

VERBS OF LIKING WITH THE INFINITIVE AND THE GERUND

1. Introduction

In a number of teaching grammars of English (Azar,¹ Murphy,² Steer & Carlisi³), *like* is treated as one of the verbs which shows no difference in meaning when it is construed with the gerund or the *to*-infinitive. Even Palmer's specialized study on the English verb⁴ makes no comment on the distinction between these two constructions. Uses such as (1) and (2) below show however that the infinitival and gerundive constructions do not mean exactly the same thing with the verb *like*:

(1) I like to finish work at 4:00.

(2) I like finishing work at 4:00.

What the difference is and what is responsible for producing it will be one of the things we will try to come to grips with in this study. Another aspect of usage in this area which will merit our attention is the fact that *like* is different from most of the other verbs in its semantic field in being used with both the infinitive and the gerund as complements: besides *love*, which also admits both forms of complementation, all the other verbs in this semantic group are construed exclusively either with the gerund (*enjoy, relish, fancy, appreciate*) or with the infinitive (*want, wish, desire, long, yearn, hanker, pine, hunger and thirst*). Why some verbs allow both complements and others only one is another fact about the functioning of complementation in this area of usage which calls for an explanation.

Another aspect of usage which also deserves further attention is the question of control or the identification of the agent of the non-finite verb's event. Wood⁵ has observed that whereas (3) below involves strict subject control (and consequently could only be said by a judge), the construction illustrated in (4) is non-controlled and the agent of *sending* could be either the subject of *like* or some non-specified third party:

(3) I don't like to send first offenders to prison.

(4) I don't like sending first offenders to prison.

That two constructions which are so similar in meaning as to be presented as

¹ *Understanding and Using English grammar* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1981), pp. 194-6.

² *Grammar in Use* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 108.

³ *The Advanced Grammar Book* (Boston, 1991), p. 338.

⁴ *The English Verb* (London, 1988), pp. 156 & 203.

⁵ 'Gerund vs Infinitive', in *English Language Teaching XI* (1956), 12.

identical by some grammarians should have a different range of control readings is yet another fact which calls for explanation.

2. Previous Approaches

2.1. *The Distinction Between the Gerund and the Infinitive*

Various approaches have been taken to the distinction between the gerund and the infinitive. A number of authors have adopted what could be characterized as a temporal approach. In this view, the *-ing* is commonly claimed to denote simultaneity or temporal overlap between its event and that expressed by the main verb, representing the former's duration as ongoing or extended in time (cf. Wierbicka,⁶ Langacker,⁷ Dixon,⁸ Verspoor⁹). The infinitive, on the other hand, is treated as involving a reference to the future: Quirk et al.¹⁰ depict it as evoking an event as 'potential', and Stowell¹¹ goes so far as to claim that it incorporates a future tense operator. Some authors focus more on reality status than on the temporal relation of the *-ing* to the main verb, and describe the gerund as evoking 'actualization' or 'reification' (Bolinger)¹² or 'events or states already in existence ... at the time associated with the preceding verb' (Tregidgo).¹³ The claim made by Kiparsky & Kiparsky¹⁴ that the gerund is found only after 'factive predicates' (i.e. those that presuppose the truth of the proposition contained in the complement) also falls under this type of approach. Larreya¹⁵ defines the *-ing* in terms of the internal picture of the event which it evokes, which he characterizes as an image of an event divided between an accomplished and a non-accomplished portion:



According to the author, this explains why the *-ing* produces an impression of simultaneity: since its event is represented as in progress at the point in time at which it is put into relation with another event, the effect produced is one of temporal coincidence or overlap.

⁶ *The Semantics of Grammar* (Amsterdam, 1988), p. 69.

⁷ *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* (Stanford, 1991), II, 445.

⁸ 'Complement Clause and Complementation Strategies', in *Meaning and Grammar*, ed. F.R. Palmer (Cambridge, 1995), p. 185.

⁹ 'Iconicity in English Complement Constructions: Conceptual Distance and Cognitive Processing', in *Complementation*, ed. K. Horie (Amsterdam, 2000), p. 214.

¹⁰ *A Comprehensive English Grammar* (London, 1985), p. 1191.

¹¹ 'The Tense of Infinitives', in *Linguistic Inquiry* XIII (1982), 562.

¹² 'Entailment and the Meaning of Structures, in *Glossa* II (1968), 124.

¹³ 'Some Observations on Verb + *ing* and Verb + Infinitive', in *English Language Teaching Journal* XXXV (1980), 45-8.

¹⁴ 'Fact', in *Semantics: An Interdisciplinary Reader in Philosophy, Linguistics and Psychology*, eds. D.D. Steinberg and L.A. Jacobvits (Cambridge, 1971), p. 347.

¹⁵ 'Peut-on porter un regard simple sur les formes impersonnelles du verbe anglais: *to* + V, V + *ing*, V *-en* ?', in *Sigma* XI, (1987), 8.

There is also a tradition in English grammar which treats the difference between the gerund and the infinitive in terms of referentiality. The origin of this tradition appears to be Sweet's¹⁶ comment that the gerund in (5) below has a generic reference:

(5) Seeing is believing.

Jespersen¹⁷ continues this tradition in his description of the opposition between *I hate lying* ('the vice in general') and *I hate to lie* ('in this particular case'), *I don't like smoking* ('I object to the habit') and *I should like to smoke now* (which evokes a desire to have a cigarette at the present moment). This approach is also followed by Wood,¹⁸ who holds that the gerund 'represents the activity as it were *in vacuo*, without reference to any agent or occasion,' so that when we say *Lying is wrong* 'we are thinking of the activity or the practice in a universal sense, as a vice having an existence independent of the individual who succumbs to it'.

2.2. Problems with Previous Approaches

There are important problems with all of the proposals described above regarding the nature of the distinction between the gerund and the infinitive. Defining the gerund as evoking simultaneity or temporal overlap, for example, stands in direct contradiction to uses such as (6) and (7) below:

(6) I remember turning off the lights.

(7) I am considering changing jobs.

In the first sentence, the gerund's event is obviously prior to the present moment occupied by the remembrance of it; in the second, the change of employment is clearly future with respect to the mulling over of this possibility. This leads Wierzbicka¹⁹ to distinguish between two different kinds of *-ing* complements, temporal and non-temporal, with only the former implying 'sameness of time' and the latter referring to 'facts', as in (6), or 'possibilities', as in (7). Such an analysis is obviously unsatisfactory however, as it would split up the *-ing* form into three distinct homonyms. Defining the infinitive as 'future' or 'non-realized', on the other hand, encounters problems with usage such as (8) and (9):

(8) I managed to get the door open.

