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Categorial Characteristics of English Complex Event Nominals and Verbal Gerunds

(Kategoriální charakteristika anglických verbálních substatntiv a gerundií)

Master's Thesis

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I declare that I worked out this thesis on my own and acknowledged all the used and quoted sources.

In Olomouc on 13th May 2010 ....

Contents

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

a	around
AmE	American English
BI	bare infinitive
BNC	The British National Corpus
BrE	British English
c	circa
CHEL	The Cambridge History of English Language
COCA	The Corpus of Contemporary American English
COLMOBAENG	The Corpus of Late Modern British and American English Prose (1700-1879)
cf.	compare with
DPS	possessive pronoun
e.g.	for example
etc.	and so on
eME	Early Middle English
eModE	Early Modern English
HC	The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts
i.e.	it means; that is
INF	infinitive
lOE	Late Old English
ME	Middle English
ModE	Modern English
NP	noun phrase
OE	Old English
PDE	Present-day English
PNP	personal pronoun
V	verb
*	grammatically incorrect (example)
Δ	unexpected empty space

1 INTRODUCTION

The English suffix *–ing* is a very productive one. It cooperates on the progressive aspect (e.g. *He is work<u>ing</u> in the garden.* or *He has been read<u>ing</u> for an hour.*), it may help create English nouns (e.g. *shopp<u>ing</u>*) and adjectives (e.g. *will<u>ing</u>*), and at the same time it is a necessary part of what we call verbal gerunds (e.g. *I hate do<u>ing</u> homework*), complex event nominals (e.g. *I like read<u>ing</u> of the book*) and participles (e.g. *Hav<u>ing</u> written the letter, he left*). Since the topic including English *–ing* complements is very broad, I have chosen just some aspects connected with it. I would like to discuss the above mentioned gerunds and complex event nominals from the point of view of their categorical characteristics and Agents. These areas are usually only briefly mentioned in most grammar books. In case of Agents of English *-ing* complements, many authors even do not distinguish possible ways of their expressing and follow just one way, more suitable for them.

The main sources for the theoretical part of my thesis will be grammar books and various articles from journals, internet and so on. The most important part will be the practical one[1], which should examine the conclusions from the theoretical part, perhaps correct or clarify them. In my practical part I will employ *The British National Corpus* and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English*. I will use these primarily to compare the British English to American English. In some contexts, I will also distinguish spoken and written items. The theoretical and practical part will blend together so that the thesis will seem more compact and hopefully will be easier to read.

As to the structure, I will start with a brief introduction of both corpora used in my thesis. The main aim of the third chapter will be to describe the origins of what we call verbal gerunds and complex event nominals for the purpose of showing the natural development of this phenomenon. In the next chapter I would like to explore the nature of verbal gerunds and complex event nominals, place them in the system and show all the

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[1] In all the examples of my thesis, I will use bold type for *–ing* forms, and I will underline the parts important for the matter discussed.

consequences of their structure, premodification and postmodification. The fifth chapter will deal with the position of verbal gerunds and complex event nominals in the sentence. I will be interested not only in the position itself, but also how their surroundings (e.g. the preceding verb, preposition, etc.) influences the form of their Agent. This chapter should be based mainly on the generalised observations from *The British National Corpus* and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English.* The statistical data from my thesis will be summarized in the form of tables to make the results more transparent.

2 CORPORA USED

In my thesis, I will work with two available corpora, namely *The British National Corpus* (BNC) and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA). They will serve me as means for comparing the British and American variety of English. In this chapter, I would like to briefly introduce these corpora with emphasis on their contents and structure. The problems that may arise when searching for some information in both corpora will be mentioned in particular sections of my thesis.

2.1 THE BRITISH NATIONAL CORPUS (BNC)[2]

The British National Corpus was first released in 1994 and up to the present day there have been three editions, the latest from 2007. This project has been managed by Oxford University Press but there are many other institutions that cooperate on it, like Oxford University, the British Library, and so on. The corpus itself contains 100 million words and its samples cover spoken (10%) and written language (90%) from various kinds of sources. The written part includes extracts from books, newspapers, journals, or academic essays. The spoken part consists of transcribed speeches of people who come from various regions and social groups, and who are of various age and sex. The aim of the corpus is to represent the state of British English in the later part of the 20th century, concretely from 1990 to present days. For easier work, it is accompanied by a search tool called "Xaira", designed especially for the latest XML version from 2007.

2.2 THE CORPUS OF CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN ENGLISH (COCA)[3]

The Corpus of Contemporary American English is a younger product than its British counterpart. It was released in 2008. It is the largest freely-available corpus of English. The head of the whole project is Mark Davies

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[2] All the pieces of information are gained from the official websites -
http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml , http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml.ID=creation
[3] The source of information for this subsection is the official website –
http://www.americancorpus.org/

from Brigham Young University. The corpus contains more than 400 million words which are divided into a spoken and written language. Both parts can be searched year by year from 1990 on. The written part of the corpus is also distinguished according to the genre, while the spoken part according to the source of speech. Currently, the whole corpus covers the period from 1990 to 2009, but it is updated once or twice a year.

3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENGLISH –ING FORM[4]

3.1 OLD ENGLISH

The beginning of the existence of English gerundial constructions goes back to the OE period. According to Vachek (1978:116) *"the gerund originated from old verbal substantives which in OE ended in –ung (its replacement by –ing was probably due to Scandinavian influence)"*. Teresa Fanego in her study on the loss of hybrid gerunds in ModE mentions that

> *"the –ing form is not participial in origin ... but descends instead from an Old English derivational suffix which could be freely added to verb stems to form abstract nouns of action, as in OE spilling 'destruction' (>spillan 'destroy') or OE wending 'turning' (>wendan 'turn')"* (2006:95).

And finally, in the second volume of *The Cambridge History of the English Language* (CHEL), you can find this information:

> *"the story of the present participle and gerund is complex and somewhat murky; the two things we can be sure of are that, as in most major changes, there was a long period of complex variation, and that – surprisingly – the infinitive was involved as well. ... the present participle and the verbal noun, are respectively an old adjective and a derived noun. The –ing noun continues a Germanic type called a 'feminine abstract', which in early times had the suffix */-inɣa ~ unɣa/. By the end of Old English the -ung type had yielded to –ing, which was the only Middle English survival"* (1992:145).

Mustanoja (1960)[5] mentions that *"... the first sporadic signs of the gerundial function of the noun in –ing appear in late OE. They are slavish imitations of Latin gerunds ..."* (Tajima 1985:3). To sum it up, those OE nouns ending in –

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[4] In my thesis, I would like to adopt more or less traditional division of English history into Old English (up to 1100), Middle English (1100-1500), Early Modern English (1500-1800), English of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century (1800 – 1950), and Modern English (some authors use the term "Present-day English") (1950-present). Some authors also divide Middle English into Early Middle English (1100-1300) and Late Middle English (1300-1500). At the same time, we sometimes come across the subdivision of Modern English into Early Modern English (1500-1700) and Late Modern English (1700-1900). See Fanego (2006).

[5] Mustanoja, Tauno F. *A Middle English Syntax*. Helsinki: Societe neophilologique, 1960.

ing (resp. *–ung*) did not have properties of what we call gerunds today despite the fact that "*they do suggest that the noun in –ing is at least capable of acquiring verbal properties*"[6] (Tajima 1985:3) and that their meaning of "nouns of action" prepared the base for their further development.

The only non-finite complements in OE were infinitival constructions. The authors of *CHEL I* (1992:242) distinguish two morphological types of infinitives, the first one appearing in prose and verse from earliest times:

a) an infinitive with the suffix *–(i)an,* originally the nominative-accusative case marker for a neuter verbal noun

b) an infinitive with prepositional *to,* originally 'toward', and the inflected infinitive suffix *–anne/ -enne,* originally the dative case marker for a verbal noun.

As to syntax, infinitival constructions could have the function of both subject and object in OE. However, "*it is usually undecidable whether complements in impersonal constructions are really subjects rather than oblique objects*" (*CHEL I* 1992:244). Generally said, we find infinitive constructions in OE mainly as objects of transitive verbs.

3.2 MIDDLE ENGLISH

When we read through the secondary literature[7] and articles[8] concerning the development of English gerunds, we must conclude that the ME period was very crucial as to the formation of what we call gerund today. In conclusion to her study on gerunds in this period, Tajima (1985:136-137) states that "*the ME period was instrumental in the formative stage of the syntactic development of the gerund as we know today; a noun whose role has been broadened by its acquisition of verbal characteristics*". That is why I would like to pay extra attention to this topic in the next subsection.

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[6] See Mustanoja (1960:572).

[7] For this period the most useful being. *The Syntactic Development of the Gerund in Middle English* by Matsuji Tajima, *An Historical Syntax of the English Language* by Fredericus Theodorus Visser, *The Cambridge History of the English Language*. Vol. 2**. (**ed. Norman Blake), and *A Brief Survey of the Historical Development of English* by Josef Vachek.

[8] Among articles, I relied especially on Teresa Fanego and her study "The role of language standardization in the loss of hybrid gerunds in Modern English".

3.2.1 THE RISE OF GERUNDS

As stated in the previous subsection, the gerund developed from an OE noun ending in *–ing* (resp. *–ung*). This kind of nouns behaved like any other nouns taking various kinds of determiners typical just for this part of speech. Fanego (2006:95-96) mentions that it continued even throughout the eME period and she gives a couple of examples[9]. They show that in that time gerunds could take determiners, possessive pronouns as well as an *of-*phrase as any other noun:

(3.1)   *at the **makyng** thys lettyr 'at [the moment of] writing this letter/ when writing this letter'*

<div align="right">(1472-1488 <i>Celly Letters</i>, 94/5 (Tajima 1985:68))</div>

(3.2)   *And thus began his **loving** of Criseyde*

<div align="right">(c. 1385 Chaucer <i>Troilus and Criseyde</i>, V 1833 (Tajima 1985:70)</div>

(3.3)   *Sain Jon was … bisi In **ordaining** of priestes, and clerkes, 'Saint John was … busy ordaining priests and clerics,'*

<div align="right">(c. 1300 (MS a1400) <i>English Metrical Homilies</i>, 112/2-4 (Tajima 1985:76))</div>

Later on, in the lME period, gerunds began to acquire more and more verbal properties, which has gradually led to the present-day-English (PDE) situation. Fanego (2006) attributes the rise of present-day gerunds to the encounter between newly developed gerunds and old forms used in the language, i.e. infinitives. She sums up the beginnings of gerunds like this (Fanego 2006:96-97):

> "*...the first instances of verbal gerunds can be dated back to Late Middle English, their spread across the grammar of English extended over a period of several centuries...In the early stages, verbalization was largely restricted to prepositional environments (e.g. 'I insisted on wearing a suit'), which were the primary context in which the gerundive was not blocked by the productive to-infinitive, as this was available in Old and Middle English in a variety of clausal functions, but could not occur after prepositions other than to. In addition, for a long time verbal features were found only with those prepositional gerunds that lacked an explicit subject [see (10) below], but not with the type exemplified by*

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[9] Although these examples are taken from Tajima (1985), I quote Fanego's (2006) version because she adds the PDE transcription for the ME texts, which I find quite useful.

> *structures like [(3.2)] above (<u>his</u> loving of Criseyde), where the*
> *possessive his represents the notional subject of the following -ing form.*
>
> (10) <u>yn</u> **feblyng** ?e body with moche fastyng
>
> *'in weakening the body by too much abstinence' (c. 1303 (MS a1400)*
> *Handlyng Synne, HS 408 (Tajima 1985:76))"*

But this needn't have been the only reason for the rise of gerunds. According to *CHEL II* (1992:252-253), there also arose a morphological problem in the lOE or eME because

> "*... the inflectional endings of the present participle, (inflectional) infinitive and verbal noun began to be confused. At the same time, or perhaps because of this, there was syntactic confusion in that the verbal noun (in Old English ending in –ung) began to develop verbal properties, i.e. it acquired the ability to take a noun phrase as its direct object (in Old English the genitive case was the norm); and it could be modified by adverbs that normally only modify verbs etc. ... It seems likely that the syntactic confusion noted above was more a result of the phonological developments than that it occurred independently of it. An immediate consequence of all this was an enormous expansion of the functional load of the form in –ing. This may well have assisted in the breakthrough of the progressive form. An example of this is the gradual replacement of the Old English construction he com ridan by the he com ridyng/ridand construction.*"

Vachek (1978) emphasises the importance of the French gérondif for the rise of gerunds, which is the opinion also mentioned by Tauno Mustanoja in the first of volume of his *A Middle English Syntax* (1960) (see Tajima 1985:3). At the same time Mustanoja (1960) hypothesizes about the possible Celtic influence. Moreover, he Mustanoja also states that "*... one significant contributory factor is obviously the analogy of the English present participle, and the gerund no doubt receives several of its functions from the infinitive*" (Tajima 1985:3). It is difficult to decide which of these factors was the most important one as different authors deal with different theories. But all of them are worth mentioning and thinking about.

ME period was not crucial only for the rise of gerunds but also played a significant role in their further development towards more verbal properties. It is not easy to determine exact dates of the first occurrences of various syntactical constructions with gerunds. Each new research brings new dates which usually go further into the history. For example Vachek (1978:116) dates the beginning of the gerundial form back to the middle of the 14th century, while Tajima (1985:136-137) concludes that "... *the preliminary development of a gerundial -ing form initially purely nominal into one partly nominal and partly verbal in character can be detected as early as in the second half of the 12th century*". However he adds that

> "... *it is safe to say that the gerund was almost exclusively treated as a noun until about 1300, but it would be too hasty to insist that the use of the gerund with syntactic verbal force was fully or firmly established "about 1300". Instead, the evidence presented in [Tajima's] study strongly suggests that it was not until the first half of the 15th century that the gerund appreciably developed certain verbal properties, particularly those governing the direct (or accusative) object and of being modified by an adverbial adjunct. The other features: governing a predicative, indicating voice by means of compound forms, and taking a common (or accusative) case subject or an objective case subject, are still far from fully developed, being only very sporadically instanced down to the close of the ME period.*"

Tajima offers a great deal of examples and analyses in his study which makes his conclusions very trustworthy.

3.2.2 THE "SUBJECT"[10] OF GERUNDS

Looking for some data concerning the historical development of what we may call "subject" of today's verbal gerunds and complex event nominals, Tajima's study is again a very valuable source of information. ME gerunds

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[10] I use this term to denote the constituent which expresses the semantic role of the Agent of a gerund. I follow the terminology of Tajima (1985).

had many features which he found worth mentioning but for the purpose of my thesis I will focus on the form of their "subject" and object.

Gaining more and more verbal properties, the gerund needed to express its Agent, as most ordinary verbs within a sentence. The beginnings of usage of "subjects" in combination with gerunds are described again in Tajima (1985:119), who states:

> "*Like a verb, the gerund may have a subject of its own, expressed or unexpressed. However, its expressed subject, in accordance with its nominal origin, has normally been indicated by a noun in the genitive case or a possessive pronoun from OE down to the present day, or by a periphrastic genitive with of from ME onwards. ... Thus the gerund with its subject in the genitive (possessive) case is ... common throughout all periods of English.*"

It is obvious that the nominal origin of gerunds again played an important role in their development, this time in the development of their "subject". But we know that for verbal gerunds there is one more option nowadays, i.e. using the nouns in common case or objective case pronouns instead of the genitive case for nouns or possessive forms of pronouns. Tajima's (1985:123) research shows that

> " ... *the gerund with a noun subject in the common case occurs from the first half of the thirteenth century[11] while the gerund with a pronominal subject in the objective case develops from the second half of the 14th century[12], but both constructions remain very rare throughout the remainder of the ME period*".

They became much more frequent during the eModE period, but according to Tajima (1985:126), the pronominal "subjects" in objective case were not "*really current until after 1800*". If combination with genitive can be taken as one of the nominal characteristics of the OE and ME gerunds, then the gradual rise of the usage of accusative means that the gerunds started gaining more and more verbal properties, especially during the lME period.

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[11] Tajima found the first example of the "subject" of gerund represented by a noun in common case from c1200, but she warns the reader that these earlier examples may allow alternative interpretations.
[12] Its first occurrence is dated a1400.

The prime of these forms was to come, but the importance of ME period lies in initiating the process.

3.2.3 THE DIRECT OBJECT OF GERUNDS

A very important step in the development of English gerunds was their postmodification by a direct object. On grounds of the fact that gerunds were originally nouns which ended in *–ing* (or previously *–ung*) and behaved like any other noun, I assume that the original way of expressing the object was to postmodify the gerund with another noun in genitive case[13] or with the help of preposition *–of*. It can't have been direct object which primarily postmodified the gerund because it is a typical feature of verbs to be directly postmodified by direct object and gerunds were developing their verbal properties very gradually. Tajima's (1985:31) conclusions confirm my assumption. She states that

> "*the gerund developed in the OE period as a pure noun. Its logical object (i.e. the object of the logical concept implied in it) was, therefore, expressed in the genitive (possessive), and later, as a result of the tendency to use analytic patterns in place of synthetic ones, in the periphrastic genitive with* of".

