

TEACHING ENGLISH GERUND AND PROGRESSIVE CONTRAST IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This work aims at providing the didactic strategies that could help the secondary school teachers and learners cope with the English gerund and progressive contrast based on the suffix "ing" within English sentences. In fact, the classroom observation, the teachers' questionnaire and the learners' written activities have served to collect relevant data from the Second class. It results that, teachers of English only deal with the spelling "ing" to teach continuous tenses, neglecting gerund and its different grammatical functions within sentences. Consequently, the Second-class learners lack knowledge that could help to distinguish gerund from progressive through English writing activities. Thus, this work shows that English gerund and progressive contrast could be taught, learnt and assessed thanks to the explanatory method coupled with the 3Ps revisited method in a teaching lesson plan.

Keywords: Teaching, gerund, progressive, sentence.

Résumé

Ce travail de recherche propose des stratégies didactiques qui pourront aider les enseignants et apprenants à traiter la notion de l'opposition du gérondif anglais à l'aspect progressif basé sur le suffixe « ing » dans des phrases anglaises. En effet, l'observation de salles de classes, le questionnaire destiné aux enseignants et le test des apprenants ont servi pour collecter des données appropriées dans des classes de Seconde. Il résulte que les enseignants d'anglais ne se contentent que de l'enseignement de la forme progressive du suffixe « ing », mais ils négligent l'enseignement du « ing » exprimant le gérondif avec ses fonctions grammaticales dans des phrases anglaises. Par conséquent, les apprenants de Seconde ne disposent pas de connaissances qui peuvent les aider à différencier le gérondif de la forme progressive dans différents exercices. Ainsi, ce travail prouve que cet enseignement est possible et pourrait être appris et évalué grâce à la méthode explicative associée à la méthode révisée des 3Ps dans une fiche pédagogique selon le niveau des apprenants sélectionnés.

Mots clés : Enseignement, gérondif, progression, phrase.

Introduction

The main objective of this work is to suggest the teaching-learning strategies that could enable both teachers and learners to deal with the contrast between gerund and progressive through the English affixes. Actually, writing correctly in any language is not an easy task for the secondary school learners. That is, mastering and implementing the different writing activities in classes require much time and a lot of training. Thus, the official syllabus of English course includes: "G.O.2: *Expressing oneself orally*, G.O.3: *Understanding written messages*, S.O.2.8: *Forming lexical words* and S.O.3.6: *Forming lexical words for English gerund whereas*, G.O.2: *Expressing oneself orally*, G.O.4: *Expressing by writing*, S.O.2.12: *Using appropriate tense to*

express an action or an event and S.O.4.4: Using appropriate tense to express an action, an event” to enable both teachers and learners deal with word formation and sentence construction in any English tense.

Obviously, the content of gerund covers its different functions in a sentence as a subject, a complement, a direct or an indirect object. However, progressive is concerned with ongoing actions such as present continuous, past continuous, present perfect continuous, past perfect continuous, future continuous, future perfect continuous. Thus, these English grammar notions are required to be taught, learnt and assessed autonomously regarding the syllabus prescriptions. Hence, this research work contrasts the English gerund and progressive because they share the same morphological feature based on the suffix "ing" attached to the English verbs. This morphological similarity causes trouble to the secondary school learners during the writing activities in classes. That is the reason why, the applied linguistics, the contrastive teaching and the didactic of languages are the selected issues to facilitate the teaching, learning and assessing of this English grammar item in the secondary school classes.

As a result, the teaching of these English grammar items in general and sentence components in particular tend to prepare learners to face testing activities during the formative and summative evaluations. Firstly, the teaching of English gerund and progressive contrast could help secondary school learners apprehend how to form "gerund" with the suffix "ing" in order to create a noun from a verb. Secondly, learners will discover the different grammatical functions of gerund as the subject of a sentence when it occurs at the initial position of the sentence, a subject complement when it brings more information about the subject, and a direct or an indirect object and object of preposition in different sentences.

Thus, this article is divided into different sections which are related to the previous works on English grammar items, the data collection analysis, and the practical suggestions based on the teaching, learning and testing of English gerund and progressive contrast in different classes.

I- Previous works English grammar notions

This section reviews some previous works dealing with the teaching of English grammar notions in secondary schools. As a matter of fact, the following authors: Inam Ismael Taher (2015), Patrick J. Duffley (2003), Raflis et al, (2018) Mackelberghe et al (2021), and Khalid Fattah, et al (2021) are selected to enlighten the audience about the different aspects of English gerund and progressive.