(9) I remembered to lock to door.

Here the infinitive denotes events which really took place. In the light of uses such as (6)-(9) above, it is obviously impossible to define the distinction between

¹⁶ *A New English Grammar* (Oxford, 1903), II, 120.

¹⁷ *A Modern English Grammar* (London, 1940), V, 193.

¹⁸ 'Gerund vs Infinitive', p. 11.

¹⁹ *The Semantics of Grammar*, pp. 69 & 164.

the *-ing* form and the *to*-infinitive in terms of tense or temporality.

As regards referentiality, the traditional opposition between generality (with the gerund) and particularity (with the *to*-infinitive) runs into similar problems. Indeed, there are a certain number of authors who uphold the very opposite distinction between these same two forms. Thus Freed²⁰ proposes that with aspectual verbs the *-ing* form 'refers to the unspecified duration of a single event', whereas the infinitive carries a 'generic reading'. The position of Conrad²¹ is related but slightly different: he treats the gerund as a 'referring noun phrase', i.e. one which points to 'one locatable instance, or several locatable instances, of actions, processes, states, etc.' and the infinitive as a non-referring NP, i.e. one which 'does not refer to individuated, locatable occurrences ... but is compatible with locatable occurrence'. The ambivalent nature of his position on the infinitive shows the shakiness of the referring/non-referring distinction however. Indeed, as this ambivalence might suggest, the infinitive functions both as a referring and a non-referring NP, as illustrated by (10) and (11) below:

(10) To have the Greek paper is not the great help that at first flush it seemed.

(Brown University Corpus P07 0640)

(11) And it was the House he loved. To be the presiding officer of it was the end of his desire and ambition.

(Brown University Corpus B03 0280)

The gerund, which is purported to be exclusively 'referring', is however also capable of both referring (12) and non-referring (13) uses:

(12) Giving up the violin opened a whole new career for Ilona Schmidl-Seeberg, a tiny Hungarian who Fritz Keisler had predicted would have a promising career on the concert stage.

(Brown University Corpus A30 0360)

(13) I took a deep breath. Being angry wouldn't help.

(B. Conrad *Referring and Non-Referring Phrases*, Akademisk Verlag, Copenhagen, p. 116)

To come back to the more traditional generic/particular distinction, usage shows that the gerund and the infinitive can both express these two types of reference. Both can refer to a particular occurrence:

(14) Grosse quietly got a broom and started to sweep up the sugar. Vince watched him.

(Brown University Corpus L03 0650)

(15) She stopped reading and looked up at me.

Both can also refer generically:

(16) To understand American politics ... is to know people ...

(Brown University Corpus C11 1670)

²⁰ *The Semantics of English Aspectual Complementation* (Dordrecht, 1979), p. 152.

²¹ *Referring and Non-Referring Phrases: A Study of the Use of the Gerund and the Infinitive* (Copenhagen, 1982), pp. 92 & 118.

(17) Writing a book is not unlike building a house or planning a battle or painting a picture.
(G. Scheurweghs, *Present-day English Syntax*, London, p. 205)

Consequently, the distinction between the gerund and the infinitive can be defined neither in terms of an opposition between genericity and specificity nor in terms of a contrast between simultaneity and futurity. We will attempt to propose a more solidly based distinction in section 4 below.

3. Previous Work on Verbs of Liking

The only full-length article devoted the question of infinitival and gerundive complementation with verbs of liking of which I am aware is Bladon.²² The goal of this study is to provide an exhaustive statement of the patterning of *to* and *-ing* nominalised object constructions with the verbs *like*, *love*, *hate*, *prefer* and *dislike* in modern British English. A framework is presented consisting of an ordered sequence of two-term selection procedures whose aim is to lead to the choice of the appropriate construction. This framework is inspired by the transformational-grammar approach and proposes two types of selection criteria: 'structural' rules, such as the restriction of the verb *dislike* to construal with only *-ing* complements, and 'semantic selection' rules, such as the distinction between 'actual' and 'conditional', which leads in the latter case to the choice of *would* before *like* (cf. (18b) below):

(18a) I like interviewing men of such renown.

(18b) I think I'd like interviewing a man of such renown.

The structural restrictions bearing on *like* have to do with the generative grammar category of *Aux*. Bladon²³ claims that *like* + *to*-infinitive is incompatible with *have* + *-en* and *be* + *-ing* (the latter being also incompatible with the *-ing* complement):

(19a) * He can like to learn languages.

(19b) * He could like to learn languages.

(19c) * He must like to learn languages.

(19d) * He will like to learn languages.

(20) * He has liked to learn languages

(21a) * He is liking to learn languages.

(21b) * He is liking learning languages.

If these restrictions are really structural, however, it is rather puzzling that they should apply only to certain modals and not to *may* and *might*:

(22) 'He's a liar then. He may like to blame it on them, but it's little Con Melody cared what they said.'

(E. O'Neill, *A Touch of the Poet* in *Complete Plays*, II, New York, p. 14)

²² 'Selecting the *to* or *-ing* Nominals after *like*, *love*, *hate*, *dislike* and *prefer*', in *ENGLISH STUDIES* XLIX (1968), 203-14.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 205-8.

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Moreover, a more careful examination of usage reveals that practically all of the purportedly ungrammatical structures are possible:

(23a) Someone can like to learn languages and yet not like to travel.

(23b) Perhaps you could like to start your own recycling group to benefit a local charity or school.

(British National Corpus HTA 37)

(23c) He must really like to learn languages – he is always studying a new one whenever I meet him.

(23d) The army list has provision for a number of characters without specifying who they are or where they come from within Ulthuan – it is assumed that players will like to create their own names and background histories for their characters.

(British National Corpus CM1 1885)

(24) Although the instruction books that come with new machines recommend certain ways of setting such machines up, I have always liked to experiment across the range of possible settings.
(British National Corpus G30 740)

(25) I'm liking being adulated.