This is a generally shared conclusion among authors[14]. According to Tajima's (1985:133) research, the first periphrastic forms with *of* appeared as early as c1200. But at that time it was still more the matter of noun ending in *–ing* than the gerund which has some degree of verbal properties.

When exploring the next development of direct objects of gerunds, I found Tajima's (1985:74) study the most innovative of all as she concludes that

> "*... the gerund + object construction first appears before 1300, ... , at least slightly earlier than the examples recorded by Visser[15] and more*

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[13] As one of the typical features of English grammar in both OE and ME was declination, it was very easy to recognize the object of gerund according to its suffix in the early period of its development.
[14] See also Visser (2002)
[15] Visser found the first example of this from in the text from 1303. (Visser 2002:1205)

than half a century earlier than has generally been considered to be the case".

She also states that the form of gerund immediately followed by direct object "*makes only slow progress until the end of the 14th century, but then becomes appreciably more frequent in the 15th century*" (Tajima 1985:135-136). Without any doubt, the two forms, i.e. the gerund followed by both *of*-phrase and direct object coexisted next to each other in the 15th century.

But these were not the only combinations of gerund + object that can be found in ME texts. Tajima (1985:31) distinguishes at least six types of the co-occurrence of these two items. She found these possibilities in primary sources:

1) object genitive (possessive) + gerund

2) object + gerund

3) gerund + *of* adjunct

4) determiner + gerund + *of* adjunct

5) gerund + object

6) determiner + gerund + object

Having explored many primary sources, Tajima (1985:131) concludes that "*[type 1 and 2](survivors of OE synthetic expressions) are the most commonly used in early ME*". Subsequently Tajima (1985:41) states that

> "*apart from the unusually high frequency before 1200, ... , [type 3], which is generally regarded as regular construction in ME, begins to develop after 1250 and reaches its peak in the second half of the fourteenth century but then decreases steadily, being slightly supplanted by [type 4] as the most common construction in the second half of the 15th century. Type IV, although first found before 1200, becomes frequent only after 1300, competing with, and finally ousting, its rival Type III by 1500*".

And finally Tajima (1985:131) sums up that "*[types 5 and 6], both with syntactic verbal force, appear only in late ME (1300-1500), with [type 5]'s frequency steadily increasing and [type 6]'s usage remaining extremely rare*". Generally speaking, the degree of frequency of these constructions was not

the same and some of them were "waiting" for their summit in the following periods.

There is one more property of ME gerunds that I would like to comment on. It is their ability to govern a predicate, which, according to Tajima (1985:132),

> "*occurs as early as 1450, … , a century before the oldest instance on record (1551 More Utopia [Ralph Robynson's transl.]), thereby disproving the belief that this is only a ModE product. Its five occurrences in three different texts during the second half of the 15th century testify to the fact that this verbal property is a late ME, rather than a ModE, development*".

This is one of the conclusive proofs of gerund's gaining more and more verbal properties during the ME period.

3.3 EARLY MODERN ENGLISH

In the eModE period, the development of gerunds picked up steam. Gerunds overshadowed the old form of infinitive and were gradually developing their verbal properties. They also spread thanks to the fact that popular writers started using them in their works and later on, grammarians became interested in them from the theoretical point of view.

3.3.1 THE "SUBJECT" OF GERUNDS

As mentioned above, the development continued gradually, which means that it sometimes took several centuries until some of the nowadays typical features of gerunds became widely used. For example, the authors of *CHEL III* (1999:286) mention that "*with most verbs, the accusative + -ing construction seems to become common only towards the end of the period[16]; with some verbs, such as see, hear, and find, this type is common even much earlier*". They give these examples:

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[16] For the authors, the "period" ends in 1776.

*(3.4) Then I <u>saw</u> <u>ij. Naked imagis</u> **lying** a long, the one imbracing the other.*

<div align="right">([HC] Leland I 141)</div>

*(3.5) He lay much silent: Once they <u>heard</u> <u>him</u> **praying** very devoutly.*

<div align="right">([HC] Burnet *Life of Rochester* 157)</div>

The status of "subjects" of gerunds suffered change as well. In the previous chapter, I wrote about the logical development of gerunds towards more verbal properties, which also affected their "subjects". The primary form of the noun in genitive or possessive pronoun was later supplemented by the analytic *of*-phrase. Finally the "subject" of gerund could be expressed by a noun in common case or pronoun in objective case. However, the last two forms were not as usual in eModE as in PDE. In *CHEL III* (1999:286) we can learn that "the non-genitive noun seems to become common in written texts as late as the eighteenth century, the objective form of the pronoun even later". This is the same conclusion as Tajima (1985:126) made, i.e. the objective case for personal pronouns was commonly used after 1800 according to her. Of course, we can find several occasional examples of these quite modern forms even earlier (*CHEL III* 1999:286):

*(3.6)   it was true of this <u>light</u> **contynuyng** from day to daye.*

<div align="right">(1536 John de Ponte, Ellis *Original Letters* I 2, 125)</div>

*(3.7)   I woulde haue no mans honestye empayred by <u>me</u> **tellynge**.*

<div align="right">([HC] Latimer 160)</div>

Nevertheless, these forms are very rare and show rather a tendency for next development than an actual development.

Moreover, there was a problem with forms of pronouns, especially at the beginning of the eModE period because their forms were not fully developed yet, or, more concretely, the possessive form of the pronoun "it" did not emerge until in eModE, so "*the neuter possessive pronoun was <u>his</u> for the whole of the ME period*" (Vachek 1978:37). But even Milton in the authorised version of the Bible from 1611 still used "his" for the neuter possessive[17].

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[17] See Vachek (1978:37).

3.3.2 GERUNDS VERSUS INFINITIVES

The general feature of the development of English gerunds was their gaining more and more verbal properties. As mentioned above in the quotation from Fanego's study (2006:96), "*verbalization was largely restricted to prepositional environments [in the early stages] ...* ". But gradually, the position of gerunds, especially of those verbal ones, strengthened and they began to appear in different functions, not just the complements of preposition. Fanego (2006:97) notes that

> "*from the middle of the sixteenth century we come across scattered instances of gerundives encroaching upon the to-infinitive as the objects of verbs of so-called subject control ... From the late seventeenth century occasional examples of verbal gerunds used as subjects or predicatives can also be found*".

She worked mainly with *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* and gives following examples of the 17th century development mentioned above (Fanego (2006:97):

(3.8)   **Slitting** *the bark is an excedent additional help to most of the foresaid evils, and also for bark-binding.*

(HC 1699 Langford *Plain and Full Instructions to Raise All Sorts of Fruit-Trees*, Sample 2, 114)

(3.9)   *Your Lordship does me too much honour, it was* **exposing** *your Person to too much Fatigue and Danger, I protest it was.*

(HC 1697 Vanbrugh *The Relapse*, I 59)

To sum it up, the fight between the infinitival a gerundial forms started with the first instances of gerunds and became more intensive in the eMod period. Potter (1975:134) states that "*since Shakespeare's day, there has been a general drift towards the gerund*". The gerund was gaining more and more power and "stealing" some of the infinitival properties for itself. This supports the general assumption that gerunds owe a lot to infinitives with regard to their own development.

3.3.3 HYBRID GERUNDS

At about the same time, the phenomenon which Fanego (2006:97-98) calls "hybrid gerunds" began to appear. She also gives a couple of examples that are worth mentioning here:

(3.10) *and though I profess no knowledg of the Law, yet I am sure the regulation of these defects might be easily mended ... But above all, <u>the</u> **taking** Fish in Spawning time, may be said to be against nature.*

<div align="right">(HC 1676 Walton Complete Angler, 213)</div>

(3.11) *... a consideration which I take the liberty to recommend a little to the reader: for however swift his capacity may be, I would not advise him to travel through these pages too fast: for if he does, he may probably miss <u>the</u> **seeing** some curious productions of nature which will be observed by the lower and more accurate reader.*

<div align="right">(COLMOBAENG 1742 J.Fielding Joseph Andrews 066(105-P23)</div>

(3.12) *She certainly would soon have broken her Heart, had she known that all this Misery ... was her own Fault; but as she thought it his Inconstancy, to his Generosity, in not telling her the Truth, she owed <u>the</u> **avoiding** that painful Reflection.*

<div align="right">(COLMOBAENG 1744 S. Fielding David Simple, 71)</div>

(3.13) *... but of all these [ends] the noblest End is <u>the</u> **multiplying** children, It is religion to marry for children.*

<div align="right">(HC 1673 Taylor Sermons, 13)</div>

(3.14) *There is one piece of sophistry practiced by both sides, and that is <u>the</u> **taking** any scandalous story that has been ever whispered or invented of a private man, for a known undoubted truth, and raising suitable speculations about it.*

<div align="right">(COLMOBAENG 1711 Addison Spectator, 114/040-P06)</div>

All the above mentioned examples show quite a strange aspect of especially the 17th and partly 18th century gerunds, which also sporadically appeared in the ME, or even OE period[18]. The gerunds themselves are still premodified by definite articles, which is a typical feature for nouns, but they are already postmodified by a direct object, which refers rather to verbal properties than to the nominal ones. Fanego (2006:98) offers a possible explanation of this phenomenon:

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[18] See Visser (2002:1197).

> "*the function of the in such instances was not to indicate definite reference, but rather to provide the following verbal gerund with an introductory element of some kind; in other words, the was basically a semantically empty grammatical marker or complementizer serving to license the –ing clause at a time when subjectless verbal gerunds in argument positions (i.e. subjects, objects, or predicatives) were probably not yet fully acceptable*".

Except of this pattern, i.e. *definite article + gerund + direct object*, there was also another one which seems more logical in relation to the origins of gerunds. The pattern is *definite article + gerund + of-phrase*, because it allows the gerund a more nominal character. Visser (2002:1210) notes that

> "*from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century constructions with of and those without of before the complement of a form in –ing preceded by the were used side by side – after 1500 with almost equal frequency -, and ... the choice between the two patterns was largely, if not exclusively, a question of style. It is not rare for both of them to be used in one and the same sentence*".

He shows his assumption on the following example:

(3.15) *'to the **saving** of their lives, and restoring Δ their health'*

<div align="right">(1722 DeFoe, Journ. Of the Plague Year (ed. Bradley) 56)</div>

As mentioned above, the story of the so called hybrid gerunds continued until the end of the nineteenth century. The discrepancy of the forms with and without an *of*-phrase were conflicting the coming ModE system and this caused their gradual disappearing.

3.4 19TH CENTURY AND THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The 19th century was a very crucial period for the development of language into the present state. As to the gerunds, the grammarians tried to solve two major "problems" – they had to deal with the existence of hybrid gerunds, which showed many nonsystematic properties. The forms of the

"subjects" of verbal gerunds was one of the topics to look at, because the fight between the two forms continued since the lME period.

3.4.1 THE "SUBJECT" OF GERUNDS REVISITED

In today's English, there is a choice between the common (in case of pronouns objective) or possessive case of the "subject" of a verbal gerund, if it is expressed. So we can come across the following sentences, both of them grammatically correct:

*(3.16) I like <u>his</u> **singing** the song.*

*(3.17) I like <u>him</u> **singing** the song.*

Since the gerund was originally a noun, we may assume that the form of pronoun in (3.16) is older than the pronoun in objective case in (3.17). We can find the preference for the possessive form in many examples from the 19th century, even the beginning of the 20th century (*CHEL IV* 1998:268):

*(3.18) and <u>his</u> just now **refusing** to pay me a part, is a proof of it.*

(1777 (1781) Sheridan, *Scarborough* I.ii 580.37)

*(3.19) Every one laughed at the idea of the <u>cook's</u> **being** engaged as queen.*

(1904 Nesbit, *Phoenix* iii.73)

The generally accepted theory of the development of the objective form of pronouns, as seen in (3.17), includes several reasons. According to *CHEL IV* (1998:269), these reasons

> *"... include the identity in sound – and intermittently in spelling too – of the common case and genitive of most plural nouns [see (3.20) below] and some names [see (3.21) below], and similarly the morphological ambiguity of 3 SG feminine her, and the unavailability of awkwardness of any genitive for various sorts of NP, including nonpersonal pronouns [see (3.22) below], coordinated NPs [see (3.23) below], or NPs with postmodifying prepositional phrase [see (3.24) below]".*

*(3.20) and I do not wonder at the young <u>fellows</u> **raving** about her.*

(1848 Thackeray, *Pendennis* xi.118 [Jespersen])

*(3.21) William was flamingly indignant at <u>Mr Briggs</u> **being** too late*

(1841 Gaskell, *Letters* 16 p. 47 (23 Dec.))

*(3.22) when I think of <u>this</u> **being** the last time of seeing you*

(1816 Austen, *Mansfield Park* III.v[xxxvi].359 [Jespersen])

*(3.23) I do not think there is much likelihood, of <u>you and Miss Fairfax</u> **being** united.*

(1895 Wilde, *Importance* II p. 138 [Jespersen])

*(3.24) upon my <u>application for her address</u> **being** refused*

(1857 C. Brontë, *Professor*, ed. Smith & Rosengarten (Clarendon, 1987) xx.185 [Jespersen])

Tajima's (1985) research shows that the first examples of "subject" pronominals in objective case appeared as early as in the second half of the 14th century (see page 17). Visser (2002:1183) dates the occurrence of objective case pronouns as "subjects" of gerundial structures more than a century later, namely the end of the fifteenth century. He adds that these forms appeared more frequently "*from about the middle of the nineteenth century*", and according to *CHEL IV* (1998:269-270), "*by the late nineteenth century, their use was being variously recognised by observers as dialectical, vulgar, or merely colloquial*".

Moreover, we may come across examples of pronoun in nominal case used as a "subject" of gerund (*CHEL IV* 1998:270):

*(3.25) I recollect <u>Peggoty and I</u> **peeping** out at them from my little window.*

(1849-50 Dickens, *David Copperfield* ii.19 [Jespersen]

*(3.26) But thats [sic] very different thing from killing a man because he's a German and <u>he</u> **killing** you because youre [sic] an Englishman.*

(1932 Shaw, *Too True to be Good* III p.1161 [Jespersen])

But these are very exceptional cases which are far from being marked as common expressions.

3.4.2 HYBRID GERUNDS

The hybrid gerunds were quite common in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as mentioned in the subsection above. Visser (2002:1211-1212) concludes that by the end of the nineteenth century, the form without *of* had more or less disappeared. He thinks that "*the decline in frequency of the form without of seems to [be] ascribable to its being pilloried as solecistic by a number of prescriptive grammarians, who, for once, appear to have been to a large extent successful*".

The research made by Teresa Fanego (2006:102) brings more concrete information. She worked out the table (see Table 1), where she explored

gerunds preceded by definite article and postmodified either by an *of*-phrase or a direct object in the period 1640 – 1879. Having explored that statistical information in the Table 1, we find out that the main changes which affected the structure of gerundial constructions described above can be dated to the second half of the eighteenth century. Fanego (2006:102-103) claims that

> "*prior to this, the-hybrids (e.g. the gaining her affections) had been slowly but steadily gaining ground and usually served, … , to avoid the use of a bare verbal gerund (e.g. gaining her affection) in the clausal slots of subject, object or predicative*".

From the second half of the eighteenth century on, the structures premodified by *the* and postmodified by an *of*-phrase began to prevail over the structures postmodified by a direct object In the second half of the nineteenth century, the statistic number of occurrences was even bigger. According to Fanego, the loss of hybrid gerunds was completed in the early years of the twentieth century.

Except of the definite article, gerunds could also be preceded by other determiners, e.g. *no, this, that,* and so on. Cornilescu (2003:17) uses Jespersen's (1909-1949) examples to prove this claim:

(3.27) <u>This</u> **telling** *lies out of school has got to stop.*

(3.28) *There is* <u>no</u> **enjoying** *life without you.*

Cornilescu (2003) notes that the occurrence of such determiners was quite free until the early twentieth century.

Cornilescu (2003) also gives examples where the gerunds immediately followed by a direct object were premodified by adjectives, which is a typical behaviour of nouns:

(3.29) *… between rheumatism and* <u>constant</u> **handling** *the rod and gun.*

(Kingsley)

On the other side, the authors of *CHEL IV* (1998:271) found some examples of *-ing* constructions postmodified by both an *of*-phrase, which is generally known as a postmodifier of nouns, and an adverbial, i.e. the typical postmodification for verbs.

(3.30) *The* **shutting** <u>*of the gates*</u> <u>*regularly*</u> *at ten o'clock … had rendered our residence … very irksome to me.*

(1818 Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*, ed. Rieger (Bobbs-Merrill, 1974) ii.i[ix].86 [van der Wurff]

*(3.31) ... then, with a more comical expression of facet than before and a **settling** <u>of</u> <u>himself</u> <u>comfortably</u> ... he launched into some new wonder ...*

<div align="right">(1840-1 Dickens, <i>Master Humphrey's Clock</i> iii.60 [Visser])</div>

These are all very strange constructions which seem to randomly combine nominal and verbal characteristics.