Inam Ismael Taher (2015) develops the similarities and the differences among the three terms, gerund, verbal noun, and deverbal noun. Thus, he (2015:30) writes, *“the study aims to point out the confusing discrepancies in terminology, the properties of these forms, the similarities and differences between these three forms, and accordingly their categories”*. In fact, the author evokes the confusion the secondary school learners are victims of when dealing with the notion of gerund in English sentences. This is due to the suffix letters *“ing”* in different sentences where it may express the progressive form of the verb, the subject or the complement of a complete sentence as in the example (1):

- a. I am **teaching** English.
- b. **Learning** is my desire
- c. I am devoted to **fishing**
- d. I like **dancing**

When analysing the example (1), it appears that during the English learning process, learners encounter some difficulties to understand the different natures of the *“ing”* form in different sentences. Indeed, this spelling may express the progressive as in (1a) when it is constructed with the auxiliary *“To be”* in a given tense. Then, in (1b) the grapheme *“ing”* is combined with an ordinary verb that acts as a noun and functions as a subject of a given sentence. In (1c) *“ing”* added to the verb *“fish”* at the end of the sentence makes this latter act as a complement; namely, an indirect object since it comes after the preposition *“to”*. Finally, in (1d) the letters *“ing”* coupled with the verb *“dance”* makes this latter carry the nature of a noun and it functions as a direct object. Therefore, it is important to mention that the *“ing”* form usage is a matter of confusion in the secondary school learners’ minds because; it is used sometimes as a gerund, a verbal noun or a deverbal noun in English sentences. The illustration (2) evidences:

- a. John's **refusing the offer** was out of anger.
- b. The **killing** of the president was an atrocious crime.

When analysing this illustration, Inam Ismael Taher enlightens the difference between deverbal noun and verbal noun. In fact, deverbal nouns are nouns derived from verbs or verb phrases, but they grammatically

function as nouns in a sentence as in (2a). Whereas, Verbal nouns do not take direct objects. They are modified by adjectives rather than adverbs as in (2b). Otherwise, the distinction between deverbal nouns and verbal nouns is that, deverbal noun functions as autonomous common nouns, whereas verbal noun keeps the verbal features. The verbal noun is derived from a verb, it is precisely a noun, and it shows nominal characteristic through the use of determiners like *the* and *this* as in the example (3):

- a. **The singing** of the song was wonderful.
- b. **This singing** pleased me a lot.

By scrutinizing the sentences (3a) and (3b), it is revealed that the use of determiners *the* or *this* makes the gerund change its nominal characteristics because the combination of the gerund and the determiners *the* as in (3a) and the determiner *this* as in (3b) makes this latter carry the function of verbal noun. Furthermore, the verbal noun is not only characterized by the use of determiners associated to the gerund, but it is also identified when it enables adjectives. In this regard, Inam Ismael Taher (2015:31) evidences: “*Verbal nouns do not take direct objects as verbs can, and they are modified by adjectives rather than adverbs. Some authors call these deverbal nouns rather than verbal nouns. In English, such nouns can be formed from verbs with the suffix -ing, that is, they take the same form as the gerund*”. This quotation demonstrates that verbal nouns are attested in English sentences when they are modified by adjectives placed before the gerund as in the following illustration: (John’s **deft painting** of his son is wonderful). In fact, the association of the adjective *deft* with the gerund *painting* in this sentence makes the gerund carry the nature of a verbal noun because the gerund *painting* is modified by an adjective that comes before this latter.

Actually, gerund, verbal noun and deverbal noun are sometimes similar to the extent that they share the same external construction within a sentence. That is, they have something in common based on the grapheme “ing” that makes them similar as in the example (4).

- a. **Eating** much sugar is not good for health.
- b. Khan’s **accepting** the offer was out of any profits.
- c. The **drinking** of coca cola is prohibited.

When analysing these sentences, it reveals that in one hand, the gerund in (4a), the deverbal noun in (4b) and the verbal noun in (4c) are all alike since they share the letters “ing” which are associated to the verbs “eat, accept, and drink” in the above sentences. But, the distinction between these three grammatical aspects is at the level of their internal construction as in the illustration (5).

- a. Their **acting** in a nasty manner surprised us.
- b. Peter’s **writing** depicts his **refusal**.
- c. Their **nasty acting** makes them out of job.