The semantic selection criteria are summarized in the table below (cf. Bladon).²⁴

SELECTION	RULES	SYNTACTIC EXPONENT	
DESIRE	FULFILLED	<i>to</i> + infinitive	
	UNFULFILLED	<i>would/should</i> + <i>to</i> + infinitive	
ENJOYMENT	ACTUAL	POSITIVE	OCCASIONAL → stressed <i>like</i> + <i>to</i> + infinitive
		FREQUENT	-ing
	NONPOSITIVE	-ing	
	CONDITIONAL	<i>would/should</i> + -ing	

If *like* can be paraphrased by 'want', 'desire', 'intend' or 'go out of one's way', then it is construed exclusively with the *to*-infinitive, whether the desire is fulfilled, as in (26) or unfulfilled, as in the construction with *would/should* (27):

(26) He likes to go home by car.

(27) He would like to go home by car.

The notion of 'enjoyment' is generally associated with the -ing complement, whether the enjoyment is actual (28) or conditional (29):

²⁴ 'Selecting the *to* or -ing Nominals ...', p. 214.

(28) He likes going home by car.

(29) I think I'd like interviewing a man of such renown.

The only exception to this pattern is the case of utterances in which stressed *like* is followed by the *to*-infinitive, such as (30) below, which Bladon describes as implying enjoyment of an event that only occurs occasionally:

(30) He likes to go home by car (but his parents can't often manage to fetch him).

Although there are major problems with the structural constraints which Bladon proposes, his semantic selection rules are much more interesting. There do seem to be two general types of sense expressed by the verb *like* which fall into the semantic categories of 'desire' and 'enjoyment'. Moreover, there also appears to be a correlation between the first of these senses and the *to*-infinitive, on the one hand, and the second sense and the *-ing* form, on the other. The exception made by Bladon in the case of sentences like (30) poses a problem however: why can they not be analyzed as expressing an only occasionally fulfilled desire rather than enjoyment? Beyond these considerations arises the question of explaining why the *to*-infinitive construction should express a desire and the *-ing* construction the notion of enjoyment. Can this be related to the meanings of the complements themselves? What relation exists between usage with verbs of liking and with other verbs of similar meaning? Are there any constants which can help us to better understand the origin of the meaning and usage distinctions which can be observed in this semantic field?

A few other authors make some comments on the distinction between *like* + gerund versus *like* + infinitive. Building on Bladon's²⁵ and Bolinger's²⁶ work, Kempson and Quirk²⁷ attempt to apply to this type of verb a general distinction between 'fulfilment' (gerund) and 'non-fulfilment' (infinitive). This allows them to account for the exclusive construal of *enjoy* with the gerund and the exclusive use of the verb *expect* with the infinitive. They adduce usage with the verb *like* in support of their distinction:

The principle would seem to be supported in a limited way by modalized or otherwise contextualized forms of the few verbs that may in general dominate either infinitive or participle:

I like to visit her.

I like visiting her.

? I liked to visit her last Wednesday.

* I'd like visiting her.

It is of some interest that the two adjunct clauses can have the effect of discriminating the instances of *like* as equivalent to 'aim' and 'enjoy' respectively:

I like to get up as soon as the alarm rings.

(preferred to the gerund by 43 out of 50 respondents)

I like getting up when the weather is warm.

²⁵ 'Selecting the *to* or *-ing* Nominals ...'

²⁶ 'Entailment and the Meaning of Structures'

²⁷ 'Controlled Activation of Latent Contrast', in *Language* XLVII (1971), 548-72.

(preferred to the infinitive by 43 out of 50 respondents)²⁸

While some aspects of Kempson and Quirk's distinction between the two senses of *like* with the gerund and the infinitive seem accurate, the exclusion of *I'd like visiting her* is unjustified and the claim that *I like to visit her* evokes non-fulfilment of the infinitive event does not correspond fully to the meaning of this sentence. Moreover, the use of the artificial data provided by a questionnaire, while indicative of certain aspects of meaning, needs to be completed by an examination of naturally occurring usage in context.

Kilby,²⁹ like Bladon, feels that *like + -ing* refers to enjoyment, and he draws the further conclusion that the gerund evokes something happening at the same time as the enjoying. The infinitive, in contrast, evokes 'the prospect, or the generalised idea, of the activity'. Consequently, the sentence *I like to eat three pounds of raw meat before training sessions* 'suggests that the speaker eats the meat because he thinks it is good for him', while the corresponding sentence with the *-ing* 'suggests that he does it because it makes him feel good doing it, because he likes the experience'. Kilby does not bring out the exact nature of the sense expressed by *like* with the *to*-infinitive however, and so the relation between these two components of the construction is left somewhat vague.

Dirven³⁰ makes two sorts of distinctions between gerundive and infinitival constructions with verbs of liking. In the latter case, illustrated by (31), *like* is said to mean 'want' and the infinitive to denote 'a potential, single occurrence of an action' (p. 128):

(31) I would like to see you wearing a Roman toga and reciting Shakespeare.

In the former, illustrated by (32), *like* is glossed as 'enjoy' and the *-ing* is claimed to denote 'a factual or a general state':

(32) I have always loved acting.

The problem with this, however, is that Dirven is comparing *would like* and *like*, forgetting the contribution of the auxiliary *would* to the meaning of the utterance. If the use of *would like* with the gerund had been taken into account, the inadequacy of the description of the *-ing* as denoting a factual or general state would have become apparent.

In another passage, Dirven comments on the distinction between the gerund and the infinitive in (33a) and (33b) below in terms of the opposition between countable and non-countable nouns:

(33a) As a child, I loved to watch the trains go by.

(33b) As a child, I loved watching the trains go by.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 554.

²⁹ *Descriptive Syntax and the English Verb* (London, 1984), pp. 155-6.

³⁰ 'A Cognitive Perspective on Complementation', in *Sentential Complementation and the Lexicon*, eds. D. Jaspers, W. Klooster, Y. Putseys and P. Seuren (Dordrecht, 1989), pp. 113-39.

Here is how he formulates the analogy:

In both sentences, the speaker presupposes the truth of the complement, namely that someone watched the trains go by. But in the first sentence with the *to*-infinitive it is each single occurrence of the process of watching and consequently also the series of individual occurrences which is evoked. In this respect, the *to*-infinitive is comparable to a countable noun which may denote one or several instances of a given entity or event. In the second sentence with the gerund, it is no longer the individual occurrences of watching the train, but rather the unspecified and unbounded duration of some phenomenon, here watching trains. In this respect, the gerund is comparable to an uncountable noun or mass noun: not one single occasion nor a series of occasions is meant here, but some vague extension of the process of watching.³¹

This analogy appears however to have a rather tenuous basis in reality. Although in (33a) one does feel an impression of separate occurrences, this would seem to be linked to the impression of the speaker trying to watch trains go by whenever he could rather than to any inherent singularising value attached to the infinitive (cf. the discussion of (14)-(17) above). As for the claim that the gerund denotes the unbounded and unspecified duration or vague extension of a process, it is entirely without foundation. In both (34) and (35) below it evokes the totality of an individual occurrence:

(34) I finished reading the article at 5:30.

