

## Characteristics of Gerund, Participle I and Verbal noun

 **Javid Babayev**

Nakhchivan State University

Keywords	Abstract
gerund participle I verbal noun verbalization tense voice	The article elaborates some bullet points of gerund, participle I and verbal noun. The difference between verbal noun and gerund has been brought into notice with examples in the study. The article underlines that verbalization of the ing-form word is caused by adverbs mainly. It occurs when we add adverb after the ing-form word which makes the ing-form word transform into gerund. In this case, gerundized word cannot be pluralized. If the adverb is not added in the sentence, the ing-form word can be pluralized very easily. Furthermore, some obscure points about tense and voice of participle I and gerund have been clarified in the study. It turned out that gerund has the category of voice and the category of tense. Like gerund, participle I has both category of voice and tense. Moreover, the tense forms can be in present and present perfect.

### Introduction

Gerund is supposed to be a verb form which functions as a noun as if it is a wolf in a sheep's clothing. To tell the truth, we cannot refer this quality to all syntactical functions of gerund. Gerund as an adverbial modifier does not function as a noun. Hence, this definition seems to be relative to some extent. Even though it mostly functions as a noun, it is always related to a verb as a wife who still obeys her mother and disobeys husband after marriage.

As obvious, gerund is one of the non-finite forms of the verb which means that it does not concord according to number, person and tense. Gerund has the category of tense and voice. For example,

I like being praised.

I like having been elected a deputy

Like gerund, Participle I also possesses the category of tense. It also has the category of Voice. Another similarity between gerund and participle I is that both can be used in present and present perfect tenses. For example,

Having left the house, I locked the door.

The house having been left, I locked the door.

As seen above, Participle I has both tense and voice categories. To have the category of tense does not mean that there should be sequence of tense, number and person. As it is possible to detach the part of the sentence with Participle I easily, there may not be the sequence of tense. For example,



The house having been left, I am obliged to wait for somebody to come and open the door.

Gerund might have a nominal character to some extent. It should not be forgotten that gerund along with infinitive may answer the question “what” in the functions of subject, object, predicate and attribute. But being able to answer the question “what” does not give us a ground to pluralize it. Since gerunds and infinitives are non-finite forms of the verb. It is often argued that gerund does not have the function of attribute. This is one of the most debatable questions among grammarians. Though most linguists reject its attributive function, very few grammarians are in the view that gerund does have the function of attribute. It can be proven with an example shown below:

I liked the idea of going to beach.

In the above-mentioned example, underlined prepositional gerund defines the word “idea”. Gerunds in the function of attribute are usually guided with prepositions. Actually, the example above has been taken for gerundive which functions as a verbal adjective. Though it is not always right to subdivide gerund into several parts according to its syntactical functions. If so there may be more similar words defining every syntactical function of gerund. The afore-mentioned example may also be used in passive voice:

I like the idea of being praised.

### Literature review

Gerund has been a research topic of many linguists so far. According to Ramirez et al. (2013), metalinguistic analysis leads to the development of the ability of English language speakers to reflect on or manipulate underlying grammatical rules of the target language (Selene Maya Ruiz, 2023). Gerund was classified as defective verbal noun by Slobodanka S.Prtija (2021). He compared gerund with gerundive in the works of Tacitus and Plini the Younger. Gerundives are verbal adjectives which match the attributive function of gerund. Raflis and Arozato Lase drew the attention to the syntactical functions of gerund (2018). It is interesting that the article written by the same authors suggest that gerund serves as a noun. In fact, his approach to the issue is partly justifiable. Because gerund always bears the functions of the verb though syntactically it resembles to noun. If it served as a noun, it could be used in the plural form, as well. Fernanda Guimaraes dos Santos claims -ing suffix to be multifunctional (2016). Also Hasan Alisoy dealt with reductions regarding participle I. Besides, A.Nuri and T.ismayilli also touched upon the so-called topic in their studies.