The above illustration shows the nuance between the gerund, the verbal noun and the verbal noun. In fact, (5a) deals with the gerund when it keeps its nature as a noun and functions as the subject of the verb “surprised”. (5b) is concerned with the deverbal noun that is not followed by any preposition and it is considered as a pure common noun and, sometimes it carries two different suffixes: “ing” as in (writing) and “al” suffixes as in (refusal). (5c) talks about the verbal noun since it is modified by the adjective *nasty* changing the gerund into verbal noun.

In short, this linguistic piece of work has dealt with the different grammatical rules that could help both teacher and learners face the functions of gerund in English sentences, the similarity and the dissimilarity between gerund, verbal noun and deverbal noun. However, this study lacks the didactic process that may facilitate the teaching and learning of each of these grammar items in secondary schools accordingly.

Patrick Duffley (2003) aims to show the difference between gerund and infinitive in teaching and learning English. In fact, this opposition stands on the position and the function of both items in sentences where they could be subject of the same predicate. Thus, the author (2003: 324) writes: “*This corpus-based study shows that the distinction between the gerund and the infinitive cannot be accounted for in terms of the previously proposed oppositions between particularity and generality*”. Duffley clarifies the nuance between the “ing” form and the “to- infinitive” in different English sentences. In effect, the relevance is put on the verb to indicate the progressive aspect of the action. However, the infinitive focuses on the result of the action or the preference. In the learning

process, the distinction between the two teaching notions is complex. As a matter of fact, the author requests teachers of English to first enlighten learners about their dissimilarities in terms of morphology.

Additionally, Duffley mentions that the “to- infinitive” is made of the meanings of its two constituent parts, (the bare infinitive and the preposition “to”), whereas the spelling “ing” is part of the verb’s morphology as evidenced in the example (14) below:

- a. *To drink* alcohol is bad for children.
- b. *Drinking* alcohol is bad for children.

In the first sentence (14a), the infinitive construction is made up of the preposition “to” that follows the verb separately, but in the second one (14b), the “ing” form is linked to the verb and becomes a part of the verb’s morphology.

Moreover, this distinction is also defined in terms of particularity and generality. In effect, the particularity concerns the “ing” form when it evokes an event that exists at the same time as other events that do not only happen simultaneously (in past, present and future times). However, the generality refers to the to-infinitive to the extent that it is represented as denoting an event that is future or hypothetical in some extent as in the example (15) below:

- a. I saw him **walking** across the square.
- b. I saw him **walk** across the square.

The analysis of this illustration unveils that in (15a), the speaker deals with the performed ongoing action or event that happens in the present time, but in (15b), it is the integral actualization of the event. This means that the speaker talks about the completed performance of the action or the total realization of the action from the starting point to end of the event.

In a word, Duffley has dealt with the contrast between gerund and infinitive usage in English sentences. In fact, the author has clarified this opposition in terms of particularity and generality when expressing events. The “ing” form expresses particularity when it talks about the ongoing action, whereas the “to- infinitive” expresses generality when it depicts the action from the beginning to the end. Elsewhere, Duffley’s work needs to be transposed into teaching items that could be learnt and assessed accordingly in different pedagogical classes in secondary schools.

Rafliis, et al (2018) focus their work on the English ending “ing”. They show the ambiguity of this ending that has two properties in grammar. In fact, when “ing” is associated to a verb, it functions as a subject or an object in English sentences. However, when this latter is combined with a verb and preceded by an auxiliary verb, it expresses continuous action in different tenses. In this perspective, the authors (2018: 60) explain: “*The problem in this journal is gerund, verbal ending -ing and serves as a noun. Gerund differs from grammar construction in English because it is able to convert a verb into a noun by adding -ing at the end of the verb. At the same time, there is also a continuous tense form that adds “ing” at the end of the verb.*” Obviously, the grapheme “ing” covers two grammatical categories when it is used in English sentence construction. They are related to verb and noun categories. Thus, the authors show that, when “ing” is associated to a verb, it makes this latter a noun that carries different functions in English sentences. This noun refers to gerund that may serve as a subject or a complement (direct object or object of the preposition). This means, a gerund can have several placements within a sentence either at the beginning, the middle or the final positions. These positions justify the different grammatical functions of the gerund. The example (16) illustrates:

- a. **Reading** is my pass time.
- b. Peter’s way of **reading** is very good.
- c. All my pass time is **reading**.
- d. I am devoted to **reading**.

