Non-finite forms of the verb

Lecture 13
The verb is a grammatical class of words

- It denotes situations and establishes the relation between the situation reported and the extralinguistic reality.

- Therefore the verb is central in expressing the predicative function of the sentence.
Verb morphology

• English verbs can be categorized in a number of different ways.

• On the basis of their function in the verb phrase we can distinguish between main verbs and auxiliaries.
Main verbs

• We can recognize five different forms of the main verb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the base form</th>
<th>the present participle</th>
<th>the present tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the past participle</td>
<td>the past participle</td>
<td>the past tense</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The base form

- There is no difference in the form between the **infinitive**, the **present tense** (not 3rd p. sg.), and the **imperative**

- Finiteness: the infinitive is a **non-finite** form, whereas the other forms are **finite**.
Which are the non-finite forms of the verb in English?

• The infinitive

• The participles ( -ing participle, -ed participle )

• The gerund
Non-finite Verb Forms

• The infinitive, the –ing participle and the gerund express the verbal categories of aspect and voice.

• Their grammatical paradigms comprise different forms
The infinitive

• There are two types of infinitive:
  - the to-infinitive
  - the ‘bare’ infinitive

• When do we use the infinitive with to?
• When do we use the infinitive without to?
It is used after the following verbs: see, hear, feel, watch, make, let, bid.

- Example: I heard her speak to her son.
  I saw him enter the house.
  They made us believe they words.
  He let them go to the expedition.

It is used after modal verbs.
• Will you **leave** on your own accord?

• They asked him **to leave**.

• We **leave** as soon as I find the tickets.

• **Leave** the room immediately!
Infinitive

Active:
Simple: to speak
Progressive: to be speaking
Perfect: to have spoken
Perfect Progressive: to have been speaking

Passive:
Simple: to be spoken
Progressive: to be speaking?
Perfect: to have been spoken
Perfect Progressive: to have been being spoken?
Role in the sentence

- The present infinitive - subject.
  Example: **To confess immediately would be best.**

- The present infinitive as an adverbial modifier.
  Example: **We drank wine to relieve the boredom.**
Role in the sentence

• a compound verbal predicate, e.g. *He had to repeat this rule.*

• a compound nominal predicate, e.g. *Our aim is to maintain peace all over the world.*

• a modifier of nouns, e.g. *The conference to be attended is of great political importance.*

• nexus constructions, e.g. *I don’t want you to leave me.*
Role in the sentence

- The continuous infinitive shows the continuation of the action expressed by the infinitive.
Example: **He is thought to be hiding in Mexico.**

- The perfect infinitive is used with can't, couldn't, must, may, should, could, would like, etc.
Example: **She may have turned up.**

  **He cannot (couldn't) have lifted the box.**

  **I could have crossed that river.**
How many different participles are there in English?

- **-ing participle**

  **Active:**
  - Simple: speaking
  - Perfect: having spoken

  **Passive:**
  - Simple: being spoken
  - Perfect: having been spoken

- **-ed participle**

  This participle does not express any of the verbal categories. It has **only one form:** spoken.
The present participle

- The present participle is formed by adding the suffix *-ing* to the base form of the verb.
- If the vowel of the last syllable in the stem is short and stressed, a single final consonant is doubled:
  - forget → forgetting
  - bid → bidding
  - run → running
  - wrap → wrapping,
  - beg → begging
  - rip - ripping
• The Present participle - an adjective (modifier of nouns).

Example: **playing children, running water.**

• The Present participle - a **modifier of verbs.** (it describes the condition in which the agent is performing the activity).

Example: **The children came running.**

**I prefer to eat sitting.**
• The Perfect participle is an **adverbial** modifier.
Example: **Having finished his essay, the student attended to the experiment.**

• It can function also as a **post-modifier** within a **noun phrase**.
Example: **A cat fed on smoked salmon will start demanding champagne.**
• Like the infinitive, the **Present participle** can be found in **nexus constructions**:

\[
I \text{ saw him running.}
\]

• In British usage the construction ‘I saw it done’ is confined to a few verbs only:

• **We must get the matter settled.**

• **I want this done quickly.**
Example:

- * I'm knowing the Beethoven trios intimately.
- Knowing the Beethoven trios intimately helps a lot.

- Nonfinite -ing participles cannot be correlated with the progressive.
Gerund

- The paradigm of the gerund coincides formally with the paradigm of the –ing participle.
- The gerund can be used as a subject or object of the sentence.

   Reading is useful. Many people enjoy reading.

- The gerund can function as a complement of a preposition.

   She is fond of climbing.
   He was hopeless at writing letters.
Gerund

• The gerund is used after certain verbs - stop, finish, prevent, avoid, admit, deny, recollect, delay, postpone, enjoy, fancy, imagine, suggest, keep (=continue), understand, mind (=object), consider, miss, anticipate, etc.

• and after the expressions – can’t stand, can't help, it's no use, it 's no good, it's worth.
• The gerund - a subject, object or the object of a preposition; it can form plural, it can enter into compounds in various ways.

*a wedding-ring, blotting-paper*

• gerund vs. substantive (according to Jespersen): it has perfect and a passive, also a perfect passive; it can take an object; it can be freely combined with adverbs: *The librarian doesn't allow talking here.*
A group of verbs can be followed by either a gerund or an infinitive with little difference in meaning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb</th>
<th>gerund</th>
<th>infinitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>continue</td>
<td><em>She continued talking.</em></td>
<td><em>She continued to talk.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hate</td>
<td><em>He hates cleaning dishes.</em></td>
<td><em>He hates to clean dishes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td><em>Sam likes reading.</em></td>
<td><em>Sam likes to read.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td><em>We love scuba diving.</em></td>
<td><em>We love to scuba dive.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prefer</td>
<td><em>He prefers eating at 7 PM.</em></td>
<td><em>He prefers to eat at 7 PM.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another group of verbs can be followed by either a gerund or an infinitive with considerable difference in meaning:

| **forget** | She forgot reading the book when she was a kid. (It means “to forget that you have done something”) | She forgot to pay the rent this month. (It means “to forget that you need to do something”) |

keep, regret, remember, start, stop, etc.