

Obstacles Encountered by secondary school students in Using ing-form  
(gerund) , Present participle and Participle Adjectives

العقبات التي يواجهها طلاب المدارس الثانوية في استخدام صيغة ing  
(اسم المفعول) وصيغة المضارع التام وصيغة المفعول المطلق

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كلية التربية – ناصر

الملخص:

يتناول هذا البحث الصعوبات التي تواجه الطلاب عند استعمالهم لـ :  
(المصدر + ing) كاسم الفعل (be + V +ing) ، وكذلك (الصفة المنتهية بـ ing)  
الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو التعرف على هذه الصعوبات والطرق المقترحة لعلاجها.  
وقد استعمل الباحث وسيلتين في هذه الدراسة وهما اختيار للطلاب واستبانة  
للمدرسين. مجموع الطلاب الذين اشتركوا (40) طالباً من المرحلة الثانوية بمنطقة  
الزاوية (مدرسة المطرد الثانوية) وكذلك (10) مدرسين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية في  
هذه المنطقة. واستعمل الباحث طريقة (Spear Brown) لتحليل النتائج ومن أهم  
النتائج التي توصل إليها الباحث هي أن الطلاب يواجهون صعوبات في التمييز بين  
(المصدر+ing) والفعل (be + V +ing)؛ لأن المصدر + ing عندما يكون خبر  
يأتي بعد الفعل "be" وكذلك الفعل في صيغة الاستمرار يأتي بعد الفعل "be" –  
أيضاً.

1- His hobby is reading (gerund as complement) خبر

2- She is writing a letter (present participle) (be + V+ ing) فعل

كما أنهم يواجهون صعوبات في التمييز بين المصدر + ing عندما يكون خبراً (ما  
يعود على المبتدأ) وكذلك الصفة المنتهية بـ ing لأن كلاهما يأتي بعد الفعل "be"

1- His favourite hobby is reading (gerund as a complement) خبر

2- The film was boring (participle adjectives) (ing) صفة منتهية بـ

العامل الرئيسي وراء هذه الأخطاء هو أن الطلاب لا يعرفون وظيفة المصدر  
(المصدر + ing) والفعل (Be +V+ing) وكذلك الصفة المنتهية بـ "ing".

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أما بالنسبة للمدرسين لا يهتمون كثيراً بشرح (المصدر + ing) والفعل ( Be +V+ing) وكذلك الصفة المنتهية بـ "ing"، ويركزون على الأعمال التحريرية ويهملون الأعمال الشفوية في هذا المجال. وللتغلب على هذه الصعوبات والمشاكل وضع الباحث بعض التوصيات ومنها حث المعلمين على عدم التركيز على الأعمال التحريرية وإهمال الأعمال الشفوية لتعزيز الفهم عند الطلاب في هذا المجال، وكذلك حث الباحث على التركيز (المصدر + ing) والفعل (Be +V+ing) وكذلك الصفة المنتهية بـ "ing".

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### Abstract :

This study investigates the difficulties faced by students in using ing form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives. The goal of this study is to find out to what extent the students face the difficulties in using ing form (gerund) present participle and participle adjective.

The researcher used two data collection instruments: students' test and teachers' questionnaire, these were conducted to explore the obstacles in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective, the sample of the study composed of 40 students and 10 teachers in Al-Motred secondary school in Zawia. The researcher used the Spear Brown method with an expert in analyzing the results .

The findings of the study proved

- Students face difficulties in using ing – form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective.
- Students confused ing-form (gerund), as a complement with present participle because gerund as a complement and present participle come after be.

e.g.:

- a- His favorite hobby is swimming (gerund) as a complement.

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- b- She is writing a letter (present participle)
- Students also confused ing-form (gerund) as a complement with participle adjectives since ing-form (gerund) as a complement and participle adjectives come after "be":

e.g:

- a- Her hobby is reading (gerund) as a complement.
- b- The film was boring (participle adjective)
- The main factor is that students did not mastery the function of ing – form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective.
  - English language teachers do not give enough explanation to the ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective because they do not have enough time to do that.
  - It is recommended that teachers should focus both oral and written practice to reinforce students' knowledge of ing – form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective
  - It is also recommended that teachers should emphasize on different treatments of ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjective by different schools of grammar.

### 1. Introduction:

English is taught as a foreign language in Libya. In Libyan formal education teaching of English starts in the first year of basic education, at the age of six.

