences, emotions, or mental activities such as *enjoy*, *avoid*, and *consider* (Seifert, 2023).

Example:

- *She enjoys reading novels.*

Here the gerund phrase reading novels functions as the object of the verb *enjoy* (Anas et al., 2025).

Another common function of gerunds is serving as a subject complement after linking verbs such as *be*. In such cases, the gerund phrase completes the meaning of the subject by providing additional information about it (Solano-Escobar, 2023).

Example:

- *Her favorite hobby is painting.*

In this example, the gerund painting functions as a complement that describes the subject (Anas et al., 2025).

Gerunds also frequently occur as objects of prepositions, which is one of the most common environments for gerund constructions in English. After a preposition, verbs must appear in the gerund form rather than the infinitive form (Seifert, 2023).

Example:

- *She is interested in learning languages.*

Here the gerund learning functions as the object of the preposition *in* (Solano-Escobar, 2023).

Field Study

In order to investigate learners' understanding of gerund constructions in English, a field study was conducted using a questionnaire distributed to students of the English Language Department. The aim of this field study is to examine students' ability to distinguish between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds and to identify their grammatical functions within English sentences.

The questionnaire consisted of a set of grammatical questions related to gerund constructions, including identifying gerunds in sentences, distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds, and determining their syntactic roles such as subject, object, and complement.

The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 50 undergraduate students from the English Language Department. The collected data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistical methods based on frequency and percentage, in order to determine the level of students' understanding of gerund constructions in English.

Question 1: Which sentence contains a gerund used as the subject?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	8	16%
B	32	64%

C	6	12%
D	4	8%
Total	50	100%

The results show that the majority of students (64%) correctly identified the sentence containing the gerund functioning as the subject. This indicates that most participants are able to recognize gerund constructions when they appear in subject position within the sentence.

Question 2: Function of gerund in: *Swimming is good for your health.*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	5	10%
B	6	12%
C	34	68%
d	5	10%
Total	50	100%

The findings indicate that 68% of the students correctly recognized the gerund as the subject of the sentence. This result suggests that students generally have a good understanding of gerunds when they appear at the beginning of a sentence.

Question 3: Function of gerund in: *She enjoys reading books.*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	7	14%
B	31	62%
c	8	16%
d	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Most participants (62%) correctly identified the gerund phrase as the object of the verb. This indicates that students are generally familiar with verbs that are followed by gerund complements.

Question 4: Which sentence represents a verbal gerund?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	9	18%
B	28	56%
C	7	14%
D	6	12%
Total	50	100%

More than half of the participants (56%) correctly identified the verbal gerund construction. However, the remaining responses suggest that some students still have difficulty distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds.

Question 5: Which sentence contains a nominal gerund?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	29	58%
B	11	22%
C	6	12%
D	4	8%
Total	50	100%

The results show that 58% of the students correctly recognized the nominal gerund structure. Although the majority answered correctly, the results also indicate that distinguishing between gerund types remains somewhat challenging for some learners.

Question 6: Feature of verbal gerunds

Response	Frequency	Percentage
A	30	60%
b	8	16%
c	7	14%
d	5	10%
Total	50	100%

The majority of respondents (60%) correctly identified that verbal gerunds can take direct objects. This confirms that most students understand the verbal properties associated with this type of gerund.

Question 7: Feature of nominal gerunds

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a	8	16%
b	31	62%
c	6	12%
d	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Most participants (62%) correctly recognized that nominal gerunds typically appear with the preposition *of*. This reflects a relatively good understanding of the structural differences between gerund types.

Question 8: Function of gerund in: *Her favorite hobby is painting.*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a	9	18%
b	30	60%
c	7	14%
d	4	8%
Total	50	100%

The results show that 60% of the students correctly identified the gerund as a complement. This indicates a moderate level of understanding regarding gerunds used after linking verbs.

Question 9: Function of gerund in: *She is interested in learning languages.*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a	6	12%
b	7	14%
c	32	64%
d	5	10%
Total	50	100%

A clear majority (64%) correctly identified the gerund as the object of a preposition. This suggests that most students are aware that verbs following prepositions typically appear in gerund form.

Question 10: Gerund as subject in: *Writing essays improves students' academic skills.*

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a	33	66%
b	8	16%
c	6	12%
d	3	6%
Total	50	100%

The majority of students (66%) correctly identified the gerund phrase as the subject of the sentence. This result confirms that students generally understand the syntactic role of gerunds in subject position.