(35) I really liked visiting with Aunt Bertha last week.

The attempt to assimilate the infinitive/gerund distinction to the countable/non-countable opposition therefore also founders on the reef of usage.

There is consequently a need for a deeper look into complement constructions with verbs of liking. The intuitions of the authors referred to above are both fascinating and frustrating. Fascinating because one sees glimmers and glimpses of an explanation. Frustrating because the generalizations drawn from these intuitions run ashore on other data. An approach which is both systematic and firmly grounded in usage appears requisite. What follows is an attempt to propose one.

4. The Explanatory Framework

The essential parameters for explaining complement usage with the *-ing* form and the infinitive are three in number: the meaning of the complement forms themselves, the function of the complement in the sentence and the meaning of the main verb (cf. Duffley).³²

4.1. *The Meaning of the Complement Forms*

As regards the meaning of the *-ing* complement, it is important to realize that it does not always carry the aspectual value of imperfectivity which is characteristic of its use in the progressive construction. When the *-ing* is used as a gerund, it evokes the whole of an event as a homogenous entity made up of all

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

³² 'Gerund versus Infinitive as Complement of Transitive Verbs in English', in *Journal of English Linguistics* XXVIII (2000), 221-48.

of the instants contained within the event. This accounts for the compatibility of the gerundive use of the *-ing* with the preposition *after*:

(36a) After eating supper, he went out for a walk.

Here the *-ing* corresponds to a past simple form evoking the complete actualization of the eating, as shown in (36b), and not to the progressive construction in (36c):

(36b) After he ate supper, he went out for a walk.

(36c) * After he was eating supper, he went out for a walk.

In the progressive construction, the *-ing*'s event is conceived as being attributed to an agent at some point located between the beginning and end limits of this event. In gerundive usage, however, the whole interiority of the event is evoked. It will be seen below that the failure to properly identify the meaning of the gerundive *-ing* has been one of the major obstacles to achieving a proper understanding of the semantic behaviour of *-ing* complement constructions in English.

As for the *to*-infinitive, its linguistic semantics involves two components: the bare infinitive and the preposition *to*. Regarding the former, comparison with the participial *-ing* shows that the infinitive evokes an action as completely carried out from its beginning to its end:

(37a) I saw your cat crossing the street.

(37b) I saw your cat cross the street.

The bare infinitive can also evoke a state, as in (38):

(38) He did know the answer.

This makes the bare infinitive analogous to the simple form of the verb, and consequently it will be analysed here as an abstract version of the simple form. Like the latter, the bare infinitive simply evokes its event as a whole, either as a complete beginning-to-end actualization in the case of an action or a full-fledged existence in the case of a state. The difference between the infinitive and the simple form lies in the fact that the infinitive is not specified as to tense or person and so represents an event in the abstract. This is indeed the basic distinction between finite and non-finite forms of the verb.

Regarding the first element of the construction, it will be held here that the *to* introducing the infinitive is the preposition and not a meaningless infinitive marker (contra Chomsky,³³ Andersson,³⁴ Lehrer³⁵). If *to* was needed to mark an infinitive, it should occur in all of the uses of the latter, whereas there are a considerable number of cases where it is absent (after *do* auxiliary, modal verbs, *make*, *have*, *let*, *see*, *hear*, *feel*, etc.) These cannot all be explained as historical

³³ *Syntactic Structures* (The Hague, 1957), p. 100.

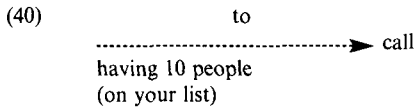
³⁴ *On Verb Complementation in Written English* (Lund, 1985), p. 267.

³⁵ 'Why *to* is not a verb', in *Aspects of Language*, eds. M. Alinei and N. Arhammar (Amsterdam, 1987), II, 256.

vestiges of past usage, since in the case of the verb *make*, for instance, the *to*-infinitive construction is common in earlier stages of the language and the restriction to complementation with the bare infinitive is a later development (cf. Visser).³⁶ Moreover, there are a certain number of cases where the bare and *to*-infinitives can be opposed to one another in terms of meaning, such as (39a) and (39b):

- (39a) I had ten people call last night.
 (39b) I had ten people to call last night.

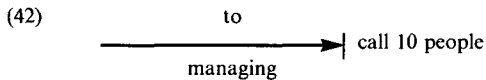
From such cases as these, it can be seen that while the bare infinitive evokes the actualization of its event, seen in (39a) as coinciding with the experience of its occurrence, the presence of *to* introduces the notion of a movement towards the subsequent realization of what the infinitive denotes (cf. Duffley).³⁷ This can be illustrated by a diagram as in (40):



The movement towards realization can be understood as possible, as in (40) above, or as actually gone through, as in (41) below:

- (41) I managed to call ten people last night.

This can be diagrammed as:



Viewing *to* as a preposition expressing the notion of movement can thus account for cases such as (41) which are inexplicable if the infinitive is analyzed as containing a 'future tense operator' as in Stowell.³⁸

Another aspect of the meaning of the complement forms must be mentioned to round out the picture – the question of person. Although neither the infinitive or the *-ing* bear an inflection for person, nor are they compatible with nominative pronouns (**What! I be/being sarcastic?*), they both behave in some respects as if they did have a subject. One example of such behaviour is their construal with adjectival subject complements, a construction which is impossible with a noun:

- (43a) Appearing tired is not quite the same thing as being tired.
 (43b) To appear tired is not quite the same thing as to be tired.
 (43c) *Appearance tired is not quite the same thing as being tired.

³⁶ *An Historical Syntax of the English Language* (Leiden, 1973), III, 2, p. 2261.

³⁷ *The English infinitive* (London, 1992).

³⁸ 'The Tense of Infinitives'.

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The adjective *tired* in (43a) and (43b) applies to a generic 'subject' implicitly present in the infinitive. This element of meaning is not present in the noun, whence the impossibility of (43c). The implicit element found in the verbal forms just referred to can be characterized as a 'generalized person' (Duffley).³⁹ It has the same relation to the event as an explicit subject, but it is not defined ordinarily as first, second or third person, being rather left undetermined as to both its ordinal rank and its nature.