Clarifies that grammar is considered as an important aspect of learning the English language, and without learning the grammar the language cannot be practice properly.(1)

Basic grammatical English rules are considered the basis to teach English learner and the guarantor for practicing good language communication skills, Grammar learning also the basic enables for good thoughts and ideas expression (4)

Emphasized that learning, the grammar of the English language helps understand the sentence and understand its composition.(5)

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Indicated the students face problems in writing the expression due to their weak ability in the grammar of mother tongue in the foreign language.(7)

Stated that ing-form (gerund) and present participle have the same form ending ing form. and stated that the present participle is formed by adding –ing to the base verb form.(3)

### **1.1 Statement of the problem:**

As a teacher of English language for thirty years, the researcher has discovered that secondary school students in Zawai make errors when they use ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives, therefore, he will investigate these problems and the causes behind them.

### **1.2 Objectives of the study:**

- To discover how students in third year secondary in Zawia use ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.
- To find out the factors behind the errors made by secondary school students.
- To investigate how teachers explain the ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.

### **1.3 Questions of the study:**

- What are the errors made by secondary school students in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives?
- What are the factors behind these errors?
- To what extent do teachers of English give attention to the importance of ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives?

### **1.4 Significance of the study :**

This research is importante in the field of teaching and learning because it deals with ing-form (gerund)< present participle, and participle adjectives. It will discover the difficulties in using the ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives by foreign learners. Hence, they will know how to mastery the ing-form (gerund) present participle and participle

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adjectives. It will also help the teacher how to choose methods in teaching English language or secondary phase.

### **2. Literature review:**

#### **2.1 Difficulties in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives**

##### **2.1.1 'participles' and gerunds': an unclear difference**

The distinction between participles and "gerunds" is not always clear cut it can sometimes be difficult to decide which term to use. For this reason some grammarians prefer to avoid the terms participle and 'gerund' .

##### **2.1.2 Subject pronouns are not possible.**

His shouting gets on my nerves. (BUT NOT He-shouting...)

Note that possessives and pronouns are not used before -ing forms if it is already clear who is being talked about. Thank you for waiting. (NOT Thank you for your waiting).

When an -ing form is used with an article, it cannot usually have a direct object. Instead, we can use an of-structure. The smoking of cigarettes (NOT the smoking cigarettes)

No is often used with an -ing form to say that something is not allowed, or is impossible. This often happens in notices and after there is.

NO SMOKING                      NO PARKING                      NO WAITING

Sorry - there's no smoking in the waiting room.

She's made up her mind; there's no arguing with her.

In an inform style it is more common to use object (like me, John) instead of possessives (my, John's) with -ing forms, especially when these come after a verb or preposition. Do you mind me smoking? She was angry at Lina trying to lie to her.

#### **2.2 The meaning of ing-form (gerund), present participle adjectives.**

An -ing form (gerund) can be used, just like a noun, as the subject complement of a verb.

My favourite activity is reading. (complement)

Infinitives (e.g. To smoke is bad for you) are possible in these but are formal and uncommon.

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ing forms can also be used as objects after certain verbs.

I hate packing. (object)

The –ing form subject, complement or object is used like noun but it is still a verb and can have its own object.

Smoking cigarettes is bad for you.

My favourite activity is reading thrillers.

I hate packing suitcases.

We can often use determiners (for example the, my, this) with ing forms the opening of Parliament

Does my smoking annoy you? I hate all this useless arguing

Possessive 's forms are also possible.

John's going to sleep during the wedding was rather embarrassing She was angry at Lina's trying to lie to her. (8)

### 2.1.1 Purpose : a machine for cutting:

For + ing form can be used after a noun or after an indefinite pronoun such as something or anything, to explain the purpose of an object or material what it is for.

A strimmer is a machine for cutting grass and weeds.

Have you got any stuff for cleaning silver?

I need something for killing flies.

This structure is mostly used to talk in general about types of object, we are more likely to use an infinitive I must find something to kill that fly.(9)

### 2.2.2 Expressions + ing

When these expressions are followed by a verb, the verb ends in -ing:

It's no use / It's no good ...

- It's no use worrying about it. There's nothing you can do.
- It's no good trying to persuade me. You won't succeed.

There's no point in ...

- There's no point in buying a car if you don't want to drive it.
- There was no point in waiting, so we went.

It's (not) worth .

- My house is only a short walk from here. It's not worth taking a taxi.

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- It was so late when we got home, it wasn't worth going to bed.
- You can say: 'a book is worth reading / a film is worth seeing' etc.:
- Do you think this book is worth reading?
- You should go and see the film. It's really worth seeing.

(Have) difficulty .

I had difficulty finding a place to live. (not 'to find')

- Did you have any difficulty getting a visa?
- People often have great difficulty reading my writing.
- Remember that we say 'difficulty' (not 'difficulties'):
- I'm sure you'll have no difficulty passing the examination.

You can also say '(have) difficulty in -ing':

- He's shy. He has difficulty in talking to people he doesn't know well.

A waste of money/time ...

- It's a waste of time reading that book. It's rubbish.
- It's a waste of money buying things you don't need.