3.4.3 LANGUAGE STANDARDIZATION

As stated above, the changes in English structures are connected with the efforts of some groups of people to make this language a more systematic one, the process we may call language standardization. Fanego (2006:103) explores this process, which seems very important for the development of some gerundial constructions, quite deeply, and she describes it as follows:

> "*The process of language standardization follows very similar patterns across European languages. After an initial selection stage, in which a specific language variety successfully emerges from the pool of candidate dialects for standardization, there is usually an elaboration stage in which attempts are made to increase the repertoire of formal devices as well as vocabulary appropriate to the new functions of a written standard language. This elaboration stage is followed by what Joseph (1987:108ff) has labelled the control stage, in which 'official or self-appointed controllers (writers, grammarians and other codifiers, teachers etc.) take critical stock of various aspects of the system (vocabulary, syntax, morphology, pronunciation, spelling)' (Pounder 2001:320), such that some elements are praised and others reviled, all in the name of consistency, logic, analogy, clarity, rationality, uniformity and the like. An essential facet of control activity is that variants within the language, often associated with one or more system-motivated changes in progress, are 'hierarchized, and sometimes eliminated' (Joseph 1987:109)*"

Fanego (2006:104) relates the major changes, including those gerundial ones, to the name of Robert Lowth, an eighteenth-century prescriptive grammarian. In 1762 Lowth published a grammar book,

the main concern of which was the English syntax. He was interested in the structure of gerundial phrases as well. And these are his conclusions (Fanego 2006:104-105):

> "*The Participle, with an Article before it, and the Preposition of after it, becomes a Substantive, expressing the action itself which the verb signifies: as, 'These are the Rules of Grammar, by the observing of which you may avoid mistakes. Or it may be expressed by the Participle, r Gerund; 'by observing which:' not, 'by observing of which:' nor, 'by the observing which:' for either of those two Phrases would be a confounding of two distinct forms. …*
>
> *This Rule arises from the nature and idiom of our Language, and from as plain a principle as any on which it is founded: namely, that a word which has the Article before it, and a Noun, with the Possessive Preposition of, after it, must be a noun; and if a noun, it ought to follow the Construction of a Noun, and not have the Regimen of a Verb …*
> "(Lowth 1762:111-14; emphasis added)

It is not only because of the influence of Lowth, but also other prescriptive grammarians, that hybrid gerunds began to decline and finally disappeared. Fanego (2006:106) comes to conclusion that

> "*the influence of Lowth and his fellow grammarians was no doubt crucial in bringing about the loss of hybrid gerunds with an initial definite article, and ultimately, in promoting the diffusion of subjectless verbal gerunds (e.g. gaining her affection) to all clausal functions*".

As mentioned above, Visser (2002:1211-1212) comes to the same conclusion.

I am not so convinced that individual speaker's effort can change the language system so substantially and I prefer to view the change as above all a language internal tendency to systematic uniformity. The development of ME gerunds signals a system-motivated change

reflected and explicitly formulated by Lowth and other grammarians properly sensitive to the logic of the language system.

3.5 SUMMARY

The PDE English gerunds developed from the OE noun ending in *–ung*. This suffix gradually changed into the form of *–ing*. The main changes affecting the structure of gerunds took place in ME. Those changes had the character of moving from nominal to verbal properties. One of the crucial signs of the development mentioned above was the rise of "subject" to introduce gerundial constructions. At first the subject was in the form of a noun in genitive, later on, its periphrastic forms appeared. In the middle of the 13th century, we first come across examples of common nouns in the function of the "subject"; in the 14th century the pronominal "subject" in accusative case appeared. However, common case "subject" and accusative pronominal "subject" became common during the eModE period, the latter even since the 19th century. In the eModE period we also come across frequent examples of the so called hybrid gerunds. These forms of gerunds were premodified by a definite article and postmodified by a direct object at the same time. They were called hybrid gerunds thanks to this mixture of nominal and verbal properties. The existence of hybrid forms was threatening the stability of the language system. The further development of these hybrid forms was stopped especially thanks to the work of prescriptive grammarians, e.g. Robert Lowth. At the beginning of the 20th century hybrid gerunds gradually disappeared.

Gerunds have always been a part of the language system. Such systems are usually more or less flexible and open to changes. Those changes are not accidental but they must happen within the borders of existing structures. They never affect the basic principles of the system but they have to adjust to those principles. After some time, the changed forms become more stable and compatible with the rest of the system. The gerund developed in a similar way and with all the consequences that can be derived from this development. Gerund, originally a noun, has been developing more

and more verbal properties. But all the changes have been happening within the borders of the system-defined properties of nouns and verbs. Strang (1970:153) claims that "*in its contrasts and in its functions the gerund has been growing steadily more verb-like, perhaps partly as a result of its formal identity and functional overlap with the –ing participle*". At the same time Strang (1970:153) mentions that "*Jespersen regards as a concomitant of this the growth, since about 1700, of use of a non-genitive nominal in conjunction with the gerund*[19]" Wim van der Wurf, who is an acclaimed philologist in the sphere of gerunds, claims that "*by 1900 … the construction had to be either completely nominal or completely verbal*" (*CHEL IV* 1998:271). He claims that

> "*the gerund construction, originally of mixed nominal and verbal character, came to be polarised into one or other of the two: either nominal, by analogy with the increasingly frequent deverbal abstract nouns like blockage, erasure, fulfilment, or verbal, by analogy with the ever more frequent progressive*" (*CHEL IV* 1998:272).

We can still find many examples of mixed properties nowadays, nevertheless, it's a matter of time when one of the forms prevails and suppresses another one. The tendency for unification is very strong these days.

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[19] See(3.25) and (3.26)).

4 COMPLEX EVENT NOMINALS VERSUS VERBAL GERUNDS

What I would like to deal with in this part of my thesis, are especially two types of the *-ing* forms. I decided to call them complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. In the first place, it is necessary to define and distinguish these two terms as different authors use different terminology for these phenomena[20] and some of the terms can therefore be vague, even misleading.

The question is how to distinguish these two terms from each other, how to distinguish them from the so called result nominals and –ing participles, which have, at first sight, very similar forms as the above mentioned. There are at least two ways to define the terms exactly. I will concentrate on the form of their postmodification and premodification respectively. I used this order because I consider the postmodification, especially the role of the *of*-phrase, to be a crucial argument to distinguish complex event nominals and result nominals from verbal gerunds.

I decided to choose several modifying categories which are typical for either nouns or verbs and test them in connection with what I call complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. All my assumptions will be examined by means of samples from both BNC and COCA[21].

4.1 COMPLEX EVENT NOMINALS

When exploring the complex event nominals, I would like to contrast them not only with verbal gerunds, but also with the so called result nominals because both above mentioned categories may be source of misunderstanding.

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[20] We can come across the terms like "verbal nouns", "gerundial nouns" or "nominal gerunds" for what I call "complex event nominals". At the same time, the term "verbal gerunds" used in my thesis is often referred to as only "gerunds". (See Cornilescu (2003), Fanego (2006), Malouf (1996), Lyne (2006), Huddleston (2002) and others.)

[21] Because of the fact that there are no codes and exact rules for quoting COCA, I had to make my own system. Following the abbreviation of *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA), I mention the title, i.e. where the query comes from (this part is marked by quotes). If it is a book or fiction, I close the quotation only by the year of its origin. In case of newspapers, journals, radio programmes and transcriptions of speeches, I also insert the source in front of the year. Both the source and the year are in brackets.

4.1.1 POSTMODIFICATION

Postmodification is one of the most clear and therefore reliable ways of distinguishing various –*ing* forms. Sometimes, it is just the postmodification that can help in deciding about the type of gerundial form. When writing about result nominals and complex event nominals, I was considering their nominal character and as criteria I chose these ways of postmodification: WH-relative clause, *of*-phrase (emphasis on the possibility of direct object reading), purpose clause, object (with emphasis on the absence of a preposition).

4.1.1.1   OBJECT

In this subsection, the attention will be paid to complex event nominals because they can, in contrast to result nominals, express their object. Complex event nominals are postmodified by an *of*-phrase, which is usually explained as a direct-object like argument because of their verbal interpretation. Indirect object is expressed by means of prepositions.

4.1.1.1.1 DIRECT OBJECT (OF-PHRASE)

Of-phrase is a very old means to express the genitive case in English. Post-nominal *of*-genitive is a strong signal of the nominal constructions and that's why we come across the postmodification with an *of*-phrase quite often with the result nominals ((4.1) and complex event nominals ((4.2).

(4.1)   *David's the artist who did the emblematic **painting** of Napoleon at the Saint-Bernard Pass' and The Death of Marat.'*

(COCA "BOB DYLAN'S AMERICA" (Rolling Stone) (2009))

(4.2)   *In the period between the **writing** of The German Ideology and Capital, Marx made a living in great part by contributing articles to a radical American newspaper, The New York Daily Tribune .*

(BNC A6S 509)

In the example (4.1) the *of*-phrase has the function of a modifier. But when we have a look at the example (4.2), we rather consider it to be a Patient. So the reading of an *of*-phrase is therefore different in both cases. What is responsible for this discrepancy is a different interpretation of result nominals and complex event nominals. While the former has a clearly nominal interpretation, the latter has a verbal one. Because verbs must

express their semantic roles, the more verbal is a specific expression, the more likely will its complementation express an equivalent of a semantic role. In (4.2), it is the role of Patient, equivalent to the Patient in a verbal structure "to write *The German Ideology* and *Capital*".

4.1.1.1.2 INDIRECT OBJECT

The English indirect object is defined according to its position in a sentence, which is usually emphasized by a preposition.

(4.3)   *The physical emphasis, the independence, the **doing** of battle <u>with other men</u> all underscore the male identity and dominance.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Paternity ward" (<i>Sports Illustrated</i>) (1998)</div>

(4.4)   *They may also wish to facilitate the restructuring and **adapting** of industry <u>to changing conditions and markets</u>.*

<div align="right">(BNC HXN 405)</div>

In example (4.3) the NP "with other men" represents the indirect object of a complex event nominal, in case of example (4.4) it is the NP "to changing conditions and markets".

The prepositions do not help us a lot because those prepositions immediately following nouns are usually similar to those used for introducing indirect objects in case of verbs. Prepositions immediately preceding indirect objects do not help us when we compare the amount of verbal and nominal properties of complex event nominals.

4.1.1.2   WH RELATIVE CLAUSE

One of the characteristic postmodifiers of a nominal element in the clause is a relative clause. Relative clause has the function of the attribute, which is a typical modifier of the category of Noun universally and in English as well. The following examples show that both result nominals and complex event nominals are commonly postmodified by relative clauses:

(4.5)   *It is a **painting** <u>which</u> requires the eye to interpret objects, each of which is discrete, distinct, with its own meaning.*

<div align="right">(BNC FAE 285)</div>

*(4.6)   This was the very first **painting** <u>that</u> Artemesia completed at the age of 17.*

<div align="right">(BNC HSL 917)</div>

*(4.7)   Once he sent her a fine pseudo-Fragonard **painting** <u>which</u> he'd found in the back of a French junk store.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Downsized" (*Antioch Review*) (1997))</div>

I take these examples as a strong support for the claim about the nominal characteristics of those two *–ing* forms.

4.1.1.3   PURPOSE CLAUSE

Generally said, a purpose clause tries to explain the purpose of an <u>*action*</u> mentioned in the main clause, so it can postmodify only those elements that are able to express the action. That is why complex event nominals, with their verbal interpretation, are able to bear a postmodification by a purpose clause, while result nominals, having purely nominal character, cannot be postmodified by this type of clause.

*(4.8)   The EPA pays for nearly any activity remotely connected to program management, including the **writing** of self-evaluations <u>to</u> justify bonuses.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Administrative Costs Drain "Superfund" (*Washington Post*) (1991)</div>

I found no relevant example in BNC.

Our analysis shows that purpose clause is another reliable way to distinguish between result nominals and complex event nominals. It is one of the important arguments in favour of the verbal character, or at least interpretation, of complex event nominals.

4.1.1.4   SUMMARY

The postmodification of complex event nominals is a crucial point for distinguishing them especially from verbal gerunds. At the same time, postmodification proves that complex event nominals have gained some verbal properties and cannot be considered as simply noun-like. The most important aspect of their postmodification is the existence of the *of*-phrase, the role of which is unique for complex event nominals. While in case of result nominals, an *of*-phrase has only the function of a modifier, complex event nominals use it in the role of a Patient. Verbal gerunds cannot be postmodified by an *of*-phrase at all. Being postmodified by a Patient is a

typical feature of verbs, so an *of*-phrase is a proof of verbal characteristics of complex event nominals. In addition, the postmodification by a purpose clause supports this assumption. However, the postmodification of complex event nominals is not just verb-like. The postmodifying WH relative clause proves that the nominal properties of complex event nominals are kept in this part of the structure as well.

4.1.2 PREMODIFICATION

When we have a look at typical premodifiers for nouns, we can constitute several categories which safely distinguish nouns from other parts of speech. These are especially: articles, numerals, demonstratives, adjectives, and possessives.

4.1.2.1 ARTICLES

4.1.2.1.1 INDEFINITE ARTICLE

Countable nouns in singular must be premodified by an indefinite article. While result nominals follow this pattern (see (4.9)), complex event nominals do not accept this type of modification[22]. Both BNC and COCA support this general assumption.

(4.9)   *I was given a **cutting** a few years ago by my sister and have subsequently passed on cuttings but have never known the proper name of it or much about it.*

(BNC A0G 2248)

The absence of usage of an indefinite article refers to the fact that complex event nominals do not behave like any other typically uncountable nouns. Among other things, it is their uncountability that differs complex event nominals from result nominals. At the same time, it is their uncountability that complex event nominals have in common with verbal gerunds.

4.1.2.1.2 DEFINITE ARTICLE

This type of determiner can premodify both countable and uncountable nouns in either singular or plural form. Since result nominals

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[22] For a detailed analysis (including semantics) of the distinction between result and complex event nominals see Grimshaw (1991).

have most nominal properties of all -ing forms, they also share this type of premodification with nouns:

*(4.10) This is from one of the letters written by Shelley in Italy, which goes on to describe <u>the</u> **painting** of St Cecilia by Raphael...*

(BNC A04 499)

The same pays for what I call 'complex event nominals':

*(4.11) She had witnessed <u>the</u> **killing** of the birds.*

(Huddleston 2002:83)

*(4.12) The courtroom settled for <u>the</u> **reading** of the verdict.*

(COCA "Cause for Alarm; Elicia Hughes goes through two trials on charges she shot her husband" (NBC) (2008))

*(4.13) <u>The</u> **extending** of the charges will only encourage cyclists to take their bikes by other means, thus losing revenue for the railways.*

(BNC HPP 1693_1)

For Grimshaw (1991), the possibility to premodify both result nominals and complex event nominals with a definite article is a proof of their nominal character in contrast to verbal gerunds and participles which lack this typically nominal property.

4.1.2.2   CARDINAL NUMERALS

As mentioned in section 4.1.2.1, the *–ing* result nominals behave like other nouns and even share with them the category of countability. That is there is no problem premodifying them with cardinal numerals, as can be shown on the samples from both BNC and COCA:

*(4.14) I'll take these <u>two</u> **paintings** home.*

(BNC BNG 415)

*(4.15) .... Then the hunting picture over the fireplace was gone, and <u>two</u> **paintings** of trees took its place.*

(COCA "Only the dog knew" (*Highlights for Children*) (2006))

omplex event nominals do not have the property of countability, which limits them in being premodified by a cardinal numeral. In the sphere of premodification, cardinal numerals have a lot in common with indefinite articles (see 4.1.2.1.1)

4.1.2.3   PRONOUNS

Pronouns accompany the *–ing* forms very often. For the topic of my thesis, it is important that in case of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds, particular forms of personal and possessive pronouns preceding the *–ing form*, often carry the semantic role of Agent of the "activity" contained in the *–ing* expression.

4.1.2.3.1 *PERSONAL PRONOUNS*

It is not usual at all for both result nominals and complex event nominals to be immediately preceded by nominative case personal pronouns. BNC provides us with only one example of this sort:

*(4.16) Shortly after eleven she heard the doorbell ring, then <u>he</u> **groaning** of the lift and a soft clatter as the grille door closed.*

(BNC CJF 1463)

However, this example is a product of imaginative fiction and we may consider it more to be a game with language than grammatically acceptable representative of a complex event nominal. It could simply be a misspelling, i.e. instead of "he" there could be "the", which even seems to be a more acceptable explanation.

There are no positive examples of the result nominals nor complex event nominals premodified by objective case pronouns in both BNC and COCA. It can be derived from their nominal character since it is not a typical feature of nouns to be premodified by objective case pronouns.