4.2. *The Function of the Complement*

The second factor required to explain usage with verbs of liking followed by the *-ing* or the infinitive is the function of the complement. The evidence shows that the *-ing* is simply the direct object of the main verb in the cases under study here. First of all, it corresponds semantically to the notion of 'that which is [VERB]ed', as can be seen by the fact that in (44) below *playing tennis on the new courts* obviously designates that which was enjoyed:

(44) Everyone enjoyed playing tennis on the new courts.

This is supported by the possibility of passivization (45) and pseudo-clefting (46):

(45) Playing tennis on the new courts was enjoyed by everyone.

(46) What everyone enjoyed was playing tennis on the new courts.

Anaphoric reference to the *-ing* direct object is also possible by means of a pronoun:

(47) If they enjoyed playing tennis on those courts last time, I imagine they will enjoy it this time as well.

The criteria all indicate therefore that the gerund is used as a direct object with verbs of liking.

The situation with the *to*-infinitive is somewhat different. Mair⁴⁰ draws attention to the fact that 'although it is convenient to regard the infinitival complements of the *attempt*-class of verbs as objects, matrix verbs cannot be passivized in the normal way'. This is also true of the verb *like*, as can be seen from the following pairs of examples, one of which contains the *-ing* to serve as a basis of comparison:

(48a) The more tired they were, the less they liked getting up early.

(48b) The more tired they were, the less getting up early was liked.

(49a) The more tired they were, the less they liked to get up early.

(49b) *The more tired they were, the less to get up early was liked.

Another indication that the *to*-infinitive is not a direct object is the fact that it

³⁹ *The English infinitive*, pp. 121-2.

⁴⁰ *Infinitival Complement Clauses in English* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 105.

cannot be referred to anaphorically by a pronoun:

(50) *On Saturday Pam likes to play with her friends and Mary also likes it.

The anaphoric form used to refer back to an infinitive is rather a stranded *to*:

(51) On Saturday Pam likes to play with her friends and Mary also likes to.

For these reasons, the *to*-infinitive will be treated as a prepositional phrase acting as a goal-specifier with respect to the main verb (cf. Duffley).⁴¹

According to this analysis, the meaning of the preposition *to* defines the relation between *like* and the infinitive, representing the latter as a goal whose achievement is desired or aimed at by the subject of *like*. A prepositional goal-specifier can be very close in meaning to a direct object, as can be illustrated by the pair of examples below:

(52a) He craved peace and quiet.

(52b) He craved for peace and quiet.

Essentially the same message is conveyed whether one represents peace and quiet as that which is craved (52a) or as a goal towards whose possession the craving is oriented (52b). The linguistically-signified conceptualization of the situation is not quite the same however and while the distinction is not pragmatically significant with the example above, in other cases it is, as in usage with the verb *try*. With this verb, the direct object construction represents the gerund's event as 'that which is tried':

(53) He tried getting elected to the student council.

This implies that the subject of *try* performed this event in order to see whether it was an effective means of achieving some ulterior goal. The *to*-infinitive goal-specifier, on the other hand, corresponds to the goal itself which the employment of certain means is aimed at attaining:

(54) He tried to get elected to the student council.

This produces a very different message from the gerundive construction, one which is comparable to that of the prepositional phrase *for* + noun, which can also act as a goal specifier after *try*:

(55) He tried for a position on the student council.

The semantic parallel between the *for*-phrase and the *to*-infinitive is further evidence in support of analyzing the latter as a prepositional goal-specifier.

4.3. *The Meaning of the Main Verb*

Based on Bladon's distinction between 'desire' and 'enjoyment', one can classify most of the verbs under consideration into one of these two categories. *Want*, *wish*, *desire*, *long*, *yearn*, *hanker*, *pine*, *hunger* and *thirst* all involve different degrees of wanting. *Want*, *wish* and *desire* denote weaker or more neutral forms

⁴¹ 'Gerund versus Infinitive as Complement ...', p. 231.

of this notion; *long*, *yearn*, *hanker*, *pine*, *hunger* and *thirst* refer to stronger forms of desire. It is interesting to note that this latter group of verbs cannot have direct objects but are complemented rather by prepositional phrases introduced by *for* or *after*. Under the general notion of enjoyment, one can classify the verbs *enjoy*, which evokes the deriving of pleasure from something, *appreciate*, which involves the estimation of the value of something and the feeling of gratitude derived from this estimation, and *relish*, which refers to an intense feeling of pleasure or gratification, often derived from food or drink, or a rejoicing in an idea. *Fancy* is somewhat related to *relish* and evokes the notion of forming and/or entertaining an imaginary conception of something, often seen as desirable by the person doing the fancying. The hardest verbs to characterize are *like* and *love*. Both can denote enjoyment, with *love* implying a stronger form of it, as in:

(56) She likes/loves tennis.

Both can also evoke the notion of 'to feel inclined or attracted towards', as in:

(57) I like/love Myriam.

Once again, *love* evokes a stronger version of this feeling than does *like*. Both seem therefore to involve a positive feeling towards something which attracts one towards the latter and causes one to derive pleasure from the presence or possession of the desired object.

5. Confrontation of the Data with the Hypothesis

5.1. *The Verb like*

The most striking feature of the data involving the verb *like* is the far greater frequency of the *to*-infinitive in both British and American English: there are only 10 examples of the gerund in Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen and 8 in Brown, as compared to 123 *to*-infinitives in the British corpus and 115 in the American one. In both corpora, approximately half of these occurrences are constituted by constructions with conditional *would* or *should*, as in the examples below:

(58) The mother of a difficult child can do a great deal to help her own child and often, by sharing her experiences, she can help other mothers with the same problem. Since little is known about autism, and almost nothing has been written for the layman, we'd like to share one experienced mother's comments.

(Brown University Corpus B10 0890)

(59) However, I should not like to convey the impression that no authentic news is transmitted from Italy. Many Rome reports are based on the most solid facts – as witness the affair of the twenty-six Yemeni concubines.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus G54 81)

The closest paraphrase in these cases is usually with the verb 'wish', *would like* serving in such uses as a softened expression of a desire.

Outside of conditional contexts, *like* + *to*-infinitive was found to express a variety of related senses. These are listed below with some representative examples:

'try to if one can'

(60) We always like to keep the ball as much as possible against Denver because they have such an explosive attack.