Spend/ waste (time)

- I spent hours trying to repair the clock.
- I waste a lot of time day-dreaming

Go -ing

We use go -ing for a number of activities (especially sports):

go shopping   go swimming   go skiing   go fishing  
go climbing   go sailing   go riding   go sightseeing

- How often do you go swimming?
- I'm going skiing next year.
- I have to go shopping this morning.
- I've never been sailing. (6)

### 2.2.3 Ing – and – ed form adjectives :

The – ing and –ed forms of verbs may also function as adjectives (cooking instructions on food packet) just add boiling water.

They only want to travel to English speaking countries.

It's not smoked smoked salmon, air's smoked trout

Even supermarkets now sell home- made James. (2)

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### **2.2.4 Participle adjectives**

We use adjectives derived from present participles (surprising) to describe the source or cause of an action or feeling. We use adjectives derived from past participles (surprised) to describe the one (s) affected by the action or feeling .

1. the news was surprising. The teacher drew a very confusing diagram on the board.
2. My parents were surprised . the confused students said that they couldn't understand it.

We can treat people and other living things as the source of a feeling (He's boring) or the ones affected by it (I'm bored). We treat non-living things as the source only (it's boing).

3. Darwin was a fascinating person. I was disappointed. Why is the dog getting so excited?
4. Mars is a fascination plante. The news was disappointing. (Not the news was disappointed.) **(10)**

### **3. Methodology :**

This research used descriptive method to investigate and handle these problems. The researcher chose a questionnaire for teachers. The questions were derived from researcher, experience in teaching English language. The researcher conducted a test for students that is based on multiple – choice questions in order to investigate the main problems faced by secondary school students in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.

#### **3.1 sample of the study :**

The first group of participants of the study were the third year in "Al-Motred secondary school" in Zawia zone.

The second group of participants was teachers of English language who teach in this area.

The sample investigated in this study composed of 40 students and 10 teachers.



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### 3.2 Instruments :

The researcher used two main instruments of data collection. The first instrument was a test that given to the students to investigate the obstacles encountered by the students in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives,. The second instrument was a questionnaire conducted with teachers of English.

### 4. Data analysis and discussion results:

#### 4.1 Written test :

1- she goes shopping

**Table (4.1) : Results of item 1**

Option	Percent	Frequency
gerund	42%	17
present participle	25%	10
present simple	7.5%	3
present perfect	25%	10
total	100%	40

In this result, seventeen students (42.5%) chose the word "gerund". Ten students (25%) chose "present participle". Three students (7.5%) chose present simple. Ten students (25%) chose the word "present perfect".

2- He is writing a letter.

**Table (4.2) : Results of item 2**

Option	Percent	Frequency
gerund	50%	20
present participle	22.5%	9
present simple	17.5	7
Verb be	10%	4
total	100%	40

In this table, nine participants (22.5%) chose the right answer "present participle". Seventeen participants (42.5%) chose the word "gerund". Seven

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participants (17.5%) chose "present simple". Four students (10%) chose "verb be" .

3- My favourit hobby is swimming.

**Table (4.3) : Results of item 3**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Present participle	67.5%	27
Gerund	17.5%	7
Present simple	5%	2
Present perfect	10%	4
Total	100%	40

As can be seen, twenty seven participants (67.5%) did not answer correctly by choosing (Present participle). Seven participants (17.5%) have chosen "Gerund". Four participants (10%) chose "present perfect" and just two students (5%) chose past simple.

4- Smoking is very bad habit

**Table (4.4) : Results of item 4**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Gerund	37.5%	15
Present participle	40%	16
Present simple	10%	4
Present perfect	12.5%	5
Total	100%	40

In this result, fifteen testees (37.5%) chose "gerund". Sixteen testees (40%) chose "present participle". Five testees (12.5%) chose "present perfect" and four testees (10%) chose "past simple".

5- His favourit activity is reading

**Table (4.5) : Results of item 1**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Participle adjectives	47.5%	19
Gerund	42.5%	17

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Present simple	5%	2
Verb be	5%	2
Total	100%	40

According to the answers, nineteen students (47.5%) chose the word "gerund". Seventeen students (42.5%) chose "present participle". Two students (5%) chose "verb be" and two students (5%) chose "present simple"

6- The film was boring.

**Table (4.6) : Results of item 6**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Gerund	52.5%	21
Participle adjectives	30%	12
Present simple	10%	4
Present perfect	7.5%	3
Total	100%	40

In this table, twenty one participants (52.5%) their answers were incorrect by choosing the "gerund". Twelve participants (30%) answered correctly by choosing "present participle". Four students (10%) chose "past simple", and three students chose "present perfect".

7- They are interesting stories.