The analysis of this example unveils that the word “Reading” within its different positions expresses a gerund. It plays the role of simple subject as in (16a), a modifier of a complete subject as in (16b), a direct object as in (16c) and an indirect object as in (16d).

In teaching process, the authors select distributional method to facilitate the learners’ understanding on the English gerund. Indeed, the distributional method works from language observation, syntactic function

(subject, object, predicate), clause, word syllable, punctuation, to quote only a few. A linguistic method consists in handling some questionnaires in order to collect data for a given domain of study.

In this study, the authors use this method to analyse gerund as subject, direct object, complement of subject, and object of preposition. As a matter of fact, Raflis et al develop the analysis of gerund usage through distributional method. When analysing the “tempo magazine” research on the notion of gerund, they argue that there are four types of gerunds, which are subject, direct object, subject complement, and object of preposition. They found 8 gerunds used as subject, 5 gerunds as direct object, 6 gerunds as subject complement, and 23 gerunds as object of preposition. Accordingly, they confess that Tempo mostly uses gerund as the object of preposition in their magazine compared to the other type of gerund.

In a word, the authors have limited this research on showing the different functions of gerund according to its positions in English sentences. However, they did not specify the didactical process to facilitate the teaching and the learning of the English gerund in secondary school classes.

Maekelberghe et al (2021) aim at showing the nuance between nominal and verbal gerund usage in English sentences. Otherwise, the authors focus on the comparison of verbal gerund from nominal gerund in usages and meanings of each according to their features when they (2021: 422) mention, “*We show that conceptual features associated with nominal or verbal construal of an event, as presented in the cognitive-functional paradigm, can be operationalized as variables within a quantitative, variation approach*”. This quotation deals with the gerund system, where the choice of a specific nominal or verbal gerund construction is modelled based on both language-internal and language-external variables.

Obviously, what differentiates the two items (nominal and verbal gerund) is a matter of some linguistic characteristics. That means, gerund can be used to express facts within sentences. This is what blocks the learners’ understanding of the gerund usage during the learning process because of the difficulty to recognize a gerund as nominal or verbal as in the illustration (17):

- a. Please remain standing for *the singing* of our national anthem.
- b. He joined them in *singing* the Greek national anthem.
- c. His *eating* vegetables surprised me.

When observing the above illustration, (17a) expresses nominal gerund due to the presence of the definite article “the” coming before the words “singing”. (17b) is considered as verbal gerund when the gerund keeps the verbal feature. Moreover, (17c) testifies fictive actions when the gerund describes what someone often does as an attested truth.

Historically, nominal gerund came first, whereas verbal gerund has been developed from the Middle English period and becomes the most frequent subtype in Present-day English. In fact, it is due to the formal mixture of nominal and verbal features, that the verbal type of gerund receives most attention in the early formal analyses of the English gerund. In this perspective, Maekelberghe et al (2021:423) evidences:

English gerundives were long analysed as curious morpho-syntactic clusters of nominal and verbal features. Two major subtypes were thereby distinguished, viz. so-called “nominal” gerunds which diachronically speaking came first, and “verbal” gerunds, which gradually developed from the Middle English period onwards and have become the most frequent subtype by far in Present-day English. Due to their curious formal mixture of nominal and verbal features, the verbal type of gerunds received most attention in the early formal analyses of the gerund.

It results from this quotation that the nominal gerund (**The drinking** of beers is prohibited) appears firstly whereas, the verbal gerund (**Eating** much salt is dangerous) is developed secondly. This latter becomes the most used in speaking and writing English. Therefore, both also help shed light on the changing ways in which speakers exploit the structural options. That is, their different positions which determine the grammatical functions in English sentences.

To sum up, Maekelberghe et al have focused their research work on the teaching and learning of English gerund contrasting nominal gerund, verbal gerund from factive actions in different sentences. In fact, nominal gerund deals with the insertion of the definite article “the” associated to the word carrying the “ing” form. Verbal gerund refers to the verb that carries the “ing” form but it keeps the verbal features. In some cases, it can be modified by an adjective. Whereas factive actions are concerned with the expression of an attested truth.

Elsewhere, this work does not provide the secondary school teachers and learners with some didactic strategies that could help the later deal with this notion in different pedagogical classes.