Research Results

Based on the theoretical analysis and the field study conducted in this research, several important results can be summarized as follows:

1. The gerund is a non-finite verb form that functions syntactically as a noun within English sentences while maintaining some verbal properties.
2. Gerunds play an important role in English sentence structure because they can occupy several grammatical positions such as subject, object, complement, and object of a preposition.
3. There are clear structural differences between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds, particularly in terms of their internal syntactic structure and their degree of verbal or nominal characteristics.
4. Verbal gerunds tend to preserve more verbal features, such as taking direct objects and being modified by adverbs.
5. Nominal gerunds behave more like nouns and are often accompanied by determiners, adjectives, or prepositional phrases.
6. The results of the questionnaire indicate that most students have a general understanding of gerunds and their basic functions in sentences.
7. However, distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds remains challenging for some learners due to the overlapping grammatical properties between verbs and nouns.

Discussion of Results

The analysis of the questionnaire results reveals several important findings related to students' understanding of gerund constructions in English. The majority of the participants were able to correctly identify gerunds when they appeared in common syntactic positions such as the subject or the object of a sentence. This indicates that undergraduate students generally possess a basic understanding of gerunds as non-finite verb forms that function nominally within sentence structures.

The results also show that students demonstrated a relatively good ability to recognize the grammatical functions of gerunds in sentences. A significant proportion of the participants correctly identified gerunds functioning as subjects, objects, complements, and objects of prepositions. This reflects the fact that gerund constructions are frequently introduced in English grammar courses, which helps students become familiar with their syntactic roles.

However, the findings also reveal that some participants experienced difficulty distinguishing between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds. Although many students correctly recognized examples of each type, a noticeable percentage of incorrect responses suggests that the structural differences between these two forms are not always clearly understood. This difficulty may result from the hybrid nature of gerunds, which combine both verbal and nominal features within a single construction.

Furthermore, the results confirm that the complexity of gerund constructions lies mainly in their dual grammatical status. Students tend to identify gerunds more easily when they appear in clear syntactic positions, such as subjects or objects, but they encounter more challenges when analyzing the internal structure of the gerund phrase and determining whether it behaves more like a verb phrase or a noun phrase.

Overall, the results of the field study support the view presented in modern linguistic studies that gerunds represent a complex grammatical structure in English. Their dual nature and flexible syntactic functions make them an important topic in the study of English grammar and syntactic analysis.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the differences between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds in English and to analyze the various syntactic constructions in which gerunds appear within sentence structures. The research focused on explaining the grammatical characteristics of gerunds and identifying the different functions they perform in English sentences, such as subject, object, and complement.

The theoretical analysis demonstrated that gerunds represent a unique grammatical structure in English due to their hybrid nature, combining both verbal and nominal properties. Although gerunds are derived from verbs and retain certain verbal characteristics, they function syntactically as nouns in

many contexts. This dual nature makes gerunds one of the most complex non-finite constructions in English grammar.

The study also highlighted the structural distinction between nominal gerunds and verbal gerunds. Verbal gerunds preserve many verbal features, such as taking direct objects and allowing adverbial modification, whereas nominal gerunds behave more like noun phrases and often occur with determiners or prepositional complements. This distinction plays an important role in understanding the internal structure of gerund phrases and their behavior within sentence constructions.

The field study conducted through the questionnaire provided additional insight into learners' understanding of gerund constructions. The results indicated that most students were able to recognize gerunds and identify their basic grammatical functions within sentences. However, the findings also revealed that distinguishing between nominal and verbal gerunds remains a challenge for some learners due to the overlapping characteristics between verbs and nouns.

In general, this research confirms that gerunds occupy a significant position in English grammar and syntactic analysis. Understanding their structure and functions contributes to a clearer interpretation of English sentence patterns and supports more accurate grammatical analysis. The study also emphasizes the importance of addressing gerund constructions more systematically in English language teaching and linguistic research.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, several recommendations can be proposed:

1. Greater attention should be given to teaching gerund constructions in English grammar courses, particularly the distinction between nominal and verbal gerunds.
2. English language instructors should provide more practical examples illustrating the syntactic functions of gerunds in sentences.
3. Teaching materials should include comparative explanations between gerunds, infinitives, and participles to help students better understand non-finite constructions.
4. More exercises and analytical activities should be designed to help learners identify gerunds and analyze their grammatical functions in different contexts.
5. Future linguistic studies are encouraged to investigate gerund constructions using larger corpora of spoken and written English in order to better understand their distribution and usage patterns.

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