**Table (4.7) : Results of item 7**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Gerund	55%	22
participle adjectives	32.5	13
Present simple	5%	2
Present perfect	7.5%	3
Total	100%	40

In this result, twenty two students (55%) did not give the right answer by choosing "gerund". Thirteen students (32.5%) chose " participle adjectives". Three students (7.5%) chose "present perfect" and two learners (5%) chose past simple.

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8- She was good at writing novels

**Table (4.8) : Results of item 8**

Option	Percent	Frequency
Gerund	20%	8
Participle adjectives	60%	24
Present simple	12.5	5
Verb be	7.5	3
Total	100%	40

In this table, twenty four participants (60%) could not answer correctly by choosing "participle adjectives. Eight students (20%) could answer correctly by choosing "gerund". Five students (12.5%) chose "present simple" and three students (7.5%) chose "verb be".

**4.1.1 Discussion :**

This paper dealt with problems faced by secondary school students in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.

According to the results of table 4.1, seventeen students (47.5%) chose the word "gerund". Ten students (25%) chose present participle. Only three (7.5%) chose present simple. Ten students (25%) chose "resent participle. This means that students face difficulties in using ing-form "gerund" present participle and participle adjectives.

In table two 4.2 nine participants (22.5%) could answer correctly. Twenty learners (50%) gave incorrect answer by choosing the gerund" which means that the students confused gerund with present participle because they have the same form.

The results in table 4.3 showed that twenty-seven learners (67.5%) did not give the correct answer by choosing present participle instead of "gerund". The participants also confused the present participle with gerund since they have the same form and gerund as a complement and present participle come after "be'.

As can be seen in table 4.4, the students who gave the correct answer were fifteen (37.5%) participants sixteen students (40%) chose present participle. According to the answer, the students confused gerund with present

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participle because they do not know the function of gerund and present participle.

The table 4.5 have shown that nineteen learners (47.5%) chose participle adjective. Seventeen students (42.5%) chose "gerund".

According to the answers, students face difficulties in using gerund, participle adjectives because they both end with "ing".

The results of table 4.6 showed that twenty –one learners (50.5%) gave incorrect answer by choosing "gerund".

Twelve students (30%) cold answer correctly by choosing "participle adjective". Four students (10%) chose past simple.

It is clear that the participants confused gerund as a complement with participle adjectives because they have the same form and they also come after "be" .

The results of table 4.7 showed that twenty-two students (55%) chose "gerund" thirteen students (32.5%) gave the correct answer by choosing "participle adjective".

According to the answers, the students confused gerund with participle adjectives because students do not have any idea about participle adjectives which end with "ing".

The table 4.8 have shown that twenty four participants (60%) chose "participle adjective". Only eight students (20%) could answer correctly by choosing "gerund".

It is clear, that the learners confused participle adjectives with gerund. They also did not recognize that the word "writing" is gerund because gerund comes after preposition .

### **4.2 Teachers questionnaire ;**

The researcher conducted a questionnaire for teachers who teach secondary school students. Ten teachers participated in this study. Most of the questions were answered clearly since each teacher knew the goals of this study which related to the difficulties encountered by the students in using ing-form (gerund) present participle and participle adjectives in English language .

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The teachers questionnaire showed that the majority of the teachers assured that the students face difficulties in using ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.

### **4.2.1 Discussion :**

Ten teachers who teach the secondary phase in English language participated in the teachers, questionnaire .

Eight teachers (80%) assured that students face obstacles in using ing-form (gerund) , present participle and participle adjectives

Seven teachers chose (70.5%) confirmed that they do not focus both oral and written practice in teaching ing-form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives. They also do not explain the grammatical rules because they donot have enough time to do that. Five teachers (50%) confessed that their students donot mastery the functions of ing-form (gerund) present participle and participle adjectives.

### **5- Conclusion**

This study investigated the obstacles encountered by secondary school (students in Zawi zone Almotred secondary school).

The study used the described method that consisted of two main instruments to obtaining the results.

The findings of the study:

- The students face difficulties in using ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.
- Students confused ing- form (gerund) with present participle when the ing- form (gerund) used as complement since they have the same form and they also come after "b". e.g.
  - His favourite hobby is swimming (gerund)
  - She is writing a letter (present participle)
- Students also confused ing –form (gerund) as complement with participle adjectives since ing-form (gerund) as complement and participle adjectives come after "be". e.g.
  - Her bobby is reading (gerund)
  - The story is boring.

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- The main factor is that the students do not mastery the functions of ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.
- English teachers do not give enough explanation to the use of ing-form (gerund) present participle and participle adjectives.

### **Recommendations:**

- Teachers should focus both oral and written practice to reinforce students/ knowledge of the ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives.
- Teachers should emphasize on different treatments of ing- form (gerund), present participle and participle adjectives..
- The authority of Education in Libya should give attention training which makes the teachers of English more qualified.

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