

LINGUISTICA PRAGENSIA 1/2007

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THE SUBJECT OF *-ING* FORMS IN A LEGAL ENGLISH CORPUS

Slávka Janigová (Košice)

Slávka Janigová: THE SUBJECT OF -ING FORMS IN A LEGAL ENGLISH CORPUS

The article concentrates on the subject forms of *-ing* sentence condensers. We tested the general linguistic opinions against the findings obtained by analysis of a corpus compiled from two genres of legal English, *i.e.* legislation and judicial decisions. Our corpus research derived from a scalar approach to particular types of *-ing* forms and concentrated on gerundial and participial condensers.

Corpus findings confirmed statistical prevalence of the common case subject over the possessive case subject, which, however, cannot be treated as a proof of a higher degree of formality of the possessive case as the law reports comprise both forms without *prima facie* semantic or stylistic distinction. A specific feature found in respect of the legislative genre is exclusiveness of the possessive form with the pronouns, and the common case form with the nouns.

The imperative of explicit expression of the *-ing* agent that is not identical with the matrix agent intensifies up the axis: deverbial noun – *-ing* verbal noun – gerund – *-ing* participle as condenser – *-ing* participle as indicator of the progressive aspect of a finite verb. Frequency corpus findings suggest that in the case of a possibility of pragmatic identification of the agent, its explicit formal absence is not treated as defective, hence unattached gerundial and participial constructions show a rather stable position in the language system.

THE GERUND IN THE FUNCTION OF SENTENCE CONDENSER

Jarmila Petrlíková (Plzeň)

Jarmila Petrlíková: THE GERUND IN THE FUNCTION OF SENTENCE CONDENSER

Since the gerund behaves as a finite verb form with respect to complementation and modification, it qualifies to form secondary predications. In this role, it is regarded as one of the means of complex sentence condensation. In a number of such cases, there is a theoretical possibility of replacing the gerund construction by a finite dependent clause.

Detailed consideration of 175 potential clausal alternatives has shown that there recur certain problems that appear as blocking or obstructive factors having an impact not only on the actual process of replacement, but also on the resulting finite clause functioning as an alternative of the gerund.

The limiting factors can be classified into several categories according to the linguistic feature which they involve, their frequency of occurrence and the extent to which they affect the actual replacement.

On the other hand, they suggest certain qualities of the gerund which make it different from its potential alternatives and which can be fully exploited mainly in the construction of more complex sentences. Apart from the apparent reduction of the number of finite clauses, the gerund makes it possible to introduce into a sentence a range of various shades of meaning, semantic indications and nuances, and to make thus the language more flexible and capable of expressing complexity of thought.

IL VERBO ITALIANO DI MODO FINITO ED IL VERBO INGLESE NEL LORO VALORE COMUNICATIVO

Eva Klímová (Opava)

*Eva Klímová: ON THE ITALIAN AND THE ENGLISH FINITE VERB FORM FROM
THEIR COMMUNICATIVE VALUE POINT OF VIEW*

The article deals with the Italian and the English finite verb form observed in their communicative value, i.e. from the functional sentence perspective (FSP) point of view. The Italian inflectional verbal form is confronted with the English finite verb form with the aim of demonstrating their function within the communicative units of the sentence viewed as a communicative field. The Italian finite verb form, expressing all the grammatical categories, may represent several communicative units: the categories of person and number constitute the theme while the categories of tense and mood constitute the transition proper. The notional component of the verb may have the function of transition or rheme. The grammatical and semantic components are included within one verbal form. Thus the Italian finite verb form may participate in several communicative units and reach high communicative value. The communicative value of the English finite verb form, characteristic for poor inflection and tending to lose its lexical meaning, is lower. Both grammatical and non-grammatical components are conveyed by separate elements. The differences observed between Italian and English on the FSP level reflect the morphosyntactic characteristics of both languages.