# THE OCCURRENCE OF GERUNDS IN CP CLAUSES

### Marisa Schaer

#### INTRODUCTION

Stowell (1982), in his discussion of the structural properties of tensed clauses and infinitives versus those of gerunds, states that gerunds lack the COMP position. From this he concludes that there is no gerundive complementizer parallel to *for* or *that*. Stowell provides no structural diagrams to substantiate his claims; thus it is impossible to tell what he considers to be the scope of a gerund, such that it does not include a COMP position. I will show that gerunds do occur in complementizer phrase (CP) clauses with a COMP position, and that these clauses can contain movement. According to Chomsky's derivational theory of grammar, movement relates the sequential occurrence of a constituent in one place at one level of structure with its occurrence at a different place and level of structure (Trask, 1993).

### CP CLAUSES WITH MOVEMENT

Stowell gives the following examples to show that WH-movement does not occur with gerunds (5a-c in Stowell 1982):

- (1) a. The table on which you should put your coat is in the next room.
  - b. The table on which to put your coat is in the next room.
  - c. \*The table on which putting your coat is in the next room.

I do not consider (1c) to be a satisfactory test of the properties of gerunds. I propose the following sentences as examples of gerunds in CP structures involving movement:

- (2) a. The table for putting your coat on is in the next room.
  - b. The pot for cooking the soup in is on the top shelf.

Granting that (2a) is cumbersome, (2b) employs the identical structure with more likely semantics.

Examination of the deep structures of (1b) and (2a) will demonstrate this argument (following Holisky, 1996):1

(1b) Deep structure:

spec comp  $[_{S[NP[NP]}]_{NP} = \frac{0}{[_{S[NP]}]_{NP}} = \frac{0}{[_{S[NP]}]_{NP}}$ 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>NP=noun phrase, VP=verb phrase, InfVP=infinitive verb phrase, S=sentence, VPPresPart=present participle verb phrase.

(2a) Deep structure:

The theta structure position of the constituent *the table* relative to the verb *put* is the grammatical function indirect object (goal). It is in an argument position, as assigned by the verb *put* <agent, patient, goal>, and as such is eligible for movement.

#### CP CLAUSES WITHOUT MOVEMENT

Holisky's (1996) analysis of the gerundive as an NP with a potentially empty NP Genitive position denies Stowell's claim that "even phonetically null pronouns cannot appear in the (nonexistent) COMP of a gerund." Consider Stowell's example:

(3) a. \*The city (his) visiting is Paris. (his 7c)

Contrast (3a) with:

(3) b. [The city [for e visiting in April ]] is Paris.]

A gerundive can also occur as a verb in a CP clause in an S with empty NP and Aux positions:

(4)  $[_{S}[_{NP}]$  The important thing  $[_{CP}]$  when  $[_{NP}]$  e traveling  $[_{VP}]$  is to use caution  $[_{NP}]$  (one) (is)

## CONCLUSION

In making the above points regarding gerunds in CPs, I do not refute Stowell's claim that gerunds have no internally determined tense. I have demonstrated that the COMP position does occur in gerundives; thus, any lack of tense cannot be attributed to a missing COMP position. Furthermore, the COMP position provides a landing site for constituent movement.

# REFERENCES

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