Khalid Fattah El Hakim et al. (2021) aim at identifying the gerund usage found in *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes* and describe their implementation in teaching Reading. In fact, the best way to study the use of gerund is to exploit novels, short stories where concrete life conversations are attest how gerund is used in communication with a particular view different from the continuous tense as they (2021: 32) argue: “*There are many misperceptions regarding gerund, especially for the beginners or the young learners. Gerund shares similar characteristics to continuous tenses and present participle adjectives. All of them uses -ing verb as the distinguishing trait*”. The above passage unveils the secondary school learners’ misunderstanding about the gerund, the progressive form and the participle adjective since they share the same spelling of “ing” in sentences. Otherwise, all these grammatical categories are “ing” form verb, but they cover different functions within English sentences.

In English sentences, the gerund behaves as a noun, the progressive works as a verb, and the participle refers to an adjective as in the example (18) below.

- a. She is **walking** toward you.
- b. **Walking** in the desert is not fun.
- c. She understands many words like a **walking** dictionary.

The analysis of this example depicts the different functions by some grammatical categories sharing the combination of verb- infinitive and the grapheme “ing” in the above sentences. In (18a) “**walking**” expresses the progressive or continuous tense when it follows the auxiliary “be”. In (18b), “**Walking**” refers to a gerund since it behaves as a noun or the subject of the liking verb “be”. Moreover, in (18c), “**walking**” is neither the progressive aspect nor the gerund, but it functions as an adjective of the noun “dictionary”. That is, “walking” modifies “dictionary” in this English sentence. Working on English gerund, these authors discover that three usages of gerund are possible in English sentences. In fact, a gerund could function as a subject, a direct object, or an object of preposition.

Khalid Fattah El Hakim, et al have dealt with the three gerund usages in English sentences as subject, direct object and object of preposition. In addition, they have suggested a method that may facilitate the teaching and the learning of the English gerund in English sentences through short stories.

II- Data collection analysis

The aim of this section is to analyse and interpret the data collected from the classroom observation, the teachers’ questionnaire and the learners’ writing activities based on the teaching learning of English gerund and progressive contrast at lycée Thomas Sankara.

Firstly, the observation in the second classes starts from November 2023 to May 2024 to see if the selected grammar item is taught, learnt and assessed accordingly. The following table (1) illustrates.

Table 1: Observation checklist

English grammar items	Teaching items	Observation
English Gerund	Subject Subject compliment Direct object Indirect object Object of the preposition Verbal noun	<i>Not taught, learnt and assessed accordingly</i>

	Deverbal noun	
English Progressive	Present continuous	<i>Taught, learnt and assessed accordingly</i>
	Present perfect continuous	
	Past continuous	
	Past perfect continuous	
	Future continuous	

Obviously, the above table shows the different functions of English gerund and the different aspects of English progressive tense. In fact, these grammar notions are mentioned in the syllabus and requested to be taught, learnt and assessed in order to help the secondary school learners convey accurate messages orally or by writing during the English teaching-learning process in secondary schools. However, the observation results unveil that at secondary school teachers of English only cope with different forms of progressive tenses, but they neglected the teaching of the English gerund and its functions within sentences. Therefore, English gerund items are not taught, learnt and assessed accordingly. During the observation period, teachers have developed different items:

Comparatives derive from G.O.2 (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.1 (Making comparison). The teacher made learners be able to compare things or people. Indeed, two subtitles have been noticed; namely, comparative of superiority and comparative of inferiority. The teacher developed comparative of superiority following the structure (Adjective + er + than) as in (Shelia is **nicer than** Bela) and comparative of inferiority (Less + adjective+ than) as in (Naomi is **less intelligent than** Felky). The teacher also tackled comparative of superiority with long adjectives with More+ adjective+ than as in (She is **more intelligent than** Julia) to make learners be aware of different grammatical rules when comparing short and long adjectives in English sentences .

Giving direction is from G.O.2: (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.5: (Expressing oneself in daily conversation). In fact, the objective of the teacher is to help learners show direction through some specific expressions as: go straight, turn left, and turn right. This notion develops the learners' speaking skill through dialogues.

Daily routines is another lesson observed during this period. It focuses on the G.O.2: (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.12: (Using appropriate tense to describe an action or an event). The aim of the teacher is to bring learners talk about daily routine based on the simple present tense with the insertion of frequency adverb, such as; always, often, never; usually as in, (I **always** arrive at school on time).