(Brown University Corpus A12 1450)

(61) I like to get as much as possible of this planting done in November while the temperature of the soil is still fairly high, for this gives the roots a reasonable chance to get themselves established.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus E08 69)

'be in the habit of'

(62) During late childhood boys like to tease, jostle, and talk smart to girls;

(Brown University Corpus J47 0740)

(63) There's nothing he likes more than to frighten the Party. That's the first step. Then he likes to come along and kiss it better.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus K03 40)

Related to this sense is the idea of taking time out, of seizing whatever opportunities one gets to perform the infinitive's event, which can be illustrated by (64):

(64) Do you like to sew? Does making your own clothes, or even doll clothes, interest you?

(Brown University Corpus F06 0490)

'always be ready and willing to'

(65) She is a beautiful filly and likes to trot.

(Brown University Corpus E09 0910)

(66) In the bedrooms the children were preparing to sleep. He liked to watch them, he wanted children now,

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus K16 191)

'have an inclination to', 'be inclined to'

(67) Find out what you like to do most and really give it a whirl.

(Brown University Corpus F06 0490)

(68) 'Ballad of a Soldier' was a simple story of a pure young boy and a pretty girl falling in love. It was something with which audiences liked to identify themselves.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus G49 135)

There is a sub-type of this use which occurs with verbs of thinking and imagining to evoke a pet idea, a view to which someone is inclined by personality, worldview or purportedly superior insight into a situation:

(69) every grown man (except a few who were always suspected of being shy on virility) knew at least the fundamentals of baseball, just as every male American in this era liked to imagine (or pretend) that he could fight with his fists.

(Brown University Corpus F38 1630)

(70) A dutiful teacher puts his back into his work and is apt to be hard and unbending. The diligent teacher puts his heart into his work because he loves it, and this is how I like to think of teachers today doing their work.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus B27 119)

VERBS OF LIKING WITH THE INFINITIVE AND THE GERUND

'*want, wish*'

(71) First of all, no unit likes to have a new CO brought in from outside, especially when he's an armchair trooper.

(Brown University Corpus F22 0270)

(72) "Divorces cost money."

'Well, he had a bit, hadn't he? Didn't have to work, seemed comfortable enough.'

'Yes, but he didn't like to spend it.'

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus L14 91)

In the American corpus, this sense is always associated with a generic reference; in the British corpus, however, there are some instances where the infinitive's event is specific:

(73) 'Did you find it?'

He shook his head again. 'Some one gave it me.' Martin had not liked to go on questioning him, suspecting that this would be an intrusion on some private memory which he wanted to respect.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus K06 172)

(74) She hesitated. 'I - I don't really like to tell you,' she said reluctantly.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus L22 188)

This usage is only found in negative or non-assertive contexts (e.g. with expressions such as *hardly*). In American English one would have the verb *want* in such cases.

'*tend to*'

(75) A man has 32 souls, one for each part of the body. Those souls like to wander off, and must be called back.

(Brown University Corpus F24 1660)

(76) [No instances found in Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus.]

'*prefer, choose to*'

(77) Though Americans usually lived in groups segregated by national origin or religious belief, they liked to work and shop in the noise and vitality of downtown. Only a radical change in the nature of the population in the central city would be likely to destroy this preference ...

(Brown University Corpus J60 1600)

(78) Similarly, since most men like to be seen to do the paying, it is a tactful precaution if, at the start of the evening out, she gives him the theatre tickets 'to take care of' ...

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus F08 72)

Normally, *like + to* evokes a habitual preference; however, one case has come to hand where it refers to a choice exercised on one particular occasion:

(79) After they left, some of the people moved around, to find more comfortable places to sit. There were not many chairs, so that some preferred to sit on the edge of the porch, resting their feet on the ground, and others liked to sit where they could lean back against the wall.

(Brown University Corpus K26 1461)

One gets the impression that the author was perhaps seeking to avoid the repetition of the verb *prefer* in this instance. Finally, there are two cases which are difficult to paraphrase, but which seem to evoke a very positive or favourable disposition towards the occurrence of the event expressed by the infinitive:

(80) She skipped a piece of water at him and laughed, a funny, hoarse laugh he liked to hear.

(Brown University Corpus P16 1240)

(81) A fascinating letter has just reached this desk from a correspondent who likes to receive so-called junk mail.

(Brown University Corpus B07 1655)

The occurrence in (81) could be paraphrased by 'be happy to' and that in (80) by 'be fond of'. In the latter case one feels some similarity with the 'pet idea' impression of the *like to think/imagine* construction, in that this sentence evokes one of the person's favourite sounds.

As for the gerundive construction, most of the uses can be paraphrased by the verb 'enjoy' (7 of the 8 cases in Brown, 7 out of 10 in Lancaster):

(82) A fairly common experience for us is the wife who finds her husband staying out more and more. He may be interested in another woman, or just like being out with the boys.

(Brown University Corpus C17 1100)

(83) Even more simply, test your own reactions to different situations. There are some which bring on an almost immediate feeling of tiredness – such as when your wife mentions the washing-up – while others, if they refer to something you like doing, bring a veritable surge of energy.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus D06 83)

In some negative contexts, the closest paraphrase is with 'dislike' or 'detest':

(84) I never liked going straight into an examination with patients – it relaxes them, I've always thought, to chat first.

(Brown University Corpus P19 0760)

(85) 'Now just a minute, young lady!' His face reddened, darkening the welts and bruises, and emphasizing the purple bulge under the right eye. 'I don't like being called a spy.'

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus N07 134)

In others, the same paraphrase is possible as in affirmative contexts:

(86) Enough of his life was spent there on the field for him never to like watching the game as a spectator in the crowd. He always feels lonely.

(Brown University Corpus B14 0410)

(87) There was blue trout next, then a young chicken that had been cooked in wine and herbs, finally a platter of cheese and fruit.

Rob took a deep breath. 'I think that was the best meal I've ever eaten. I think of beans on toast in Birmingham and shudder. Or spaghetti. I won't like going to Italy!'

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus P10 23)

5.2. *The Verb love*

Similarly to the verb *like*, *love* is also far more frequent with the *to*-infinitive than with the gerund (10 out of 11 occurrences in Brown, 6 out of 7 in Lan-

caster). The *would + love* construction is very frequent as well with the infinitive (3 cases out of 10 in Brown, 4 out of 6 in Lancaster).

As regards meaning, both of the occurrences of the gerundive construction evoke enjoyment, *love* denoting a more intense degree of this notion than *like*:

(88) The Szolds, like the Marches, enjoyed and loved living together, even in troubled times; and, as in the March home, any young man who called on the Szolds found himself confronted with a phalanx of femininity which made it difficult to direct his attention to any particular one of them.