4.1.2.3.2 *POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS*

Possessive pronouns are on the other hand quite frequent premodifiers of result nominals and complex event nominals. But there is one important difference. Possessive pronouns preceding the result nominals usually express possession, while possessive pronouns premodifying complex event nominals are their Agents, as demonstrated on these samples from corpora:

*(4.17) From the very first, he painted professionally for a living and achieved fame primarily for <u>his</u> **paintings** of Nelsonian and Roman events.*

(BNC BM9 642)

*(4.18) Christian conservatives liked <u>his</u> **championing** of religious values in the public square but voted overwhelmingly for the Bush-Cheney ticket anyway.*

Example (4.17) shows a result nominal and semantically expresses that the "paintings of Nelsonian and Roman events" either belong to "him" or that "he" is their author, i.e. Agent. In the example (4.18) the word "his" functions as the Agent of the action expressed by an –*ing* form, i.e. it was "he" who was championing religious values, nobody else.

The role of the possessive pronoun premodifying the complex event nominal is unique, i.e. it can be explained just in this way. In case of nouns, the situation is more complicated and ambiguous (see 4.3.1). The uniqueness of the possessive pronoun in the role of the Agent is what complex event nominals have in common with verbal gerunds. It supports the idea that complex event nominals have been trying to establish their own identity within the language system and not to share all the nominal characteristics.

4.1.2.3.3 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

There is no problem with premodifying the result nominals with any kind of demonstrative pronoun, even in plural form, because they behave like other countable nouns:

*(4.19) I have heard that he was saddened by <u>these</u> **writings** of Fernanda Eberstadt's, in which his own writings are faulted.*

As complex event nominals are basically very similar to uncountable nouns, they do not create plural forms, and as a result, we would expect that they are not premodified by plural forms of demonstrative pronouns. Nevertheless, they can be without any doubt premodified by a singular demonstrative pronoun, as the following examples shows:

*(4.20) It's only the beginning, <u>this</u> **arranging** of soy sauce, it's only a start.*

*(4.21) Now we have to be more specific about <u>this</u> **forming** of ego out of the tension of oneness and separateness.*

Premodification by demonstrative pronouns is a typically nominal property. The examples above signal that complex event nominals have a lot

in common with nouns and support the claim about their nominal character.

4.1.2.4 POSSESSIVE CASE ('s)

Thanks to their being nominal in the structure, we may assume that there should be no problem with premodifying the result nominals and complex event nominals with a noun in the possessive case. The possessive case is usually a matter of animate nouns (see (4.22) and (4.23) below) but both corpora show that there are even examples of inanimate nouns (see (4.25) - (4.27) below) in possessive case premodifying the complex event nominals:

*(4.22) The reason for <u>Dizzy's</u> **locking** of the door behind them became apparent within a minute, when Alina heard a hesitant tap on the other side followed by a young woman's voice calling Dizzy's name.*

(BNC: FYY 1695)

*(4.23) <u>Langella's</u> **playing** of it is quietly phenomenal.*

(COCA "Frost/Nixon" (Rolling Stone) (2008)

*(4.24) It was like <u>Brueghel's</u> **painting** of the fall of Icarus, about which Auden wrote his great poem about suffering and the old masters.*

(BNC: CAJ 570)

*(4.25) I was chronically frustrated by the <u>city's</u> **killing** of time: all those coffees and slow pints, all that hanging about for other people.*

(BNC: A7D 791)

*(4.26) An Olympic parklike complex - prominently positioned on the Downtown connector - would stand for eons as an imposing monument to the <u>city's</u> **hosting** of the Games and would etch the name of its developer into the city's history.*

(COCA "Some imagine Olympic park on Northside; Atlantic Steel site is suggested as alternative stadium location" (Atlanta Journal Constitution) (1991)

*(4.27) His appointment is part of the <u>bank's</u> **refocussing** of its middle-market business banking activities.*

(BNC: K4S 1522)

Nouns in possessive case premodifying the result nominal can express either possession or the Agent (see for example (4.24), while for complex event nominals, possessive case is one of the ways to express their Agent, which

needn't be animate[23]. The possible possessive explanation of the Agent is the only difference between complex event nominals and result nominals. At the same time, the unique role of their possessive case Agent makes them very similar to verbal gerunds.

4.1.2.5   ADJECTIVES

Adjectives are prototypical premodifiers of nouns so it would seem logical that they could premodify both result nominals and complex event nominals thanks to their nominal properties. It is only partly true because both categories, i.e. result nominals and complex event nominals, demand different types of adjectives. In this respect, result nominals seem to be more limited compared to complex event nominals.

Result nominals can be premodified for example by adjectives describing quality or origin:

*(4.28) Chatterton is as much as anything the <u>famous</u> **painting** of his death in a Holborn attic done in the 1850s by Henry Wallis — with the poet lying across the bed in a kind of frozen entrechat.*

(BNC: A05 535)

*(4.29) There is no more joy in you, she said to the <u>Cornwall-born</u> **painting** of Hosanna.*

(BNC: CA3 2933)

*(4.30) When I first began working at Sotheby's we would get things like a small <u>German</u> **painting** of Heidelberg .*

(COCA "Art ATTACK" (*ABA Journal*) (2006)

However, they do not co-occur with adjectives expressing duration (e.g. long-term, temporary) or frequency (e.g. repeated, periodical). It is connected with their nature and semantics since they describe results of some activity. It is natural that such results cannot be described in terms of duration or frequency.

Complex event nominals, being verbal in interpretation, can be premodified by a larger scale of adjectives, including those describing frequency or duration:

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[23] See discussion about pronouns in section 4.1.2.3.2.

*(4.31) The reason for this <u>jealous</u> **safeguarding** of a natural heritage is apparent to, and surely supported by, all who know the area.*

<div align="right">(BNC CJH 450)</div>

*(4.32) The almost <u>constant</u> **equating** of the Mercenaries to various animals functions as an important aspect of foreshadowing in the novel.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Effacement of the author and the function of sadism in Flaubert's Salammbo" (*Symposium*) (1992))</div>

*(4.33) With regard to the national economy in such a state of affairs, the principal slogan was not concern for its lasting restoration…but the <u>immediate</u> **securing** of produce, even at the cost of undermining the productive forces.*

<div align="right">(BNC BMA 830)</div>

The premodification by adjectives is a strong support for the claim in favour of nominal characteristics of complex event nominals since adjectives are generally known as premodifiers of nouns.

4.1.2.6   NEGATION

Like all nouns, result nominals as well as complex event nominals do not accept clausal negation by the particle *not*.

*(4.34) * his <u>not</u> **reading** of the book*

<div align="right">(Cornilescu 2003)</div>

The only way to make a result nominal or complex event nominal negative is to use a negative determiner or pronoun[24].

*(4.35) There is <u>no</u> **apportioning** of blame.*

<div align="right">(BNC K2N 538)</div>

*(4.36) If Mr. Perot was not around, there would be <u>no</u> **discussing** of the issues.*

<div align="right">(COCA: "Perot: The Second Coming" (*ABC_Nightline*) (1992))</div>

*(4.37) I almost expected <u>nobody´s</u> **showing up** for the festival.*

<div align="right">(Cornilescu 2003)</div>

To make the clauses (4.35) - (4.37) negative, we can also use clausal negation related to the predicate in the finite clause. But then, it is not a matter of *–ing* non-finite clauses at all.

The sphere of negation again illustrates the nominal character of complex event and result nominals. However, it is strange that they do not accept the negative particle *not* as they premodifier because despite its being

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[24] see Cornilescu (2003).

a typical premodifier of verbs, it is not an excluded modifier of nouns as well (see footnote 34).

4.1.2.7   SUMMARY

The premodification of complex event nominals is not as distinctive as their postmodification. It demonstrates prevailingly their nominal character. What I would like to point out is the unique role of a possessive pronoun or a noun in possessive case as the Agent of a complex event nominal. This is a departure from the diverse semantic roles of possessive nouns or pronouns premodifying nouns.

4.2 VERBAL GERUNDS

It is much less difficult to distinguish the next two gerundial structures, i.e. verbal gerunds and participles. The function and position of participles usually help us a lot when we want to decide. Participles function as adverbials and are usually objects of prepositions[25], if the preposition in the clause is expressed. Verbal gerunds can also function as objects of prepositions[26] but moreover they can be in the function of both subject and object. They differ from participles especially in some aspects of their premodification[27]. At the same time we may compare them with complex event nominals because there are some properties they have in common, while some of their properties distinguish them from each other.

Both verbal gerunds and participles tend to take as many verbal properties as possible. They follow the historical development of all gerundial constructions which were originally nouns but gradually started gaining more and more verbal properties[28].

I would like to explore the property of verbal gerunds in the same categories of premodifiers and postmodifiers as in the case of complex event nominals. I will again start with postmodification because what follows the

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[25] It is usually a temporal preposition like "after", "before" etc.
[26] See the discussion in chapter 5.3.
[27] There may be examples where to distinguish gerund and participle is not uncontroversial, but I am going to avoid these. In this chapter, I am trying to find the regular format above all and not to analyze the whole range of possible usage.
[28] See chapter 3.

verbal gerund seems to me more important for the final characteristics of verbal gerunds that what precedes. Furthermore, the presence or absence of an of-phrase is for me the main distinctive point between complex event nominals and verbal gerunds.

4.2.1 POSTMODIFICATION

The typical postmodifiers of gerunds are the same as those for verbs because in the part immediately following the *ing*-form, the verbal gerund has purely verbal character and there is no possibility for any nominal property there.

4.2.1.1 OBJECT

Object is a typical complementation of the verbal category and therefore I can expect its presence with verbal gerunds, too. Verbal gerunds developed the ability to be postmodified by an accusative object without any preposition, which is the main characteristics justifying their nature.

4.2.1.1.1 DIRECT OBJECT

As mentioned in the introduction to this section (4.2.1.1), verbal gerunds can even be postmodified by a direct object in accusative without a preposition.

*(4.38) The county council has since planted trees on that piece of land which has stopped gipsies from camping there but led to them **using** <u>the verge</u> instead.*

(BNC E9P 468)

*(4.39) Like his mother, they discouraged visitors and resisted his **leaving** <u>the house</u> unaccompanied.*

(COCA "The man who can scare Stephen King" (*American Heritage*) (1995))

The property of being postmodified by a direct object without preposition is a very crucial point in differing verbal gerunds from complex event nominals since the latter cannot afford this type of postmodification[29]. But at the same time, verbal gerunds cannot be postmodified by an *of*-phrase, a typical postmodifier of complex event nominals. The reason for this fact inheres in the completely verbal character of the part immediately following the *–ing* form in case of verbal gerunds.

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[29] Complex event nominals express their object by means of an *of*-phrase.

4.2.1.1.2 INDIRECT OBJECT

Indirect object also makes a difference between complex event nominals and verbal gerunds Verbal gerunds can be followed by an indirect object without preposition while complex event nominals lack this ability.

*(4.40) That was the point of his **telling** me <u>the story</u>.*

<div align="right">(COCA "The river Jericho" (<i>African American Review</i>) (1994))</div>

(4.41) ... it's not bad but you know I'd just lost ten pounds to the taxi driver to him giving me the wrong change so I was feeling in a very frugal mood ...

<div align="right">(BNC KBF 2532)</div>

Indirect object as well as its direct counterpart both strongly support the assertion about the verbal character of verbal gerunds.

4.2.1.2   OF-PHRASE

Of-phrase is a typical postmodifier of nouns but it cannot co-occur with a verbal gerund as its postmodifier. The verbal gerund cannot be immediately followed by an *of*-phrase, instead we often find there a direct object. I did not find any example of an *of*-phrase postmodifying a verbal gerund in both BNC and COCA, which shows that the part following the *–ing* in case of verbal gerunds is basically verbal.

4.2.1.3   POSTMODIFYING ADVERBS / ADVERBIALS

There is no problem for verbal gerunds to be postmodified by adverbs. Especially long adverbs as well as periphrastic forms of adverbs are their typical postmodifiers.

*(4.42) Governments are coming to understand the importance of **privatising** <u>quickly</u>.*

<div align="right">(BNC ABD 1921)</div>

*(4.43) A group of children were using some workcards designed by the teacher to give them experience of **working** <u>independently</u> and helping one another over difficulties.*

<div align="right">(BNC F9T 184)</div>

*(4.44) Adolescents interacting with significant others holding positive attitudes about and engaging in substance use are at greater risk for perceiving and **acting** <u>in a similar way</u>.*

<div align="right">(COCA "PSYCHOSOCIAL CORRELATES OF SUBSTANCE USE BEHAVIORS AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH" (<i>Adolescence</i>) (2004))</div>

The postmodifying adverbs are usually longer than the premodifying ones (cf. 4.2.2.4). What is also important to note is the fact that even noun phrases can be postmodified by adverbials (e.g. Our <u>journey</u> <u>to Prague</u> was very pleasant") although we refer to them as attributes. Consequently, we cannot consider verbal gerunds unconditionally verbal-like from this point of view although their tendency to follow verbal properties on the part following the –*ing* form is very strong.

4.2.1.4   WH RELATIVE CLAUSE

Relative clauses have the same function as attributes, i.e. they are typical modifiers of nouns. Generally speaking, WH-structures can postmodify verbal gerunds but they are not relative clauses then. They are nominal content clauses used in the function of objects, as shows the following example:

*(4.45) Psychologists have never had much success at **defining** <u>which</u> personality characteristics are inherited in humans and which are not.*

<div align="right">(BNC ADF 1145)</div>

Ing-form followed by the relative pronoun "which" could also be the so called quasi relative clause:

*(4.46) Lydia greeted him without **smiling**, <u>which</u> is a chilling expedient, usually employed only after a row has taken place.*

<div align="right">(BNC G0X 1943)</div>

WH relative clauses are the next important claim in favour of the verbal character of verbal gerunds. Having the same function as attributes, WH relative clauses postmodify only nominal structures. The absence of samples of WH relative clauses for verbal gerunds in both BNC and COCA signals their predominantly verbal character.

4.2.1.5   PURPOSE CLAUSE

As stated in 4.1.1.3, purpose clauses try to explain the purpose of an action mentioned in the main clause. As action is usually expressed by verb, it should work in the same way with verbal gerunds. Both BNC and COCA demonstrate this assumption:

*(4.47) We do have an asset in, and I think it is worth us **fighting** <u>to</u> preserve that hospital, and not to watch it go into decline.*

<div align="right">(BNC H4A 64)</div>

*(4.48) I never knew much about Coleman except him **coming** <u>to</u> work at the studio every day.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Electronic memories of African-American weddings and other events in Memphis"
(NPR_ATC) (1999))</div>

The existence of a postmodifying element in the form of a purpose clause is another important argument for the verbal characteristics of verbal gerunds. This is one of the properties that complex event nominals and verbal gerunds have in common (see 4.1.1.3).

4.2.1.6   SUMMARY

As stated above, I chose postmodification as the main argument in discussion about the characteristics of verbal gerunds and their difference from complex event nominals. My research shows that verbal gerunds, especially the part immediately following the *–ing* form, are very likely to accept the characteristic properties of verbs. First of all, they can be postmodified by direct objects without prepositions, which is a typically verbal property. Next, it is their ability to be postmodified by a purpose clause which signals their verbal character. Moreover, the lack of both an *of-*phrase and WH relative clauses in the function of postmodifying elements of verbal gerunds implies the absence of nominal properties. The category of postmodifying adverbs and adverbials is quite uncertain to prove verbal properties of verbal gerunds because postmodifying adverbials also occur as postmodifiers of nouns, although not so frequently as in case of verbs.

4.2.2 PREMODIFICATION

It is a well-known fact that a phrase headed by a verbal gerund often looks like a nominal projection with respect to its premodification, but it looks verbal, when the premodifcation is taken into account. In other words, the nominal properties of verbal gerunds are found above all in the field of premodifiers (see sections 4.2.2.1-4.2.2.6). On the other hand, we cannot

expect any nominal properties to be found in the field of postmodifiers (see sections 4.2.1.1-4.2.1.3).

4.2.2.1   ARTICLES

Articles are typical premodifiers of nouns so we are not surprised that some of them accompany result nominals and partly complex event nominals as well[30]. Because of some nominal properties kept at the beginning of verbal gerunds. I will search for the occurrence of articles with gerunds and give the results of my findings in the following subsection.

4.2.2.1.1 INDEFINITE ARTICLE

Indefinite article is a very "sensitive" type of determiner which can premodify only countable nouns in singular. I illustrated in the section 4.1.2.1.1 above that complex event nominals do not appear with an indefinite article. It would be very surprising to find out that verbal gerunds are premodified by the indefinite article because of their prevailingly verbal character. Despite this assumption, we can find such examples in both BNC and COCA. Examples (4.49) and (4.50) below are products of momentary speech acts, samples (4.51) and (4.52) come from the magazine and a short story respectively.