Expressing plans is an item developed by the teacher taken from the G.O.2: (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.12: (Using appropriate tense to describe an action or an event). In fact, the aim of the teacher is to make learners be able to talk about future realisation with the use of (Shall, will) and with the use of (ing) form to express future continuous (will be +v-ing) as in the following sentences :(We **shall** leave this country one day. She **will** be learning English at Brazzaville. My son **will** become more intelligent in few years).

English tenses is the last lesson observed. In effect, the teacher's objective is to enable learners to form correctly tenses (simple present, simple past, past perfect, future and continuous tenses). He just deals with the simple. This item refers to G.O.4: Expressing by writing and S.O.4.4: Using tenses and models. Obviously, the notion of continuous tense has been taught learnt and assessed during the formative and summative testing activities based on the ing suffix through plan to help learners form progressive. During the assessing stage, the second learners confused to locate a word made of verb + ing in sentence making or sentence in order.

Secondly, the different questions mentioned in the teachers' questionnaire on the teaching of English gerund and progressive contrast at lycée Thomas are analysed separately.

Question 1: Are English gerund and progressive items mentioned in the syllabus?

This question aims to know if the selected items from the INRAP syllabus are required to be taught, learnt and assessed in classes. The following table (2) evidences.

Table 2: The English gerund and progressive in the syllabus

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	07	70
No	03	30
Total	10	100

It results that the majority of teachers (70 %) mention that the English gerund and progressive items are well-mentioned in the syllabus whereas, a few of them (03%) underlines that these items are not included. As a matter of fact, the majority of teachers refers to G.O.2: (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.8: (forming lexical words) and G.O.2: (Expressing oneself orally) and S.O.2.12: (Using appropriate tense to describe an event) to justify their opinions.

Question 2: Which grammar items do you often teach to ease writing activities?

This question has been asked to know the most taught English grammar item that teachers often implement in classes to help learners deal with written activities. The following table (3) exemplifies.

Table 3: The English grammar items

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
English sentences	02	20
English Tenses	02	20
Word formation	06	60
Total	10	100

The above table reveals that most of teachers (60%) cope with word formation, whereas a few of them (20%) focus both on sentence structures and English tenses. In fact, word formation refers to affixation; how to form words from prefixes and suffixes according to **G.O.3:** (Understanding oral messages) and **S.O.3.6:** (Forming lexical words through English sentences and tenses) in order to help the secondary school learners to deal with writing activities in classes.

Question 3: Which word formation items do you often teach in the Second classes?

This question seeks to find out if teachers' implement English word formation items in the Second classes at lycée Thomas Sankara. The table (4) evidences.

Table 4: The English word formation items

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
English Gerund	00	00
English Progressive	10	100
Total	10	100

The above table shows that all teachers (100%) of English in the sample population focus on the teaching of the suffix letters "ing" to deal with the progressive tenses such as the present continuous, the past continuous, the present perfect continuous, the past perfect continuous, the future continuous and the future perfect continuous in English sentences.

Question 4: What is the relevance of teaching gerund and progressive contrast?

This question is asked to know if teachers are aware of the different grammatical aspects that could justify the relevance of teaching gerund and progressive contrast in the second classes. The table (5) below exemplifies.

Table 5: The relevance of teaching gerund and progressive contrast

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Gerund functions	01	10
"Ing" to form gerund	01	10
"Ing" to form progressive tenses	08	80
Total	10	100

Obviously, the above table shows that most of teachers (80%) cope with the suffix letters "ing" to form progressive tense, whereas few of them (100%) are interested in gerund items in sentences. In effect, progressive refers to continuous tenses as mentioned above, gerund items cope with deverbal and verbal gerunds, whereas, gerund functions refer to the position of gerund in sentences (subject and object).

Finally, the analysis of the learners' writing production is possible from some exercises connected to the English gerund and progressive contrast at secondary school in the following table (6).

Table 6: Learners' writing production

Types of sentences		Scrambled sentence	Multiple choice	True or false
Total of sentences		10	10	10
Total of errors		50	65	80
Teaching items	Gerund	48	55	72
	Progressive	02	05	08

The above table unveils the three types of exercises (*Guided writing, multiple choice and true or false*) submitted to the second-class learners at lycée Thomas Sankara. Thus; *guided writing activity* aims at verifying the learners' knowledge on the "ing" placement in English sentences. The *multiple-choice activity* seeks to check if learners are aware of when the "ing" form refers to gerund or progressive in English sentence structures. And then, *True or false* activity checks to discover if the secondary school learners could be able to differentiate gerund functions from progressive tenses while ordering English scrambled sentences. Elsewhere, the *total of sentences* mentioned in the above table illustrates the number of sentences each type of writing activity contain whereas, the *total of errors* refers to the total number of learners' problems from gerund and progressive activities.