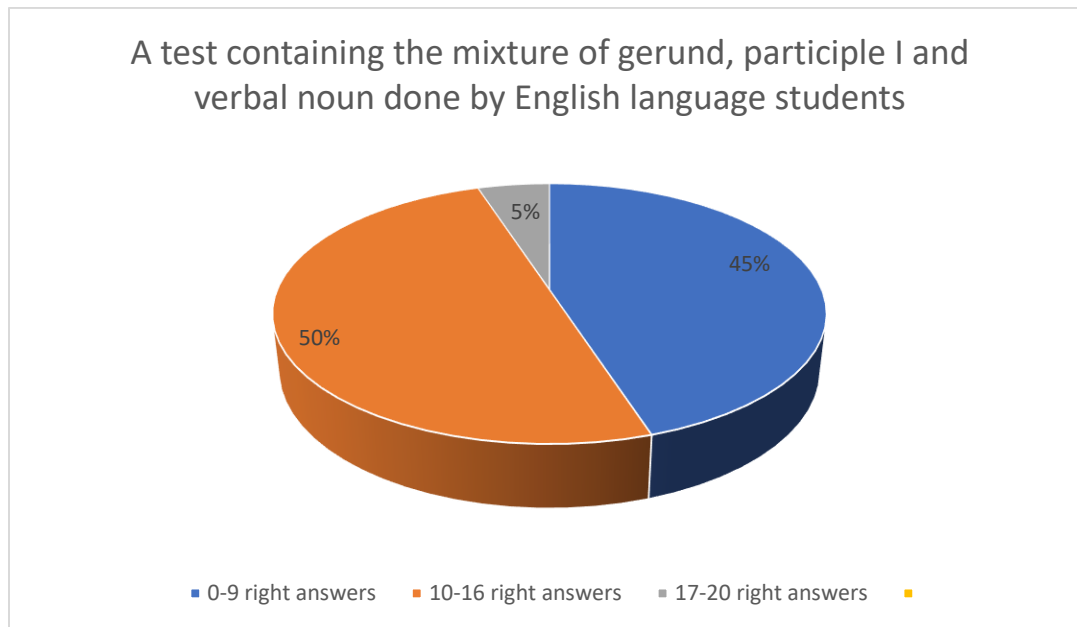
### Methodology

As the differentiation of gerund with participle I and gerund is one of the most intricate parts of grammar, we decided to conduct a survey about the acquisition rate of this topic by giving out tests containing the



so-called content among 20 first year students who were specialized in English language teaching. They had to find the correct answers which were presented in the form of multiple questions. The number of questions was 25 whose content required to differentiate gerund, participle I and verbal noun. The participants to write, at least, 21 questions right would get an excellent mark. The students showing the results between 17-20 correct answers would get a good mark. The students writing 10-16 right answers would get a satisfactory mark. The students scoring below 10 would fail the test. The level of the test was advanced – C1. Unfortunately, the results were not so good. The following pie-chart shows the results of 20 students.

**Chart 1.**



### Data analysis

Analyzing the data, it turned out that only one student could get a good mark with 19 right answers. 10 students out of 20 showed a satisfactory result between 10-16 right answers which made up 50% of the total participants. 9 students who were unable to pass the threshold failed the test which constituted 45% of the students. As seen from the pie chart, there is no category of 21-25 right answers as none of the students succeeded in showing excellent result.

### Discussion

There are some cases when it is too hard to define whether the ing-form word is gerund or verbal noun. For example,



He goes jogging.

In the above-mentioned example, the word “jogging” is regarded as a gerund. However, while translating it into the target language, it seems like a verbal noun. So subtle distinctions in languages in some aspects are striking. There is no point in searching for grammatical accuracy in collocations. The sport activities such as tobogganing, fencing, rowing, snorkeling, skinny-dipping, sledging, skiing, skating, jogging and the like, should be considered gerundial collocations. They are not verbal nouns in such word combinations.

As gerund cannot be pluralized, its verbal character remains fixed. Unlike gerund, verbal noun can be used in plural. Sometimes, it is too hard to guess whether the word is gerund or verbal noun in the sentence. In the meantime, we should render attention to details which serve verbalization along the sentence. While referring “details”, we consider adverb used after the word. As known, adverbs make the ing-form word verbalized and become gerund within the same sentence. Here are two examples which clarify the aspect of verbalization. For instance,

- 1) Jack’s coming was surprising.
- 2) Jack’s coming home was surprising.

In the first sentence shown above, “coming” is verbal noun however the same word is considered to be gerund in the second sentence. The first reason why “coming” is gerund in the second sentence is the inclusion of adverb “home”. The adverb “home” urged the ing-form word transform into gerund for its verbalizing character. Apart from the adverb denoting place, there can be any kind of adjectives used in the sentence. The second reason why the ing-form word cannot be pluralized sources from the first reason. As the ing-form word verbalized, it cannot bear the quality of plurality, as well. Since verbalized words are unable to have the character of nouns. The word “coming” can be pluralized very easily in the first sentence though the same word can’t be in the plural in the second sentence as follows;

- a) Jack’s comings were surprising.
- b) Jack’s coming (“s” is impossible to use) home was surprising.

By analyzing the afore-mentioned details, it is possible set forth such an idea that gerund used with possessive pronouns and words with Genitive Case can’t be considered a noun form if it is followed by an adverb.

There is one more key point regarding the difference between gerund and verbal noun which we should focus on. As we know, verbal nouns are often preceded by articles though gerunds are not used with articles. However, we can encounter the examples of verbal nouns which we don’t see any articles. In the meanwhile, we can confuse verbal noun and gerund. To tackle this intricate situation, we had better pay attention to the context or translation of the given word. If we are native speakers, we should figure it out



from the context. If we are not language bearers, we should focus on translation. We present two sentences below which we can define status of being gerund or verbal noun both from context and translation. For example,

- 1) I like swimming. This is my favorite sport
- 2) I like swimming every week.

In the first sentence, shown above “swimming” is verbal noun. It is facile to ascertain whether it is verbal noun or gerund both from the context and translation. Hence, both language bearers and non-native speakers can differentiate its status very easily after a distinct explanation. As we see, the second sentence in the first example defines the first one. So “swimming” in the first sentence appears to be a verbal noun. Secondly, since it is type of sport, we decide that this is a verbal noun. In the second sentence, “swimming” is gerund. Since it has been verbalized due to adverb placed after the word “swimming”.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it is possible to claim that gerund bears the function of both noun and verb, as well as adjective as a gerundive. It is not completely a verb which functions as a noun or visa versa. Gerund can easily be distinguished from verbal noun by adding adverb in the sentence. From a rigid analysis of gerund, participle I in terms of grammatical categories, we can claim that gerund has the category of voice and possesses the category of tense, as well. Like gerund, participle I has both categories. As a result, we can postulate that gerund has all 5 syntactical functions though participle I has only 2 syntactical functions.

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