*(4.49) … you see, the real, four pounds forty for a̲ You **getting** through that in two days?*

(BNC HT4 91)

*(4.50) … or are you still having a̲ me **doing** that …*

(BNC KD1 5156)

*(4.51) Stepping forward to get a firmer grip, I trod on the rake whose handle leapt up, giving me a nasty crack on the brow and a̲ **making** me stagger, knocking a bottle of systemic insecticide on to the floor, where it shattered and spread a nauseating puddle at my feet.*

(BNC ACY 1396)

*(4.52) And then it's not a̲ **forgetting**; she begins to suspect that everyone is right and she is wrong, that this is Gabe after all.*

(COCA "Miracle" (*New Yorker*) (2004)

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[30] See sections 4.1.2.1.1 and 4.1.2.1.2.

However, these examples are far from being considered as generally accepted and frequent. I use them mainly to illustrate a deviation from the norm which does not allow the indefinite article to premodify verbal gerunds.

The lack of indefinite article (the property which the verbal gerund shares with the complex event nominal) is a clear signal of the shift of meaning. While nouns prototypically denote "objects" of the real world, which are countable, the abstract meaning forces the uncountable form. Since indefinite article is a signal of countability, it cannot appear with a verbal gerund. On the other hand, the lack of countability does not yet signal any clear verbal characteristics, since many nouns are abstract and/or uncountable too. It demonstrates "the loss" of prototypical nominal characteristics only.

To argue for a verbal characteristics of the (verbal) gerund, one must also investigate other properties of the gerundial structure and this I am going to do in the following sections.

4.2.2.1.2 DEFINITE ARTICLE

Definite article has a much more general usage than the indefinite one but we must be careful when considering verbal gerunds premodified by this kind of determiner because of their verbal properties and because of the historical development. We can find examples of its usage within both corpora:

(4.53) *BRADFORD man John Gorst, 48, of Queensbury Square, Queensbury, Bradford, appeared before Northallerton magistrates yesterday charged with* <u>*the*</u> **causing** *death by reckless driving.*

(BNC K55 7123)

(4.54) *But I think there was a greater immorality, which is* <u>*the*</u> **asking** *him of that question.*

(COCA "Interview with Lucianne Goldberg and Michael Moore" (*Fox_Drudge*) (1999))

The definite article premodifying the verbal gerunds is not standard and has not been officially accepted since the beginning of the twentieth century. However, its occurrence within the corpora shows that the

phenomenon of the so called hybrid gerunds[31] is still alive. The official disapproval of the definite article as a premodifier for verbal gerunds demonstrates that verbal gerunds are generally seen as more verb-like.

4.2.2.2   CARDINAL NUMERALS

Numerals, for the purpose of my thesis cardinal ones, have a lot in common with indefinite articles because both categories are closely related to countability, more concretely to countable nouns. It is very unlikely that verbal gerunds could be premodified by numerals as they do not possess any countable quality (cf. 4.2.2.1.1). Both BNC and COCA show no examples of this kind, not even a single unusual one.

4.2.2.3   PRONOUNS

The category of pronouns is in a greater degree discussed in subsection 4.3 because pronouns (concretely personal and possessive ones) have a role of the Agent of a gerundial construction. Here I am going to demonstrate only the availability of the form with no detailed discussion.

4.2.2.3.1 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The typical pattern of premodification of verbal gerunds seems to be by means of the objective case pronouns:

(4.55) *It was here that Tony gave me my ring and told me that my funghi marinati was the best he'd ever had in spite of <u>him</u> **getting** an earful of it.*

(BNC ACK 2624)

(4.56) *I'll always remember that. <u>Me</u> **laughing** and <u>him</u> **crying**, with his big grin.*

(COCA "Marsbound: part II of III" (*Analog Science Fiction & Fact*) (2008)

However, we also come across examples when verbal gerunds are premodified by subjective case pronouns, as follows:

(4.57) *<u>I</u> **producing** fixed capital, there would be a precipitate decline in those sectors.*

(BNC BMA 428)

(4.58) *With Betty against a wall and <u>I</u> **pressing** her lips with mine, she requested me to put my tongue into her mouth 'the French way' she said.*

(BNC BN3 2300)

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[31] See section 3.4.2 above which concerns the historical development of what we call hybrid gerunds.

*(4.59) So for that reason I do not believe that I **feeling** strongly as I do should [h]im impose my views on others.*

<div align="right">(BNC JNB 655)</div>

*(4.60) I'm trying to keep myself warm da da da da da, by I **singing** warm songs!*

<div align="right">(BNC KDB 400)</div>

*(4.61) It just took I **being** with people who were natural and normal about it for me to realize that the feelings I had been having were valid ones.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Candace Gingrich" (*Ms.*) (1996)</div>

*(4.62) And Harriet found it necessary to justify <u>she</u> **being** here and <u>they</u> **being** there.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Oppression, Race, and Humanism" (*Humanist*) (1992))</div>

These examples are much more frequent in BrE than in AmE. In most cases, we find 1st person singular used in those clauses. This is not a generally acclaimed option for constructions of this type. As such innovative and ungrammatical constructions are usually found in spoken language, we would expect them to be a product of a slip of tongue occurring in a spoken language only. Surprisingly, the above mentioned examples are not just the matter of spoken language, some of them are parts of written texts, with (4.62) even being the product of presumably academic style[32].

4.2.2.3.2 POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

As discussed in the chapter 3, the possessive pronouns are the historically older form of the two grammatically accepted options for expressing the Agent of verbal gerunds.

*(4.63) The Chronicle describes <u>his</u> **besieging** 'the city of Andred' in 490 and slaughtering all the defenders.*

<div align="right">(BNC CB6 12)</div>

*(4.64) Yes, and I can understand <u>his</u> **being** unhappy.*

<div align="right">(COCA "CNN_King" (*CNN*) (1991))</div>

This form is considered quite formal nowadays and as a result, it is less used in everyday speech[33].

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[32] Given the frequency of I/me pronoun appearing in these examples, they can also be the result of "overcorrection". In England, primary school pupils are still taught that the form of "me" is to be avoided in certain context (e.g. "<u>Mary and me/I</u> arrived", or "It is <u>me/I</u>") and this corrections may lead some to put automatically the form of "I" also in the context where such overcorrection is not justified. The amount of data, however, do not allow me to make any more principal conclusions.

[33] See subsection 4.3.

4.2.2.3.3 DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

Demonstrative pronouns are typical premodifiers for nouns. Only their plural forms may cause problems, especially in case of uncountable nouns. Verbal gerunds are quite sensitive as to their premodification by typically nominal modifiers. However, they feel free to be premodified by singular demonstrative pronouns like *this* and *that.*

*(4.65) Mammals keep track of <u>this</u> **using** the pineal gland which also regulates their bodies' circadian rhythm.*

<div align="right">(BNC FEV 1751)</div>

*(4.66) The official called <u>this</u> **swallowing** feat " a record. "*

<div align="right">(COCA "Cocaine Dollars Flow Via Unique Network" (*Washington Post*) (1993))</div>

*(4.67) Apparently, the institute is considering building a pilot plant, but little is known about its proposals, and clearly we are a long way from <u>that</u> **becoming** a viable alternative to present-day technology.*

<div align="right">(BNC HHX 11293)</div>

*(4.68) And we should never, ever venture outside <u>that</u> **being** black.*

<div align="right">(COCA "2 minority educators shun race-based bias" (*Houston Chronicle*) (1995))</div>

Using plural forms of demonstrative pronouns to premodify verbal gerunds is considered grammatically incorrect. Of course, there are marginal examples of this usage but they are more the matter of slang than any accepted grammatical form:

*(4.69) I'm not doing <u>these</u> **cutting** this into big chunks I'd rather have lots of bits in it.*

<div align="right">(BNC KD8 157)</div>

The category of demonstrative pronouns shows the limitation in terms of nominal categories premodifying the verbal gerunds. On the other hand, the usage of demonstrative pronouns themselves signals that verbal gerunds are capable of accepting some amount of nominal properties.

4.2.2.4   PREMODIFYING ADVERBS

Adverbs are both premodifiers and postmodifiers typical for verbs. Because of prevailingly verbal character of verbal gerunds, they are often used as their modifiers as well.

(4.70) Coaching can be a great help — but it can also get in the way, for <u>slavishly</u> **following** *a pedantic teacher can produce very strange results, with the candidate ending up trying to sound like someone he or she isn't.*

<div align="right">(BNC A06 333)</div>

(4.71) Yet its quasi-mystical elements prevent it from <u>fully</u> **using** *its potential.*

<div align="right">(BNC A1A 1074)</div>

(4.72) I'm thankful that I had a mother, and I'm thankful she called my father to come and get me instead of <u>just</u> **leaving** *me out there for anybody to have.*

<div align="right">(COCA "With Father in His Corner, a Son Rolls With the Punches" (*New York Times*) (2004))</div>

The adverbs used as premodifiers of verbal gerunds are usually short, one-word adverbs of manner or time. Longer or periphrastic adverbs usually occur in the function of postmodifiers.

The category of premodifying adverbs is not a very reliable source for making conclusions about either nominal or verbal properties of verbal gerunds. The grammar books, e.g. Huddleston (2002) and Quirk (1985) mention the case of adverbs premodifying NPs:

(4.73) She read almost the whole book in one day.

<div align="right">(Huddleston 2002:562)</div>

(4.74) We had quite a party.

<div align="right">(Quirk 1985:450)</div>

Because of this reason, we cannot claim that verbal gerunds have verbal properties because of their premodification by adverbs. The premodification by adverbs is not a clear verbal premodification.

4.2.2.5   NEGATION

Verbal gerunds have gained many verbal properties so they can be preceded by a negative particle *not* if they want to have a negative meaning[34].

(4.75) We have a policy of <u>not</u> **importing** *alien materials unless we have to, using stone, turf and gravels from the area.*

<div align="right">(BNC A65 2196)</div>

(4.76) She criticised the Government for <u>not</u> **introducing** *a decommissioning scheme or compensation.*

<div align="right">(BNC A2A 507)</div>

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[34] However, particle *not* is not very reliable means to prove the verbal properties of verbal gerunds, since they can premodify nouns as well (e.g. "<u>Not</u> George but his wife came to the party").

*(4.77) She'd have to talk to Rob about <u>not</u> **letting** any of the children run around unsupervised, even for a few minutes.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Silent Witness" (2008))</div>

But negative particle *not* is not the only way of negation of verbal gerunds. The other means of negation for them are the adverb "never" and negative pronouns like "no", "nobody[35]", "nothing" etc.

*(4.78) The fear of <u>never</u> **seeing** her again swamped his other feelings, even lust and shyness.*

<div align="right">(BNC CKB 1478)</div>

*(4.79) At that point, the thought of <u>never</u> **giving** birth was not a real concern.*

<div align="right">(COCA "COMING UP SHORT: THE PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF TURNER'S SYNDROME" (*Health & Social Work*) (1990))</div>

*(4.80) There can be <u>no</u> **denying** the effect of the Palestinian presence upon Lebanon.*

<div align="right">(BNC ANU 1471)</div>

*(4.81) The chap would have been sitting there motionless with <u>nobody</u> **drawing** him which is something of a waste of time.*

<div align="right">(BNC K4P 1328)</div>

*(4.82) I almost expected <u>nobody´s</u> **showing up** for the festival.*

<div align="right">(Cornilescu 2003)</div>

As mentioned in 4.1.2.6, the particle *not* is not just the matter of verbs, but also nouns. The situation is very similar to that of premodifying adverbs. Negative particle *not* is not a sufficient argument for verbal properties of verbal gerunds. Just the adverb "never" does not occur with nouns so it supports the claim about the verbal characteristics of verbal gerunds.

4.2.2.6   ASPECTUAL OR PASSIVE AUXILIARY

It is not only clausal negation, but also specifically verbal categories of aspect and voice that verbal gerund share with verbs and that differs them from verbal gerunds:

*(4.83) This is precisely what Hugh could provide, and we must examine both the contribution he could make, and the evidence for his **having** <u>made</u> it.*

<div align="right">(BNC CKR 491)</div>

*(4.84) The only problem I see is with my **having** <u>used</u> that unfortunate pseudonym again.*

<div align="right">(COCA "Harmony in Flesh and Black" (1995))</div>

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[35] Note even its possessive form in *(4.82)*.

(4.85) Albert builds up a strong case arguing that the function of the two old woman "
*is not such as to warrant their **being** <u>assigned</u> the title role. "*

<div align="right">(COCA "Titles in Dubliners" (Style) (1991))</div>

*(4.86) Apart from the confusion of squadrons, the implications of his **having** <u>been</u>*
<u>engaged</u> in this quite different operation were serious.

<div align="right">(BNC AMC 1770)</div>

Expressing aspect and mood is the property which belongs only to verbs. The ability of verbal gerunds to be premodified by aspectual and passive auxiliaries strongly suggests their verbal character.

4.2.2.7   SUMMARY

The premodifying elements of verbal gerunds show their mixed nominal and verbal properties. The only purely verbal characteristic is their premodification by aspect and passive auxiliaries. On the other hand, the premodification by demonstrative, which is possible for verbal gerunds, implies the nominal properties. The categories of negation and premodifying adverbs are ambiguous, because we cannot exclude their co-occurence with nouns. Finally, the usage of both definite and indefinite articles, i.e. typical nominal categories, is not grammatically approved, but there are examples of such constructions to be found in both BNC and COCA.

4.3 AGENT[36] OF COMPLEX EVENT NOMINALS AND VERBAL GERUNDS

The Agent of some construction is the "doer" of the action expressed or implied within this construction. Various parts of speech express their Agents in different ways[37]. There is only one way of expressing Agent of complex event nominals, and at least two ways in case of verbal gerunds. When we have a look into grammar books, we find out that not all authors deal with this topic properly. Some of them use both forms without commenting on them or distinguishing them, other authors mention this fact very briefly, and some of them discuss it very deeply as a crucial point.

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[36] The word Agent in this charter is used for what I called "subject" in chapter 3.
[37] For example nouns can have their Agents in the form of possessive NPs or pronouns. Verbs can express their Agents in the form of NPs, pronouns, semi-clauses or even clauses.

4.3.1 COMPLEX EVENT NOMINALS

In case of complex event nominals, there is only way to express the Agent of gerundial construction, which is using the possessive case. Given their categorical classification, objective case is not available for them.

*(4.87) The crowds who flocked to listen to <u>John's</u> **preaching** of repentance were baptised by him in the Jordan in penitent expectation of the age of fulfilment which he proclaimed.*

(BNC G3A 458)

*(4.88) Since subjects are instructed to read and understand the passage, the varying times which elapse between presentation of one part of a passage and the <u>subject's</u> **pressing** of the button give an indication of the amount of time needed to comprehend that part of the passage.*

(BNC GVA 570)

*(4.89) Christian conservatives liked <u>his</u> **championing** of religious values in the public square but voted overwhelmingly for the Bush-Cheney ticket anyway.*

(COCA "God ^08: Whose, and How Much, Will Voters Accept?" (*New York Times*) (2007))

It is quite important to distinguish complex event nominals and nouns, both preceded by a noun/pronoun in possessive case. For complex event nominals, the only semantic function of the possessive form is the Agent. When considering the role of possessive forms preceding nouns, we have to be aware of the fact, that in some cases the possessive form can occur in the role of either the Agent, or the Patient or the element expressing possession (e.g. "My picture is on the wall"). If an *of*-phrase is added to postmodify the noun, the role of possessive form can be either the Agent or the element to express possession (e.g. "My picture of Mary is on the wall"). This discrepancy of nouns does not affect complex event nominals which, together with verbal gerunds, employ the possessive form to express only their Agent (cf. 4.3.2.1).

Research within BNC and COCA showed a very interesting discrepancy between these corpora, as can be seen in

Table 2. When searching the BNC, I found no relevant examples of a complex event nominal with a possessive pronoun as its Agent, while COCA shows 67 solutions for this query. If the Agent is a singular noun in genitive, BNC shows 90 solutions and COCA 79 solutions. In case of a plural noun in genitive as an Agent of complex event nominal, BNC does not show any example, while COCA offers 7 solutions. On the base of these facts I may conclude that complex event nominals are much more frequent in contemporary AmE than in BrE.

4.3.2 VERBAL GERUNDS

Verbal gerunds express their Agents in at least two possible ways: by a noun or pronoun in either possessive case[38] or objective case[39] (in case of nouns we refer to it as common case). The choice of case depends on many factors, i.e. the un/animate character of the Agent, its distribution within a sentence, or the occasion on which it is used. In this section I would like to comment on some basic rules connected with Agents of verbal gerunds. The choice in relation to their distribution within a sentence will be discussed in chapter 5.