It appears that the three types of exercises cover ten (10) sentences based on gerund and progressive contrast submitted to the learners of the second classes.

Scramble sentence is an exercise that consists of ordering words to form meaningful sentences. It covers fifty errors; forty-eight of gerund and two of progressive. These errors emphasise on: (1) the misplacement of words made of "ing" in gerund (a subject, an object or a complement) as in (Tricky is **speaking** English), (2) the misplaced word as "**speaking**" that is supposed to be at the beginning of the sentence to play the role of subject. Whereas, in progressive these errors are focused on the misused of the continuous tense rule with the help of the auxiliary "to be" before the word curing "ing" as in (I am to school **going**).

Multiple choice concerns the choosing of the appropriate answer among several of them. It covers sixty-five (65) errors. Fifty-five (55) of gerund and five (05) of progressive. They are illustrated by the learners' incapacity of identifying and correcting both gerund and progressive activities from the suggested answers to choose. As in the proposed sentence, (I am devoted to **teaching**), the learners think that "**teaching**" refers to progressive while, it is gerund.

True or false is an exercise that consists of saying if the proposed answers are true or false according to the requirement of a given item. It covers eighty errors; seventy-two (72) of gerund and eight (08) of progressive. They are possible through the learners' confusion between progressive and gerund written with the suffix letters "ing" in English sentences as in (My desire is **writing**), learners think about continuous tense, whereas "**writing**" refers to gerund.

In a word, the fundamental results from the classroom observation, the teachers' questionnaire and the learners writing activities in the second classes at lycée Thomas Sankara reveal that the failure to cope with the selected grammar issue in the English teaching process, the teachers' lack of the syllabus requirements about the gerund issues and the learners' incapacity to implement this contrast in the English writings activities.

III- Practical suggestions

This section aims at showing how the teaching and learning of the English gerund and progressive contrast are possible according to Explanatory method coupled with the 3Ps teaching method in the different pedagogical classes. Actually, the implementation of this didactic process is attested through the following stages: *Pre-requisite checking, Presentation, Practice, Production and testing activities*.

Pre-requisite checking aims at verifying whether learners are familiar with the types of English sentences (*simple sentence, compound sentence, complex sentence*), the English progressive verb tenses (*present continuous, past continuous, present perfect continuous, past perfect continuous, future continuous and future perfect continuous*), and the different forms of the auxiliary “be” (*am, is are, was, were, have been, had been*). Additionally, learners are requested to cite English linking verbs (*be, become, seem, appear, remain, feel, look, smell, taste, stay, grow, turn, sound, prove...*), English suffix letters (*less, ness, ly, ment, tion, ing, al...*) and to make them select the suffix letter that could make both gerund and progressive (**ing**). Finally, the teacher announces the day’s lesson: **English gerund and progressive contrast based on the suffix letter “ing”**.

Presentation is concerned with listening skill where the secondary school learners are requested to listen and observe the teacher’s illustrations and explanations carefully. The teacher firstly makes both gerund and progressive tense in the simple sentences as follows:

1. Okeo **is going** to school.
2. **Writing** was her past time.
3. She **will be singing** gospel songs.
4. Jimmy was devoted to **teaching**.
5. Elisa **has been playing** basketball.
6. His attention remains **fighting**.

Secondly, the teacher provides the rules that could justify the contrast between gerund and progressive spelt with “ing”. *The suffix “ing” expresses progressive or ongoing actions when it is combined with a verb preceded by the different forms of “be” as an auxiliary in English tenses whereas. It refers to gerund when this spelling is part of a noun (verb-ing) which functions as a subject, an object, a complement or a subject completer of sentences made of linking verbs.* Finally, the teacher reinforces the explanations and reads the above sentences fluently in order to help learners implement the taught item accordingly.

Practice develops the learners’ speaking ability on the learning of English gerund and progressive contrast. The selected learners should repeat the sentences written on the board and make their own sentences following the teacher’s model orally.