(Brown University Corpus G31 1540)

(89) He loves reading and is a bookworm in the true sense of the word.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus F44 184)

The *to*-infinitive construction occurs with two types of meaning. The most frequent type corresponds to the sense 'try to whenever one can', 'seize every opportunity to', as in:

(90) I must plead guilty to a special sympathy for nomias. This may just be pride in my adopted State of Washington, but certainly I love to visit their mound cities near Yakima or Prosser in July or August, when the bees are in their most active period.

(Brown University Corpus J10 1560)

(91) He laughed at her crestfallen expression. 'I love to tease you darling. Actually I'll manage so much better with you along.'

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus P13 123)

The second type is paraphrasable by 'be fond of', 'rejoice to' and occurs only one time, in the British corpus:

(92) They began to go everywhere, so that people learned to say: 'Hello, Willie, hello Helen, nice to see you, Helen.' He loved to hear them linking their names in this way. The link was a form of marriage.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus N12 139)

5.3. *Explanation of Usage with like and love*

The type of meaning expressed by *like* and *love* with the *-ing* form can be explained quite readily by our hypothesis. Both of these verbs denote the notion of enjoyment here (*love* a stronger degree of it than *like*) and the *-ing*, as direct object of these verbs, evokes that which is/was enjoyed. This implies coincidence in time between the liking and the event liked, as one generally derives enjoyment from an event while one is performing it. In some cases in the negative, however, such as (85) above, one gets the impression that the gerund's event is prior to the disliking, the latter being a reaction to an event already performed. In all of the cases in the corpus, there is subject control of the gerund's event, as someone generally enjoys or dislikes actualizing an event of which that person is the author. However, the noun-like quality of the *-ing* and its direct object role also allows for non-subject control, as in Wood's example *I don't like sending first offenders to prison*: this construction is comparable to *I don't like harsh treatment of first offenders*, which also shows non-subject control of the event 'treating'.

With the infinitive, on the other hand, *like* and *love* evoke some form of inclination to actualize the infinitive's event. This disposition can take the form of a desire, as in (71)-(72), but it can also be a habit (62)-(63), an inclination (67)-(68), a tendency (75)-(76) or a preference (77)-(78). Often it is closely associated with a habitual effort to perform the infinitive's event whenever one can, an impression which is dominant in (60)-(61). Bladon's analysis of the meaning of the *to*-infinitive construction as that of 'desire' must consequently be refined: the latter is but one among a group of related senses which would be better described by a broader term such as 'positive inclination or disposition'. The *to*-infinitive evokes the event towards whose actualization the disposition inclines the subject of *like/love*. Since the preposition *to* evokes the movement of the subject towards the infinitive event, this construction always implies subject control, even in Wood's example in which the verbal context allows a non-subject reading with the gerund (cf. *I don't like to send first offenders to prison*). The *to*-infinitive in this sentence is not a direct object denoting that which is not liked, but rather a goal-specifier evoking an event which the subject of *like* is not inclined to perform.

The only problem cases for our hypothesis in the corpus are (80) and (81) with *like*, and (92) with *love*. In all three of these cases, the infinitive evokes an event which happens to the subject of *like/love*, over whose occurrence the latter has no control. Does this fact obscure the notion of inclination, i.e. are these cases where the subject is represented as being only too happy to actualize an event whose actualization they must wait for circumstances to provide? There does seem to be an impression of 'if the subject could have its way, it would actualize this event as often as possible' in these uses. An alternative analysis might be however that these are cases of what Jespersen⁴² calls the 'infinitive of reaction', as in (93):

(93) He smiled to see their youthful impatience.

Here the *to*-infinitive seems to be functioning as an adverbial of time equivalent to 'when he saw', in which case it could be that the arrival of the subject at the actualization of 'see' is used to situate in time the event expressed by the main verb *smiled*. Since a tried and tested analysis of the infinitive of reaction is still forthcoming, the final word on these problematic uses must await further research.

5.4. Verbs Construed only with the Infinitive

The verbs *want*, *wish*, *desire*, *long*, *yearn*, *hanker*, *pine*, *hunger* and *thirst* are only attested with the infinitive:

(94) As for that other girl, let's just say I never want to see her again.

(Brown University Corpus L01 0910)

(95) he had not been at the Sutton Coldfield meeting and he wished to 'put two or three things right.'

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus A36 183)

⁴² *A Modern English Grammar*, V, 259-60.

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(96) There will be many who desire to seek the Lord in prayer, and they will recognize where God is to be found in that day.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus D11 103)

(97) Lorraine dear, do come down with me and tell me all your news. I'm longing to hear how you got on in town.

(Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus P05 84)

(98) How about the art of cooking? Do you yearn to make cakes and pies, or special cookies and candies?

(Brown University Corpus F06 0740)

There are no examples of the last four verbs in either the Brown University or the Lancaster/Oslo-Bergen corpora, which indicates the lower frequency of the occurrence of these constructions. Attested uses were found however in the British National and the Collins Cobuild databases:

(99) He could see that, even now, she hankered to go back.

(British National Corpus GUX 1535)

(100) At that point, the Clinton the world pines to see – leader, rather than scrambler – should, with luck, appear.

(British National Corpus CR7 155)

(101) he knew what it meant to hunger to become and remain number one.

(Collins Cobuild Corpus)

(102) Because Dorothy is such a charismatic figure, many people thirst to see her on television or read about her.

(British National Corpus AM6 138)

The reason for the behaviour of these verbs is quite obvious. The fact that they denote various forms of desire means that the infinitive's event is in the situation of being a goal whose achievement is aimed at by the subject possessing the desire. The preposition *to* represents the movement towards the goal required for the attainment of this goal. Many of these verbs cannot take direct objects, but are construed with other prepositions which also evoke their complements as goals: *to wish for a baby girl, to long for a rest, to yearn for the sight of one's native land, to hanker after praise, to pine for home, to hunger for justice, to thirst for recognition*. *Want* and *desire* can in some cases be construed with direct objects; however, the *to*-infinitive does not correspond to this function, since it cannot be replaced by a pronoun (103), nor represented as that which is 'wanted' in a passive construction (104):

(103) * Everyone wanted to leave, but Bill didn't want it.

(104) * To leave was wanted by everyone.

The only plausible analysis is that *to* + infinitive is a prepositional phrase denoting the intended goal of the wanting, a hypothesis which is rendered even more plausible by the behaviour of the other verbs expressing the general notion of desire, all of which are followed by prepositional goal-expressions.