4.3.2.1   POSSESSIVE CASE

When the authors of grammar books take stand to the form of the Agent of verbal gerunds, they usually mention that the use of possessive forms[40] is especially the matter of formal language and thus it is quite rare in everyday speech[41]. Eastwood (1994) mentions that the Agent "*can be possessive, especially when it is a personal pronoun or a name*" and gives these examples:

*(4.90) Do you mind <u>me</u>/<u>my</u> **sitting** here?*

(Eastwood (1994):160)

*(4.91) I'm fed up with <u>Sarah</u>/<u>Sarah's</u> **laughing** at my accent.*

(Eastwood (1994):160)

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[38] Cornilescu (2003) calls this form "full gerund".
[39] Cornilescu (2003) calls this form "half gerund".
[40] Possessive forms in case of verbal gerunds are used to express only the semantic roles of Agents. (cf. 4.3.1)
[41] See Quirk (1985), Huddleston (2002), Eastwood (1994), Swan (1997), Alexander (1993), or Graver (1986).

Quirk (1985:1194) states that the possessive form is used mainly for personal pronouns while non-personal pronouns take this form very rarely. But Lyne (2006:42), having examined the BNC, notes that "*the possessive form is favoured in Academic Prose, but in other text categories, the objective form is preferred*", which is the case even for non-personal pronouns. She attributes the frequent occurrence of possessive pronouns in academic texts to the technical and non-personal character of this kind of texts. In her study, Lyne also quotes Hudson[42] (2003) who comes to the conclusion that "*in American English possessives are (apparently) much more normal*" (Lyne 2006:51) Alexander (1993:83) comes to the conclusion that although the accusative form is often used instead of the possessive one in everyday speech, "*not all native speakers approve of its use*", so according to him, it depends on the speaker which alternative he or she chooses.

Graver (1986:145) concludes that we use the possessive form especially with personal pronouns and in the written language and he ends his chapter concerning gerunds with these words: "*There are, however, occasions when the possessive seems to be preferred form in both written and spoken English, and students can become familiar with these only through practice*"

Cornilescu (2003) notes that there are more and more restrictions for the possessive form which she attributes to the strengthening of the accusative form, "*which appears to be the only possible gerund form for idiom chunks or formal subjects like it, and especially there*". The next reason according to Cornilescu (2003) can be seen in unability of certain categories like demonstrative pronouns or certain partitive constructions to have a possessive form.

I discussed the variety of the "subject" (Agent) of the *–ing* forms in the introductory chapter dealing with the historical development of the English gerund. I cited authors claiming that this development towards the accusative form is also connected with basic trends of historical development of verbal gerunds, namely with their tendency to gain more and more verbal

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[42] Hudson, Richard. "Gerunds without phrase structure." *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 21(2003) 579-615.

properties. Possessive pronoun is generally considered to be interlinked with nominals and that also may be the reason why possessive Agents are becoming less frequent in connection with verbal gerunds than their accusative counterparts.

For statistical comparison of possessive and objective case pronouns, see discussion at the end of section 4.3.2.2.

4.3.2.2   OBJECTIVE CASE

Objective case is a historically younger form of the Agent of verbal gerunds. There were many reasons for its rise, as can be seen in section 3.4.1. Despite its being a younger form, it is much more common nowadays than the possessive case Agent. The following is just a short list of standard manuals of English grammar demonstrating the agreed opinion: Swan (1997:195) states that the object form is preferable especially after a verb or preposition. Alexander (1993:83) mentions that the accusative form is used especially in everyday speech in contrast to the possessive one. Graver (1986:144) comes to the same conclusion as Alexander (1993) but he also adds that the object form "*is always preferred where the use of a possessive would entail an awkward (or, in spoken English, misleading) construction*" (Graver 1986:144). We can cite here at least an illustrative example:

*(4.92) I remember <u>him</u> and <u>his sister</u> **coming** to London.*

<div align="right">(Graver 1986:144)</div>

It would seem very strange if instead of "him" there would be possessive "his" and if "his sister's" would appear there instead of "his sister". Since both Agents have to be in the same case[43], it is better to decide for an objective case to avoid misunderstanding, or at least confusion.

According to Graver (1986:144), the accusative form also tends to be used with common, or even proper nouns:

*(4.93) I object to the <u>car</u>/ *<u>car's</u> **being** left here.*

<div align="right">(Graver 1986:144)</div>

However, we may come across examples where even a common, inanimate noun can be used in possessive case[44]:

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[43] See subsection 5.1.
[44] cf. (4.25) - (4.27)

*(4.94) Everyone's future depends on the whole <u>world</u>/<u>world's</u> **being** concerned about the ozone layer.*

(Alexander 1993:83)

Quirk concludes that the genitive option is very rare when "*the subject ... is not a pronoun and does not have personal reference*[45] *... [and] with a pronoun with nonpersonal reference*[46]".

*(4.95) Peter stopped the <u>vehicle</u>/<u>?vehicle's</u> **crashing** into the fence.*

(Quirk (1985):1194)

*(4.96) I look forward to <u>it</u>/<u>?its</u> **getting** warmer in spring.*

(Quirk (1985):1194)

Quirk (1985:1064) also briefly mentions lengthy NPs in the function of "subjects" of gerundial constructions, and he recommends avoiding their genitive case:

*(4.97) Do you remember <u>the students and teachers</u> **protesting** against the new rule?*

(Quirk (1985):1064)

To demonstrate the frequency of chosen possessive and objective case pronouns in BNC and COCA, I worked out the Table 3. I have chosen only the limited set of pronouns in my research because all of them, both their possessive and objective forms, are unique and cannot be misleading. It is one of the big problems when working with corpora as some pronouns (e.g. "her") have the same possessive and objective form, other pronouns (e.g. "you", "it") look like either nominative or accusative case pronoun. In case of verbal gerunds, it is impossible to distinguish them. However, the Table 3 shows discrepancy in frequency of especially possessive pronouns, even though we consider different "size" of the BNC and COCA. Possessive pronouns seem to be more frequent in AmE than in BrE. They also appear more often in written texts than in spoken texts. At the same time the Table 3 confirms the general assumption, i.e. that accusative pronouns are more frequent in spoken texts than in written texts. Generally speaking, pronouns as Agents of verbal gerunds are more accepted and used in AmE than in BrE.

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[45] See (4.95).
[46] See (4.96).

4.3.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I tried to precisely define the terms I am exploring, namely complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. I decided to use their premodification and postmodification as the main arguments. My third argument for their exact definition is their distribution in a sentence/clause, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

Complex event nominals are nominal in character and have many properties in common with uncountable nouns. However, their interpretation is more verbal than noun like. Like uncountable nouns, they can be premodified by a definite article, singular demonstrative pronoun, ordinal numeral, adjective, possessive pronoun, or a noun in possessive case. The only way of negating them is with the help of negative determiners or pronouns. At the same time, complex event nominals can be postmodified by a WH relative clause, purpose clause, or an *of*-phrase (which can have a direct object reading). Complex event nominals cannot be modified by adverbs or objects without preposition as these are purely verbal properties which do not go with the nominal character of verbal gerunds. Nominal in character, complex event nominals can neither express their aspect nor take passive forms. Their Agent can be expressed in the form of a possessive pronoun, which is surprisingly not to be found in the BNC, or a noun in the possessive case.

Verbal gerunds are structures of mixed nominal and verbal properties. From the beginning, the phrase has partly nominal character, while from the end, it has a purely verbal character. Thanks to the partly nominal character, verbal gerunds can be premodified by a singular demonstrative pronoun. Their verbal character allows the premodification by adverbs and aspectual or passive auxiliaries. Both definite and indefinite articles also appear as their premodifiers in corpora but this usage cannot be considered as grammatically approved. The typical postmodifiers of verbal gerunds are adverbs and objects (both direct and indirect ones) without preposition. We cannot premodify verbal gerunds by adjectives or cardinal numerals. The unaccepted postmodificators for gerunds are an *of*-phrase or a WH relative clause. The Agent of verbal gerunds can be expressed in two ways:

possessive pronouns or nouns in possessive case and accusative pronouns or nouns in common case. The latter nominal and pronominal forms are becoming more frequent nowadays, especially in spoken texts, while the former forms are considered more formal and appear more frequently in written texts. Pronouns are employed as Agents of verbal gerunds much more often in AmE than in BrE.

5 DISTRIBUTION IN A SENTENCE

When considering the properties of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds, it is necessary to pay attention to their distribution within a sentence as well. I would like to monitor three basic positions within the sentence, i.e. subject and object positions together with the position of an object of preposition, which Cornilescu considers to be perhaps the most characteristic gerund environment (Cornilescu 2003) What I will focus on in this chapter will be especially the form of Agents of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds in the above mentioned positions. At the same time, I would like to show the frequency of their occurrence in both BrE and AmE.

5.1 SUBJECT

5.1.1 COMPLEX EVENT NOMINALS

Subject position is a typical position for nominals. Because of their having more or less nominal properties, we would expect that both complex event nominals and verbal gerunds can occupy this function in a sentence. However, when exploring the BNC, I found no example of sentence initial position of the complex event nominal and even no example of the complex event nominal following the auxiliary in a question, when the Agent was a possessive pronoun[47]. For COCA, I find out that there are 67 solutions for the pattern "DPS[48] + *-ing* + *of*-phrase", just 4 of them being in the position of subject:

(5.1)   <u>His</u> **championing** *of this sport throughout his twenty years with FIELD &;*
   STREAM would have a profound effect on the accuracy of all sporting rifles.

(COCA "Looking back: World War II, the new prosperity, and the winds of change--1941-1965" (1995))

(5.2)   <u>His</u> **valuing** *of human beings over concepts seems good, although it leaves the*
   rest of nature on the outside.

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[47] The complete absence of this pattern in BNC shows that it is not a lively form in BrE. There may be many reasons behind this fact. One of my personal hypotheses is that BrE is more progressive in accepting verbal properties of gerunds and the category of complex event nominals stopped being so useful and necessary for it. On the other side, AmE may not have accepted the trend of gaining more and more verbal properties for gerundial forms and have kept more features of their originally nominal character.

[48] I used only pronouns "my, his, our, their" in the analysis because these forms are undoubtedly possessive, i.e. have different forms than their nominative or accusative forms.

(5.3) <u>My</u> **tearing** *of the Bible was symbolism for breaking out of the barrier of mysticism.*

The next possible way of expressing the Agent of complex event nominals is with the help of nouns in possessive case. The Agent may be in both the singular and plural form. For the pattern "NP (sg.) + 's + *-ing* + *of-*phrase" BNC shows 90 solutions, 17 of them are in the function of subject.

(5.4) <u>Stephen Darlington's</u> **pacing** *of each Mass movement is well judged, and would have been even more effective if the intervening mass prospers were better contrasted.*

(5.5) <u>Achille's</u> **shouldering** *of family expectations freed Gustave to become an artist.*

The pattern "NP (pl.) + s' + *-ing* + *of-*phrase" cannot be found in the BNC at all.

Concerning the pattern "NP (sg.) + 's + *-ing* + *of-*phrase" in COCA, I found altogether 79 solutions, 26 of which were in sentence initial position. In case of the third possible pattern "NP (pl.) + s' + *-ing* + *of-*phrase", COCA shows 7 solutions but just 2 of them were in sentence initial position.

(5.6) <u>Soyinka's</u> **recounting** *of the incident reminds us that others who suffered the infernal torments of hell did not survive the inhuman passage ...*

(5.7) *This* <u>week's</u> **unveiling** *of the pages presents an immediate and practical question.*

(5.8) *The Carter* <u>administration's</u> **severing** *of formal diplomatic relations with the Republic of China also compelled Taiwan, for the sake of political survival, to place accelerated economic development at a higher priority level.*

(5.9) <u>Students'</u> **valuing** *of different school subjects often declines as they move through school, with the declines especially marked across the transition to middle school*

I would like to point out examples (5.7) and (5.8) because of their inanimate "subjects" in possessive case. This is not a very common, but possible case[49].

5.1.2 VERBAL GERUNDS

As mentioned in the previous section, it is no problem for verbal gerunds to be in a subject position since "the external syntax of verbal gerunds is much like that of NPs, their internal structure is more like that of VPs" (Malouf 1996:256). In section 4.3.2 I mentioned that there are two basic ways to express Agent in case of verbal gerunds. We can use either a pronoun or a noun, both in either accusative or nominative/common case. Authors of grammar books agree on the fact that we tend to use a possessive case of a noun or pronoun for the Agent of verbal gerund if the verbal gerund is in a sentence initial position, i.e. if the gerund is a subject of the main verb:

*(5.10) His **becoming** a British subject put his Spanish goods at risk, and Oliver Cromwell himself took extraordinary precautions to ensure that they could be spirited out of the country and sent to England.*

(BNC GT6 31)

*(5.11) Their **going** along is worse than Emil's touching me.*

(COCA "Sex with the lights on" (1998))

*(5.12) John's **calling** out behavior was observed to occur more frequently with teacher's close physical proximity.*

(COCA "If at first you do not succeed..." (*Journal of Instructional Psychology*) (1991)

*(5.13) Sarah's **laughing** at my accent is petting on my nerves.*

(Eastwood (1994):160)

It is very difficult to analyse the corpus data for this task. COCA does not distinguish positions within a sentence so it is impossible to analyse its data because there are too many solutions for both pronouns[50] and nouns[51] in the function of Agents of verbal gerunds. Moreover, when analyzing the data. One must be aware of the fact, that *–ing* has more functions than just

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[49] See (4.25) - (4.27)

[50] Only for the pattern "his + *-ing*", there are 2257 results in COCA.

[51] For the pattern "noun + 's + *-ing*" there are 2604 solutions. For the pattern "noun + *-ing*", COCA reminds you that it is too general query and does not show you any result.

being a gerund. It can also have a function of adjective or helps to create a progressive aspect of verbs. As a result, one has to analyse the surroundings to decide, whether it is a verbal gerund or not.

The BNC can show you the query in a sentence initial position and because there were not so many results for pronouns, I tried to analyse at least this category. As regards the pattern "DPS + -*ing*" in sentence initial position, I found 166 solutions, but among them, I counted only 137 verbal gerunds[52]. When analysing the pattern "PNP + -*ing*" for the same position, I came across a serious problem since the category "PNP" in the BNC includes both nominative and accusative forms of personal pronouns. That's why I chose the representatives which are demonstrably accusative forms of pronouns, i.e. "me, him, us, them" for my analysis. Out of 506 solutions of the pattern "PNP + -*ing*", only 40 solutions were without any doubt accusative case pronouns in the function of the Agent of the verbal gerund in subject position. I also found 101 demonstrably nominal case pronouns for this pattern, however my analysis shows that they occur in especially grammatically incorrect constructions, i.e. present progressive without "be" or the phrase "going to" used for expressing future without "be" and so on. It is definitely a matter of slang or various dialects. For the case of nouns in the function of Agents of verbal gerunds in subject position, it was also difficult to analyse the result. The BNC usually shows you the present progressive because the structure of query for present progressive and verbal gerund with its Agent in possessive case may be the same, cf.:

(5.14) <u>Marie's</u> **sitting** up on the bed with a packet of fags.

<div align="right">(BNC A74 144)</div>

The random set shows only present progressive used for this query. For the noun in common case, the random set of results shows –*ing* included in the relative clauses without a relative pronoun, which is again the matter of ambiguity of the query:

(5.15) <u>Pilots</u> **learning** to fly the very docile 3-axis control microlight aircraft are also at risk.

<div align="right">(BNC A0H 1454)</div>

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[52] There may be some doubts about the status of pronoun "her", which may be both possessive and accusative form. In the end I decided to include this pronoun in my considerations.

What the BNC clearly shows is the fact that not only possessive pronouns are used as Agents of verbal gerunds in subject position, but also accusative pronouns can be used in this function. We can expect nouns in common case in this position as well but it is very difficult to analyse the data because there are too many result and too many obstacles. In case of pronouns in accusative and nominative case, the numbers are not final as well because many pronouns have the same form for both cases (i.e. "you", "it") or their possessive form is the same as their accusative form (i.e. "her").

There is one more aspect I would like point out in connection with verbal gerunds in the position of a subject. As I mentioned above, it is possible to use both the possessive and accusative forms of Agents for verbal gerunds in the subject position. These gerundial constructions can become conjoined in the sentence initial position. However, the type of their Agent influences the form of the verb in the main clause, namely its being singular or plural. Generally speaking, the Agent of the verbal gerund influences the subject-verb agreement. If both conjoined verbal gerunds have their Agent in accusative case, they take a verb in singular form:

*(5.16) John **coming** so often and Mary **leaving** so often bothers/ *bother Mother.*

(Cornilescu 2003)

If the Agent of both conjoined verbal gerunds is in possessive case, the verb in plural form is preferred.

*(5.17) John's **coming** and Mary's **leaving** *bothers/bother Mother.*

(Cornilescu 2003)

Malouf (1996:258) states that it is caused by the character of verbal gerunds with Agents in different forms. He claims that "*POSS-ings are more like NPs, while acc-ings are more like [sentences]*". Generally speaking, conjoined sentences really prefer singular agreement on the verb, while NPs like plural agreement. Furthermore, Malouf (1996:258) claims that it is not possible to conjoin the two types of verbal gerunds, i.e. verbal gerunds with the Agent in possessive case and the one with the Agent in accusative case.