Production is concerned with the development of the learners’ reading ability since they are authorised to write their oral sentences on the board and read them freely:

- My sister will **have been dancing** Ndombolo. (L1)
- **Learning** seems my past time. (L2)
- Khan **had been explaining** the lesson. (L3)
- **Writing** stays an important skill for learners. (L4)
- The baby **was crying** a lot. (L5)
- **Walking** looks good for health. (L6)

The above illustrations are the learners’ oral and written sentences focused English gerund and progressive contrast formed with “ing”. They are allowed to copy down the summary of the taught lesson made up of some conditions or rules explaining the contrast between gerund and progressive formed with the grapheme “ing” and the examples of sentences by the teacher and learners.

Evaluation provides some exercises connected to the teaching of the English gerund and progressive contrast based on “ing” and their answers to facilitate the integration of the taught and learnt item in formative and summative evaluations.

A. Exercises

- (1) **Scrambled sentences** aim at enabling learners order correctly the “ing” form positions as gerund or continuous tense in the English different sentences.

Exercise 1: *Order the following sentences.*

1. Speaking/tricky/ English/is/
2. Basketball/good/playing/is/
3. School/John/to/going/is/

- (2) **Multiple choice** aims at getting learners be able to identify and choose the “ing” form used as continuous or gerund in the English different sentences.

Exercise 2: Read the following sentences and choose the appropriate answer between a and b, whether “ing” form expresses gerund or progressive tense.

1. We were **dancing** in this club.
 - a. progressive
 - b. Gerund
2. His bad behaviour is **talking** too much.
 - a. Gerund
 - b. progressive
3. The child is **opening** the door.
 - a. Progressive
 - b. Gerund

- (3) **True or false** develops the learners’ abilities to recognize if the proposed sentences contain gerunds or ongoing actions are true or false.

Exercise 3: Read the sentence below and say whether the proposition between brackets are true or false by considering the “ing” form usage.

1. John is **eating** some bread. (Gerund)
2. My desire is **reading** Books. (Continuous tense)
3. The teacher is **teaching** Spanish very good. (Continuous tense)
4. **Teaching** is my Job. (Gerund)

B. Answers

Correction 1:

1. Speaking English is tricky.
2. Playing Basketball is good.
3. John is going to school.

Correction 2:

1. b
2. b
3. a

Correction 3:

1. False
2. False
3. True
4. True

Conclusion

This dissertation has discussed the didactic process that could enable the teaching-learning of English gerund and progressive contrast in the Second classes. Because the two notions are mentioned in the official syllabus of English: (G.O.2: *Expressing oneself orally*, G.O.3: *Understanding written messages*, S.O.2.8: *Forming lexical word* and S.O.3.6: *Forming lexical words for English gerund* whereas, G.O.2: *Expressing oneself orally*, G.O.4: *Expressing by writing*, S.O.2.12: *Using appropriate tense to express an action or an event* and S.O.4.4: *Using appropriate tense to express an action, an event*), the teaching of English gerund and progressive contrast could help secondary school learners (1) apprehend how to form "gerund" with the suffix "ing" in order to create a noun from a verb, and (2) discover the different grammatical functions of gerund as the subject of a sentence when it occurs at the initial position of the sentence, a subject complement when it brings more information about the subject, and a direct or an indirect object and object of preposition in different sentences.

The review of some previous works has been carried on English grammar aspects in writing. In fact, Taher (2015), Patrick Duffley (2003), Rafliis, et al (2018), and Maekelberghe (2021), are the selected linguistic works that provide some rules and structures which may facilitate the study of English gerund and continuous tenses with its functions, the dissimilarity and the similarity between verbal noun, deverbal noun and gerund by Taher, the difference between gerund and infinitive usage in sentences laying on particularity and generality when denoting events by Duffley, the two dimensions of the suffix “ing” which (1) acts as a subject or an object, and (2) expresses progressive preceding an auxiliary verb by Rafliis, and the contrast between nominal gerund, and verbal gerund by Maekelberghe.

Moreover, the fundamental results from the classroom observation, the teachers' questionnaire and the learners writing activities in the second classes at lycée Thomas Sankara reveal that the failure to cope with the selected grammar issue in the English teaching process, the teachers' lack of the syllabus requirements about the gerund issues and the learners' incapacity to implement this contrast in the English writings activities.

Finally, the practical suggestions emphasize the Pre-requisite checking to enable learners be aware about the background of the selected topic, the Presentation to deals with illustrations and explanations justifying the contrast between gerund and progressive tenses, the Practice and the Production stages to help them train themselves from the different exercises and answers accordingly through the explanatory method coupled with the 3Ps method revisited by Ndongo Ibara.

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