5.5. Verbs Construed only with the Gerund

The verbs *enjoy*, *relish*, *fancy* and *appreciate* are found only with the gerund:

(105) ... this brought to the Szold house a group of bright young Jews who had come to Baltimore to study, and who enjoyed being fed and mothered by Mamma and entertained by Henrietta and Rachel, who played and sang for them in the upstairs sitting room on Sunday evenings. (Brown University Corpus G31 0590)

(106) The cornering and the road-holding on the Citroen were astonishingly good (...). But best of all was the Citroen's gluttony for work. It seemed to relish being driven hard, and flat-out driving all day appeared to leave it refreshed and longing for more. (Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus G24 12)

There are no cases of *appreciate* or *fancy* + gerund in either Brown or Lancaster. Thirteen cases of *appreciate* + *being* and twenty-four of *fancy* + *being* occur however in the British National Corpus, one example of each construction being given in (107) and (108) below:

(107) I know exactly how they'll react – one will be emotional, the other will change the subject – and neither will appreciate being told in front of the other. (British National Corpus CA9 419)

(108) How do you fancy being the Chancellor of the Exchequer's wife for the next couple of years? (British National Corpus FR1 2321)

The reason for the restriction of their complement to an *-ing* direct object can be formulated negatively, by opposition to the kind of meaning compatible with the *to*-infinitive: these verbs do not denote any form of inclination leading to the actualization of the complement's event. Temporally speaking, this is not most obvious with *enjoy* and *appreciate*: one enjoys or appreciates an event while it is being performed. *Relish* is more often used to refer to rejoicing in a thought or a prospect, but what it evokes is the feeling of pleasure derived from the idea, and not directly the desire to actualize an event (although this can be inferred from the revelling of the relisher in the idea of the event). *Fancy* also belongs to the realm of the imagination, being often the equivalent of the verb *imagine*:

(109) And that was another thing – fancy being told to call her by a name which meant in French not only 'stepmother' and 'mother-in-law' but 'beautiful Mama' too! (British National Corpus FPH 3583)

Like *relish*, it evokes rejoicing in an idea or an eventuality. Although it comes close to the notion of desire in uses such as (108), the impression of imagining a scenario with pleasure is still dominant, which explains why the complement is an *-ing* direct object denoting that which is thus imagined, rather than a *to*-infinitive evoking the goal of a desire.

6. Conclusion

The examination of usage carried out in this study has led to a refinement of the intuitions of grammarians concerning verbs of liking, in particular those of Bladon. The purely syntactic criteria proposed to account for the choice of complement with these verbs have been shown to be inadequate, the relevant factors governing complement usage being rather semantic. The connection which Bladon makes between the notion of 'desire' and the use of the *to*-infinitive has been confirmed and in addition found to underlie complement choice with the verbs *want*, *wish*, *desire*, *long*, *yearn*, *hanker*, *pine*, *hunger* and *thirst*. His analysis has had to be rectified with the verbs *like* and *love*, however, as a variety of other senses besides that of 'desire' were also found with the *to*-infinitive: 'try if one can', 'be in the habit of', 'always be ready and willing to', 'be inclined to' and 'tend to'. The common factor present in all of these senses, and which accounts for the use of the *to*-infinitive construction, is the conceiving of liking as a prior disposition inclining the subject of *like/love* to actualize the infinitive's event. This disposition is generally thought of as stable or habitual, although the British English corpus shows that in this variety of English it can be oriented towards a specific actualization, as in (73) and (74) above. The occurrence of the *to*-infinitive with these senses of *like* and *love* has thus been situated within a general view of the behaviour of the *to*-infinitive complement construction which takes into account both its inherent semantic content and its syntactic function.

With respect to the gerundive construction, the semantic relation between the main verb and the complement has been found to be more free than with the *to*-infinitive. Since the *-ing* form is the direct object of the main verb, the relation in time between the two events is a function of the lexical content of the main verb. With a verb used in the sense of 'enjoy', one will understand that pleasure was derived from the enjoyed event while it was being performed (cf. *I enjoyed talking with you*). On the other hand, with a verb used in the sense of 'imagine with enjoyment', such as *fancy*, the message understood will be that pleasure was derived from the fancied event while it was being imagined:

(110) He had fancied being a poet when he was a boy – before he'd been thrust out into the real world to try to earn a living.

(British National Corpus AC3 1223)

This situates the actual performance of the event in the future with respect to the fancying. The examination of the behaviour of the gerund with the verbs dealt with in this study thus serves to illustrate further the view of the *-ing* developed in Duffley (2000) and the fact that as a direct object complement this form does not have the imperfective aspectual value which is characteristic of the progressive. Much confusion has resulted from seeking some form of simultaneity between the *-ing* complement and the main verb. We have seen why this impression is produced when the *-ing*'s event is the direct object of a verb having the sense of enjoyment: one derives pleasure from an event while one is performing it. With verbs expressing the related notion of 'imagine with enjoyment', however, the imagined event from whose consideration a certain pleasure

is derived is temporally future and non-realized with respect to the event expressed by the main verb. The opposition between the *-ing* and the *to*-infinitive cannot be defined in terms of 'simultaneous' vs 'future' or 'real' vs 'non-real': although the meaning of *to* does situate the infinitive's event as subsequent to that of the main verb, the fact that the *-ing* is simply the direct object of the main verb renders any temporal relation between the two dependent on the meaning of the main verb, which can imply simultaneity, futurity, posteriority, or even no particular temporal relation, according to its lexical content.

As a final note regarding the lexical side of the question, one might note the existence of a logical relation between the notion of enjoying an activity and the desire or inclination to perform it: on the one hand, it is often the case that the reason why a person wants to perform some activity is because he enjoys performing it; from another perspective, it is also true that if someone wants to do something he will probably enjoy doing it, even if he has never done it before. Consequently it is not surprising that verbs such as *like* and *love* are capable of evoking both an 'enjoyment' sense and a 'desire/inclination' sense. Nor is it surprising that it should be the verbs *like* and *love* which possess this potential: the idea of feeling a positive disposition which attracts one towards the object of liking/loving and causes one to experience pleasure in the presence of the latter allows construals with focus either on the dispositional or the experiential side of this notion. This has given some observers the impression that it is the same thing to like to do something as it is to like doing it. In spite of the very close relation between these notions, one can object to this that it is perfectly conceivable for someone to like to get up early in the morning and yet not to like getting up.

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