I found no relevant examples of this kind of agreement in neither BNC nor COCA.

5.2 OBJECT

Having some amount of nominal properties, both complex event nominals and verbal gerunds can appear in the function of objects. In this subsection, I would like to discuss their function of the objects of verbs with regard to their Agent. Their function of objects of prepositions will be analyzed in the subsection 5.3. I decided to pay attention to verbal complementation at first to find out which types of verbs can be postmodified by gerundial constructions in the function of objects. I would like to analyse these types of verbs in both BNC and COCA. In the next section, I will briefly comment on the semantics of verbal gerunds since various forms of their Agents can slightly differ their meaning as well.

5.2.1 VERBAL COMPLEMENTATION

I would like to explore the category of transitive verbs because only this kind of verbs can be postmodified by an object. But the category of transitive verbs is very broad and has many subtypes. For my needs, I decided to analyse just constructions of the pattern V [-- NP VP$_{ing}$]. i.e. verbs immediately followed by a noun phrase and a gerundial construction. Only two types of transitive verbs can have this type of complementation: some monotransitive and complex transitive verbs.

5.2.1.1   MONOTRANSITIVE VERBS

To call some verb monotransitive, it must have the ability to be postmodified just by one object. The object can be a NP, a clause, or a non-finite construction, which is our case. Quirk (1985:1190) gives the following list of monotransitive verbs with the above mentioned type of complementation:

(can´t) bear, begrudge, detest, dislike, dread, (not) fancy, hate, like, loathe, love, (not) mind, miss, regret, relish, resent, (can´t) stand, start, stop, discourage, envisage, forget, (can´t) help, imagine, involve, justify, need, permit, recall, recommend, remember, risk, save, want, bank on, count on, delight in, see about.

It is not a complete list. For example Eastwood (1994:162) adds these verbs: *avoid, can´t help, enjoy, excuse, (not) forget, imagine, involve, justify, mean, mention, prefer, prevent, resent, resist, stop, tolerate, understand.*

Some of the above mentioned verbs can be postmodified either by an *–ing* form or an infinitive. From this point of view, Huddleston's (2002:1227-1240) analysis might be very helpful because it offers a great number of groups of verbs according to very elaborate criteria. I simplified his categories into this summary which focuses on monotransitive verbs that can be followed either by infinitives or verbal gerunds, both with Agents expressed:

a) Verbs that can have an infinitival or gerundial complementation[53]:

can bear, can stand, hate, like, loathe, love, prefer, deserve*, need*, require*, want*, advise, encourage, forget, recollect, recommend, remember, report

b) Verbs that can have a gerundial complementation only:

abhor, anticipate, appreciate, begrudge, can help, celebrate, chance, contemplate, countenance, defer, delay, describe, detest, discuss, ?dislike, ?dread, endure, enjoy, envisage, fancy, foresee, imagine, mention, mind, miss, put off, recall, regret, relish, resent, risk, tolerate, welcome, advocate, deplore, deprecate, discourage, facilitate, fancy, include, involve, justify, mean, necessitate, oppose, save, suggest, support, understand

I decided to explore the tendency of these verbs to be postmodified by verbal gerunds with either possessive or accusative Agent. The results can be seen in Table 4[54]. The table shows that both BrE and AmE prefer the accusative object as the Agent of their verbal gerunds. At the same time we may say that AmE tends to use verbal gerunds with their Agent in the form of pronoun more often than BrE. What also attracts our attention is the frequency of certain verbs in gerundial constructions in both languages, the most frequent being "like", "want", "imagine" and "mind" in both varieties of English. A very interesting feature can be seen in case of the verb

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[53] Verbs with an asterisk cannot have their Agent in genitive case.

[54] The results from corpora may be slightly misleading sometimes. The main problem is caused by forms of pronouns which can be the same for both nominative and accusative case (i.e. "you", "it") or their possessive and accusative forms are the same (i.e. "her"). It is impossible to distinguish these forms so the numbers in the Table 4 represent the amount of solutions shown by both corpora for –ing forms of lexical verbs and verbs "be", "have" and "do" without distinguishing controversial examples. In case of the verb "like", which can have the function of both verb and conjunction, I explored the solutions case by case and tried to exclude those solutions in which the word "like" have the function of conjunction.

"appreciate", the occurrence of which is incomparably higher in AmE than in BrE. It is also important to say that I found no complex event nominal with pronominal Agent in this function.

5.2.1.2 COMPLEX TRANSITIVE VERBS

Complex transitive verbs are the next important "allies" for gerundial constructions. The number of complex transitive verbs is smaller than in case of monotransitive verbs. Carter's (2006:523) definition of complex transitive complementation is following:

"*Complex transitive complementation occurs when a direct object is followed by an object complement or a locative complement (= a prepositional phrase locating the object in terms of time and place).*"

In my analysis, I will again follow Huddleston's (2002:1227-1240) summary of verbs which can be postmodified by gerundial constructions with expressed Agent. Some of the mentioned verbs can take bare infinitival complements, which will be seen in my list:

a) Verbs that can have a gerundial or bare-infinitival complementation[55]:

feel, *hear*, *notice*, *observe*, *overhear*, *see*, *watch**

b) Verbs that can have only gerundial complementation[56]:

excuse, forgive, pardon, preclude, prevent, prohibit, ?stop, catch, discover*, depict*, envy*, find*, keep*, leave*, picture*, portray*, set*, smell*, show*, start**

I again analyzed all these verbs in terms of their occurrence with verbal gerunds with either nominative or accusative Agent (see

Table 5). At the same time I tried to explore the frequency of complementation by bare infinitive in comparison with *–ing* form in case of verbs of perception (see Table 6).

Table 5 again shows the tendency of AmE to use verbal gerunds with pronouns as their Agents much often than BrE. In case of verbal gerunds which can have their Agent in either genitive or accusative, there are more

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[55] Verbs with an asterisk cannot have their Agent in genitive case.
[56] Verbs with an asterisk cannot have their Agent in genitive case.

solutions for accusative pronouns than possessive ones in BNC, which seems to be a current trend in BrE. On the other hand, COCA, in most cases, shows more examples for verbal gerunds with the Agent in the form possessive pronoun than in the accusative form, the exceptions being the verbs "excuse" and "stop". The complex transitive verbs postmodified by verbal gerunds with their Agent only in accusative case follow the general tendency, i.e. this type of complementation is more frequent in AmE than in BrE. The exceptional example is the verb "find" which is found almost twice as often in BrE than in AmE.

Looking at Table 6, I conclude that there is a tendency in both BrE and AmE to use rather *–ing* complements than bare infinitives for verbs of perception. The only exception is the verb "watch" which is more frequent with bare infinitive as its complement in both BrE and AmE. In the table, you can see the verbs postmodified by verbal gerunds with Agents only in accusative case since the possessive case Agent is not possible for verbs of perception.

5.2.2 SEMANTICS OF VERBAL GERUNDS

Since the contrasts between the possessive and accusative forms of Agents of verbal gerunds are best visible when they are in the function of the object of the main verb, I decided to mention their semantic value in this subsection. Biber (2005:344) states that "*when the possessive alternative is used, it focuses attention on the action described in the ing-clause … the regular NP form puts more emphasis on the person doing the action*". We can demonstrate it on these easy examples:

*(5.18) I like his **reading** the book.*

*(5.19) I like him **reading** the book.*

In the example (5.18) above, the action of reading is expressed. The person of the "reader" is not so important. We just sum up what we like. The sentence can theoretically continue like this:

*(5.20) I like his **reading** a book and **dancing** with my husband.*

The example (5.19) above presents the way of emphasising the role of the Agent in the action expressed by a verbal gerund. We want to point out that

we like only when <u>he</u> is reading the book, nobody else. The sentence could have this continuation:

*(5.21) I <u>like</u> <u>him</u> **reading** the book, but I do not <u>like</u> <u>him</u> **cooking**.*

Indirectly, I want to imply, for example, that I like his nice performance when reading, but that his meals are far from being delicious.

5.3 OBJECT OF PREPOSITION

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, Cornilescu (2003) thinks that perhaps the most characteristic position for gerundial constructions is that of object of preposition. In my research, I tried to avoid the most common prepositions like "of", "about", "for", etc. because they often do not function as separate units but are a part of the complex verb + preposition. I wanted to avoid the pattern of a verb prototypically connected with a certain type of preposition, e.g. speak about, wait for, etc. For my analysis, I chose prepositions which usually stand on their own and do not have to follow the verb immediately, namely "despite", "without", "because of", "instead of", "with", "against", "besides", "by", as can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that the chosen prepositions can be followed by both complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. However, the frequency of complex event nominals as objects of prepositions is very low, almost omissible. In BNC we can find only 1 example of this co-occurrence, in AmE there are just 10 examples. We can also confirm the conclusion made in the previous sections, i.e. that BrE is less willing to use possessive pronouns in gerundial constructions than AmE.

The function of objects of prepositions seems to be the domain of verbal gerunds, at least according to our research based on a random set of less frequent prepositions. But it is very difficult to compare or make conclusions as to the frequency of their Agents in either possessive or accusative case because the –*ing* constructions following the pronoun can be either the gerund or a relative clause without a relative pronoun[57].

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[57] cf. (5.15).

5.4 SUMMARY

Chapter 5 aimed at the distribution of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds in a sentence. The research in both BNC and COCA showed many interesting details. For the position of subject, there are no solutions in BNC for complex event nominals with the pronominal Agent or nominal Agent in plural. The only option for complex event nominals in subject position seems to be the nominal Agent in singular. COCA, concretely its software, cannot show the sentence initial position, which is one of the reliable signs of subjects, but there was a small number of solutions so I worked out the solutions mechanically. For sentence initial position, COCA offers examples of all three above mentioned forms of the Agent of complex event nominals, the most frequent being nominal Agent in singular. In case of verbal gerunds, both BNC and COCA show a large number of examples so it would be almost impossible to explore COCA mechanically. That is why I analyzed only BNC which showed 137 solutions for verbal gerunds with pronominal Agents in possessive case, and only 40 samples for pronominal Agents in accusative case. In this chapter, I also theoretically mentioned the subject-verb agreement in case when there are conjoined subjects in the form of verbal gerunds. If both Agents of the verbal gerunds are in accusative case, then the verb takes singular form. If they are in possessive case, the verb is in plural.

In the next section of this chapter, I tried to explore verbal gerunds in the function of the object of a verb. I focused only on verbal gerunds because of their variety of Agents. Moreover, I did not find any example in either BNC or COCA of a complex event nominal in the function of the object of a verb. I based my research on the list of transitive verbs inspired by Huddleston (2002) and I found out very interesting facts. In the first place, my research proved the general assumption, i.e. that accusative forms of pronominal Agents prevail over the possessive forms, which seems to be a general trend. However, AmE tends to use pronouns as Agents for verbal gerunds more often than BrE. I also found out that verbs of perception are more frequently postmodified by –*ing* forms than bare infinitives, the only exception being the

verb "watch". In addition, my list of verbs shows interesting lexicological facts, i.e. high frequency of usage of certain verbs in either BrE or AmE.

In the third part of this chapter I paid attention to complex event nominals and verbal gerunds as objects of prepositions. I chose a random set of more unusual prepositions for my statistics. Although there are sporadic examples of complex event nominals in the function of the object of preposition, their role is omissible. Verbal gerunds with both forms of Agents occur in this function quite often. The possessive forms of their Agents are again less frequent than the accusative ones.

6 CONCLUSION

In my thesis I wanted to pay attention to the categorical characteristics of English complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. I explored these two forms, their Agents and sentential distribution on the background of both BrE and AmE. The mutual comparison of these two varieties of English in relation to the topic of my thesis was also one of my aims. For the practical part, I used *The British National Corpus* and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English*. These corpora are sources of valuable pieces of information. However, it was sometimes impossible to compare them because they are not always compatible and do not offer the same kinds of information. That is why I compared them only generally and then in connection with the sentential distribution and frequency of the Agents of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds in spoken and written texts.

All *–ing* forms seem to come from the OE noun ending in *-ung* (later *-ing*). During the Middle English period, the properties of such nouns began to change and newly born gerundial forms were gaining more and more verbal properties. Gradually, they acquired the ability to express their Agent, later even in the form of a pronoun. All these processes started in the Middle English period, which is considered to be crucial for the development of gerunds. Early Modern English gerunds were suppressing their nominal features in favour of their verbal characteristics. This fight between the nominal and verbal nature led to the rise of hybrid forms which disappeared at the beginning of the 20th century, especially thanks to the efforts of prescriptive grammarians.

The main points of consideration in my thesis were the so called complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. To define these two terms precisely and to distinguish them, I used the means of their premodification and postmodification. Complex event nominals are nominal in character but they have a verbal interpretation. I understand a complex event nominal as a structure which can be premodified by a definite article, singular demonstrative pronoun, adjective, possessive pronoun or a noun in possessive case. As to their postmodification, I would mention a WH relative clause, purpose clause or an *of*-phrase. In contrast to verbal gerunds, they

cannot be premodified by a negative particle "not", and we do not find them postmodified by a direct object without preposition.

Verbal gerunds have mixed nominal and verbal properties, but their interpretation is purely verbal. They can be premodified by a singular demonstrative pronoun, an adverb, a negative particle "not", and both aspectual and passive auxiliaries. Generally acclaimed postmodifiers for them are an adverb and either direct or indirect object without preposition. As compared to complex event nominals, they cannot be premodified by adjectives or articles (although we found some examples of this premodification). Being postmodified by both an *of*-phrase or a WH relative clause is not accepted either.

Complex event nominals show two ways of expressing their Agent: either by a noun or a pronoun, both in possessive case. In case of verbal gerunds, there are two possibilities: a noun in common or possessive case, and a pronoun in possessive or accusative case. Both BNC and COCA proved that there is one extra way, i.e. a pronoun in nominative case, but this option is not grammatically codified and not very productive. As to the Agents of verbal gerunds, both AmE and BrE prefer the common case nouns or accusative pronouns. Possessive case nouns and possessive pronominals are considered formal and awkward and are usually found in written texts, especially of academic style. Pronominal Agents are more frequently used in AmE than in BrE.

In the last chapter, I explored complex event nominals and verbal gerunds within the bounds of their distribution in a sentence. The BNC and COCA showed that complex event nominals do not occur as subjects of sentences as often as verbal gerunds and there are some limitations for them, especially in BrE. With verbal gerunds, it was impossible to study their subject position in COCA, so I had to rely on the results from BNC which showed three times as many solutions in case of their possessive pronominal Agents than in case of accusative ones.

I based my research about complex event nominals and verbal gerunds in the function of the object of a verb on the list of transitive verbs gained from Huddleston (2002). I explored the frequency of co-occurrence of

these verbs and the above mentioned gerundial constructions in the function of their object. From this point of view, I found no samples for complex event nominals in either BNC or COCA. Both corpora again proved the general assumption, i.e. that the possessive case is a less popular and frequent option for the Agents of verbal gerunds. The statistics also proved the tendency of AmE to use pronominal Agents more often than BrE. When exploring verbs of perception, I found out that they occur with *–ing* forms in the function of objects more frequently than with bare infinitives, with the exception of "watch".

For the research concerning the function of gerundial construction immediately following the preposition, I chose a random set of prepositions. I omitted the most frequent ones (such as "at", "in", "on" etc.). The research showed that complex event nominals play marginal role when in the position of objects of prepositions, as well as in the case of objects of verbs. Verbal gerunds appear in this position much more often and they again occur preferably with their pronominal Agents in other than possessive case, i.e. accusative case.

My thesis showed that verbal gerunds and complex event nominals occur in both BrE and AmE. The results of my research seem to imply that these constructions are more frequent in AmE. The statistical data support the generally accepted idea that the possessive Agents of verbal gerunds are more formal and preferred especially in written texts.

APPENDIX

Table 1   The-gerunds in British English (1640–1879)

	the V*ing* NP (hybrid)	*the* N*ing of*-phrase (nominal)	*the* N/V*ing* X (ambiguous)	Total
HC EmodE3 1640–1710 [117,300 words]	19	25	1	45
LModE1 1700–1726 [200,000 words]	29	27	3	59
LModE2 1732–1757 [200,000 words]	27	21	8	56
LModE3 1761–1797 [200,000 words]	9	18	2	29
LModE4 1850–1879 [200,000 words]	6	35	4	45

Table 2   Agents of complex event nominals

	DPS + *-ing* + *of*-phrase	's + *-ing* + *of*-phrase	s' + *-ing* + *of*-phrase
BNC	0	90	0
COCA	67	79	7
	67	**169**	**7**

Table 3   Pronouns as Agents of verbal gerunds

	BNC (stext) DPS + -*ing*	BNC (wtext) DPS + -*ing*	BNC (stext) PNP + -*ing*	BNC (wtext) PNP + -*ing*	COCA (stext) DPS + -*ing*	COCA (wtext) DPS + -*ing*	COCA (stext) PNP + -*ing*	COCA (wtext) PNP + -*ing*
MY	22	342	-	-	297	1227	-	-
HIS	22	716	-	-	431	1826	-	-
OUR	16	192	-	-	211	561	-	-
THEIR	22	447	-	-	288	1088	-	-
ME	-	-	419	943	-	-	1361	3801
HIM	-	-	347	1630	-	-	1979	5441
US	-	-	255	428	-	-	896	1748
THEM	-	-	443	1284	-	-	7313	3971
	82	**1697**	**1464**	**4285**	**1227**	**4702**	**11549**	**14961**

Table 4   Monotransitive verbs with –*ing* complements

	BNC V + DPS +-*ing*	BNC V + PNP + -*ing*	COCA V + DPS +-*ing*	COCA V + PNP +-*ing*
ABHOR	0	0	0	0
ADVISE	0	0	0	0
ADVOCATE	0	0	0	0
ANTICIPATE	0	2	3	13
APPRECIATE	7	6	359	627
BEGRUDGE	1	0	1	3
CELEBRATE	2	1	5	3
CHANCE	0	1	2	1
CONTEMPLATE	0	0	0	0
COUNTENANCE	1	1	0	0
DEFER	1	0	0	0
DELAY	0	0	3	0
DEPLORE	0	0	0	0
DEPRECATE	0	0	0	0
DESCRIBE	0	2	4	7

DESERVE	0	0	0	1
DETEST	0	0	0	0
DISCOURAGE	0	0	1	0
DISCUSS	0	0	2	3
DISLIKE	0	0	0	0
DREAD	0	0	0	1
ENCOURAGE	0	0	2	1
ENDURE	0	0	2	1
ENJOY	0	1	4	11
ENVISAGE	2	8	0	0
FACILITATE	0	0	4	6
FANCY	3	26	0	5
FORESEE	0	0	2	11
FORGET	0	1	0	16
HATE	2	4	2	15
IMAGINE	1	138	28	265
INCLUDE	2	0	4	3
INVOLVE	3	11	2	5
JUSTIFY	8	9	12	13
LIKE	3	87	21	102
LOATHE	0	0	0	0
LOVE	0	3	3	14
MEAN	2	12	10	11
MENTION	1	0	5	6
MIND	22	146	73	203
MISS	0	4	2	17
NECESSITATE	0	2	1	1
NEED	0	5	1	53
OPPOSE	0	0	3	5
PREFER	0	0	2	4
RECALL	1	17	15	75
RECOLLECT	0	1	1	0
RECOMMEND	0	1	1	2
REGRET	1	2	2	0
RELISH	0	0	0	0
REMEMBER	12	212	40	483
REPORT	1	0	1	12
REQUIRE	0	3	6	5

RESENT	1	4	7	14
RISK	0	10	11	16
SAVE	2	62	0	17
SUGGEST	0	1	0	0
SUPPORT	0	2	15	17
TOLERATE	0	3	14	9
UNDERSTAND	1	12	17	47
WANT	2	203	7	429
WELCOME	0	0	2	7
	82	**1003**	**702**	**2560**

Table 5   Complex transitive verbs with –*ing* complements

	BNC V + DPS + -*ing*	BNC V + PNP + -*ing*	COCA V + DPS + -*ing*	COCA V + PNP + ing
EXCUSE	2	11	2	11
FORGIVE	0	10	12	5
PARDON	0	2	9	2
PRECLUDE	4	3	17	1
PREVENT	27	265	65	54
PROHIBIT	0	0	2	0
STOP	2	569	12	107
CATCH	-	49	-	150
DISCOVER	-	0	-	8
DEPICT	-	2	-	3
ENVY	-	4	-	4
FIND	-	129	-	68
KEEP	-	323	-	1141
LEAVE	-	98	-	345
PICTURE	-	14	-	98
PORTRAY	-	1	-	0
SET	-	40	-	86
SMELL	-	2	-	15
SHOW	-	16	-	128
START	-	13	-	39
	35	**1551**	**119**	**2265**

Table 6   Verbs of perception and their complementation with bare infinitive and –*ing*

	BNC V + PNP + BI	BNC V + PNP + -*ing*	COCA V + PNP + BI	COCA V + PNP + -*ing*
FEEL	5	29	27	182
HEAR	3	137	12	825
NOTICE	0	7	9	39
OBSERVE	0	2	3	13
OVERHEAR	0	1	8	7
SEE	3	402	43	1616
WATCH	61	40	756	111
	72	**618**	**858**	**2793**

Table 7   Complex event nominals and verbal gerunds as objects of prepositions[58]

	BNC prep. + DPS + -*ing*	BNC* prep. + PNP + -*ing*	BNC prep. + DPS + -*ing* + of	BNC prep. + PNP + -*ing* + of	COCA prep. + DPS + -*ing*	COCA* prep. + PNP + -*ing*	COCA prep. + DPS + -*ing* + of	COCA prep. + PNP + -*ing* + of
AGAINST	8	37	0	0	42	109	0	0
BECAUSE OF	10	8	0	0	41	23	0	0
BESIDES	2	1	0	0	6	9	0	0
BY	68	41	0	0	189	144	2	0
DESPITE	40	20	0	0	108	26	1	0
INSTEAD OF	5	31	0	0	17	105	0	0
WITH	40	345	0	1	210	430	4	2
WITHOUT	89	246	0	0	364	428	0	1
	262	**729**	**0**	**1**	**977**	**1274**	**7**	**3**

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[58] Those categories marked by an asterisk can be misleading since the gerundial construction following the pronoun can also have the function of a relative clause.

RESUME

Anglické –*ing* formy mají mnohostranné využití. Můžeme je najít ve funkci podstatných jmen (např. *shopping*), přídavných jmen (např. *willing*), pomáhají spoluvytvářet průběhový aspekt (např. *He is working in the garden*) a v neposlední řadě jsou nedílnou součástí toho, co nazýváme verbální gerundia, verbální substantiva a participia. Z výše uvedeného vyplývá, že anglická gerundia jsou skutečně širokou oblastí, a tudíž bylo nutné zúžit téma do té míry, aby bylo postižitelné v rámci magisterské diplomové práce. Já jsem se rozhodla věnovat se dvěma aspektům anglických gerundií, a to jejich kategoriální charakteristice a agensu. Jedním z důvodů mého výběru byl fakt, že obě zmíněné oblasti jsou ve studiích i sekundární literatuře zmiňována povětšinou sporadicky, ne-li vůbec.

Moje diplomová práce zahrnuje jak část teoretickou, založenou na obecných předpokladech či informacích ze sekundární literatury a nejrůznějších studií, tak i část praktickou, která obsahuje příklady z britského a amerického korpusu[59]. Výsledky korpusového výzkumu pro vybrané části mé diplomové práce jsem zpracovala formou statistiky do tabulek, které lze najít v příloze. Je nutno zdůraznit, že teoretická i praktická část nejsou v textu nijak oddělovány, ale prolínají do sebe navzájem.

V rámci tématu bylo nezbytné, abych se věnovala i původu a historickému vývoji –*ing* formy v anglickém jazyce. Na základě dostupné literatury lze konstatovat, že –*ing* forma se vyvinula ze staroanglického podstatného jména, jehož původní koncovka –*ung* se postupně změnila na koncovku –*ing.* Hlavní převratné změny ve struktuře gerundiálních konstrukcí mají své počátky v době, kterou nazýváme „Middle English", tedy v období středověku, pro naše potřeby vymezeného lety 1100-1500. Ve středověké angličtině se začínají objevovat první známky toho, že gerundium se v rámci daných struktur počíná měnit. Jak se později ukázalo, tyto změny směřovaly z čistě nominálního „podloží" směrem k verbálním vlastnostem.

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[59] Mnou využitými korpusy byly *The British National Corpus* (korpus obsahující 100 milionů slov, jehož první verze se objevila v roce 1994; já jsem ve své diplomové práci využila nejnovější XML verzi z roku 2007) a *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (korpus disponující více jak 400 miliony slov; poprvé se objevil v roce 2008). Oba korpusy pokrývají dobu od roku 1990 do současnosti, a to v psané i mluvené formě.

Jedním z nepopiratelných znaků výše popsaného vývoje bylo i zavedení agensu do gerundiálních konstrukcí, který měl zpočátku formu podstatného jména v genitivu[60] či posesivního zájmena. Zhruba v polovině 13.století se poprvé setkáváme s negenitivním podstatným jménem ve funkci agensu, od 14.století pak i se zájmenným agensem v akuzativu. Poslední dvě zmíněné formy se však stávají běžnými až v době raného novověku, akuzativní zájmenný agens dokonce až od 19.století. Původně předložkový předmět anglických gerundií se začal měnit v bezpředložkový přímý předmět od 14.století. V době raného novověku se rovněž setkáváme s hybridními tvary gerundiálních konstrukcí, kde jako premodifikátor sloužil určitý člen a jako postmodifikátor přímý předmět. Míšení těchto nominálních a verbálních modifikací začalo až nebezpečně nabourávat existující jazykový systém. Hlavně díky dílu Roberta Lowtha a jiných jazykovědců byl tento trend zastaven a na počátku 20.století už gerundia měla buď nominální nebo verbální charakter.

Důležitou složkou mé diplomové práce je zjišťování kategoriální charakteristiky verbálních substantiv a gerundií. Užitou metodou v mé diplomové práci je zkoumání možností premodifikace a postmodifikace těchto struktur. Stěžejní oblastí pro argumentaci ohledně charakteru jednotlivých gerundiálních konstrukcí je podle mého názoru sféra postmodifikace, a proto ji zmiňuji v rámci jednotlivých podkapitol vždy na prvním místě. Jako hlavní kritérium pro odlišení verbálních substantiv a gerundií jsem si zvolila možnost, příp. nemožnost postmodifikace jmenné fráze uvozené anglickou předložkou „of". Veškerá svoje tvrzení se snažím doložit relevantními příklady z obou korpusů.

Verbální substantiva mají nominální charakter, nicméně jejich interpretace je čistě verbální. Abychom označili jistou gerundiální strukturu jako verbální substantivum, tato musí bezpodmínečně splňovat následující normy:

a) musí umožňovat tuto postmodifikaci:

vztažná vedlejší věta, účelová vedlejší věta, jmenná fráze uvozená předložkou „of" musí umožňovat premodifikaci následujícími elementy:

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[60] V rámci následného vývoje a obliby opisných forem se tyto staly též běžným prostředkem k vyjádření agensu.

určitý člen, ukazovací zájmeno v singuláru, přídavné jméno, posesivní zájmeno či podstatné jméno v genitivu

b) musí umožňovat premodifikaci následujícími elementy:

určitý člen, ukazovací zájmeno v singuláru, přídavné jméno, posesivní zájmeno či podstatné jméno v genitivu

Verbální gerundia vykazují smíšené nominální a verbální charakteristiky. Premodifikující část gerundiální konstrukce je otevřená pro jisté nominální elementy, postmodifikující část je pak plně verbální. Pro verbální gerundia podobně jako pro verbální substantiva lze sestavit seznam „povolených" premodifikátorů a postmodifiktorů[61]:

a) k typickým postmodifikátorům patří:

přímý a nepřímý předmět, adverbium*

b) mezi premodifikátory řadíme:

 ukazovací zájmeno v singuláru, adverbium*, negativní částice „not"*, pomocná slovesa podílející se na průběhových a pasivních formách

Co se týče formy agensu verbálních substantiv, tak angličtina umožňuje dvě varianty: agens ve formě posesivního zájmena nebo podstatného jména v genitivu. Oproti tomu, verbální gerundia vykazují hned další dvě varianty, a to agens ve formě negenitivního podstatného jména či posesivní zájmeno v akuzativu. V korpusech najdeme i příklady, kdy agens je ve formě zájmena v nominativu, nicméně tato situace je marginální a vymyká se stanoveným jazykovým principům. Data v korpusech jasně ukazují, že formy negenitivního podstatného jména či zájmena v negativu v roli agensu jsou častější než posesivní zájmena či podstatná jména v genitivu. Můj výzkum potvrdil závěry autorů gramatik, kteří se zmiňují o nižší frekvenci a formálnosti oněch posesivních a genitivních tvarů. I z tohoto důvodu se s nimi častěji setkáváme v písemném projevu. Srovnání korpusů rovněž ukazuje, že zájmena ve funkci agensů jsou frekventovanější v americké angličtině než v britské.

V poslední praktické části mé diplomové práce se věnuji distribuci verbálních substantiv a gerundií ve větě. Nejprve se zabývám oběma danými

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[61] Kategorie označené hvězdičkou nemusí být stoprocentním důkazem verbálních charakteristik verbálních gerundií.

konstrukcemi ve funkci podmětu na začátku věty. Britský korpus vydává překvapivé výsledky. Zajímavá je zejména naprostá absence posesivních pronominálních agensů u verbálních substantiv v této funkci. Americký korpus ukazuje zanedbatelný výskyt výše uvedené konstrukce, nicméně podobně jako britský korpus upřednostňuje agens ve formě podstatného jména v singuláru a formě genitivu. Co se týče verbálních gerundií v pozici subjektu na začátku věty, tak tyto se vyskytují jako subjekt mnohem častěji než verbální substantiva. Upřednostňovanou formou jejich agensu, bereme-li pro zjednodušení v úvahu pouze pronominální agensy, je posesivní forma. Nicméně tyto výsledky pocházejí pouze z britského korpusu, protože software amerického korpusu neumožňuje vyhledávání dle daného klíče, tedy počáteční pozice ve větě, a díky velkému množství příkladů není možné analyzovat výsledky mechanicky.

Nedílnou součástí verbálních substantiv a gerundií je často předmět, který slouží jako jejich postmodifikátor. Vzhledem k tomu, že jsem se v této podkapitole chtěla soustředit i na formu agensu, opět zúženého pouze na kategorii zájmen, nabízela se pro výzkum pouze verbální gerundia, která oficiálně nabízí hned dvě možnosti. Oba korpusy navíc ukázaly, že verbální substantiva se ve funkci předmětu nevyskytují. Vzhledem k tomu, že objekt je typickým postmodifikátorem sloves, bylo nutné vyřešit především otázku komplementace, tedy vytvořit kategorie sloves, která mohou být postmodifikována gerundiální formou. Jako zdroj mi posloužil obsáhlý seznam monotranzitivních a komplexně tranzitivních sloves, který lze najít v *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language* (2002). Všechna vybraná slovesa jsem propojila s verbálními gerundii s pronominálním agensem a prověřila britským i americkým korpusem. Výsledky opět potvrdily již výše zmíněný fakt, a to že posesivní tvar zájmena je méně častým agensem verbálních gerundií ve funkci předmětu než předmět v akuzativu. Zároveň se ukázalo, že americká angličtina je mnohem ochotnější používat posesivní agensy pro verbální gerundia než její britský protějšek. Při výzkumu sloves smyslového vnímání se ukázalo, že všechny slovesa kromě „watch" vykazují inklinaci k používání gerundiálních forem ve funkci předmětu, a to v neprospěch holého infinitivu.

Poslední zkoumanou oblastí je gerundium ve funkci předmětu ve vztahu k předložkám. Pro korpusový výzkum jsem si náhodně vybrala několik nepříliš frekventovaných přeložek v angličtině a spojila jsem je do konstrukce s verbálními substantivy a gerundii. Verbální substantiva po předložce se v korpusech vyskytují skutečně sporadicky. Verbální gerundia se ve spojení s předložkou objevují mnohem častěji, přičemž korpusy opět signalizují mnohem větší frekvenci agensů v akuzativní formě než ve formě posesivní.

Má diplomová práce dokazuje, že verbální substantiva i gerundia se vyskytují v britské i americké angličtině, i když ne se stejnou frekvencí. Americká angličtina vykazuje mnohem větší podíl těchto gerundiálních konstrukcí. V rámci statistik vytvořených na základě analýzy dat z korpusů mohu potvrdit, že pronominální agens ve formě posesivní je méně častý, obzvláště v mluvené řeči, a najdeme ho především v psaném projevu.

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<http://www.americancorpus.org/>

<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml >

<http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml.ID=creation>

CORPORA USED

The British National Corpus, version 3 (BNC XML Edition). 2007. Distributed by Oxford University Computing Services on behalf of the BNC Consortium.
URL: http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/

The Corpus of Contemporary American English, version 1. 2008. Brigham Young University interface.
URL: http://www.americancorpus.org/

ANNOTATION

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Summary:

In my thesis I aimed at the categorical characteristics of English complex event nominals and verbal gerunds. In the theoretical part, I tried to sum up the historical development of an *–ing* form. For the practical part, I used *The British National Corpus* and *The Corpus of Contemporary American English*. Both corpora helped me to illustrate the typical means of premodification and postmodification of verbal gerunds. At the same time, I used the corpora

for the statistics concerning the sentential distribution and frequency of occurrence of complex event nominals and verbal gerunds in British and American English. Special attention was paid to the form of Agents of the above mentioned constructions within a sentence.