**WEEKS 4,5.6**

**SYNTAX**

**Function of Non-Finite VPs:**

The absence of the finite verb from non-finite phrases means that they have no distinctions of person, number, or modal auxiliary. Together with the frequent absence of a subject, this suggests their value as a means of syntactic compression. Certain kinds of non-finite phrases are particularly favoured in the careful style of written prose,

Note: In some sources non-finites are regarded as clauses and not phrases. For the purpose of avoiding confusion, for the current module, the teacher preferred to put non-finites within the list of phrases.

**1.Participles:** A participle is a verb form that is used as an adjective. **Present participles** end in *-ing* (*singing, meeting*). **Past participles of regular verbs** end in *-ed* (*covered, asked*). **Past participles of irregular verbs** have various forms, which you must learn (*gone, written, sung*). A **participial phrase** is a group of words that contains a participle and acts as:

1. **Participles as Adjectives:** The participles (present or past) can be used as adjectives to modify a noun head as pre or post modifier.

*Some comments* ***written*** *on his post* were very rude.

*Some* ***written*** *comments on his post* were very rude*.*

I saw *some* ***shining*** *stars in the bright sky.*

I had *a* ***reserved*** *seat.  
The* ***running*** *machine we saw the other day* was made in USA.

The ladyoften ordered***undercooked*** *meat.****The wounded*** *soldiers* were rescued before the enemy came*.*

We have *a* ***properly trained*** *staff all the year round.*

*The* ***badly injured*** *man* was taken to hospital.

From the examples above, we can see that a present participle or a past participle is used as an adjective to premodify a noun or a noun phrase.

Note: Participles when follow noun heads can be called reduced relative clauses or adjectives, restrictive and non-restrictive. So, they are called **restrictive participles, and non-restrictive participles**.

**Do Exercises (17-20), (17-21), (17-22), (17-23) from Stageberg p 262**

1. **Participles as** **Adverbials:**

*Staying up late at night,* he felt that he cannot stand steadily*. (present participle acts as an adverbial*

Here the present participle phrase *Staying up late at night* is **adverbial** in function. It tells why he felt that he cannot stand steadily.

I saw him *watching the match.* (Participle as adverbial= *while he was watching the match)*

**Norman C., Stageberg (p: 273**) claimes that what determines the function of the participial phrase is its **position** in the sentence:

*The girl* ***eating*** *the sundwich is a freshman. (an adjective that modifies the noun girl)*

*The girl sat* ***eating*** *the sundwich. (an adverb that modifies the verb* ***sat****)*

*The sonata* ***played*** *at the recital was Beethoven’s 32nd. (an adjective that modifies sonata)*

*He returned* ***defeated*** *by the weather. (an adverb that modifies the verb returned)*

**Do Exercises (17-34), (17-35), (17-36), (17-37) from Stageberg p 274-275**

1. **Used as a Noun generally with the definite article (*the)***

Just like the present participle, some of the past participles followed by the definite article, ***the,*** can be regarded as a noun phrase (NP) to be used as subject or object. In such cases, we think that the head noun (e.g. *people, person*, *etc.*) is **omitted** from NP

***The accused*** *have been**acquitted*. (= *the accused* people – a collective noun)  
***The accused*** *was saved from the gallows*. (= *the accused* person – a singular noun)

***The bullied*** *were**shot to death*. (= *the bullied* people)  
*They came to rescue* ***the dying*** *and heal* ***the wounded/the injured****.****The deceased*** *is**her mother*. (= *the deceased* woman – a singular noun)  
***The deceased*** *are**cremated*. (= *the deceased* people – a collective noun)  
*The human race has a great thirst for* ***the unknown****.****The wounded*** *were carried**to cross the enemy line.* (= *the wounded* soldiers/people)

**Note: Avoid Confusing Gerunds With Participial Phrases**

A gerund looks like a participial phrase, but it actually does something different when it’s used in a sentence. **Gerunds** are verb phrases that act as **nouns**, but participial phrases act as **adjectives or adverbs**. Here are some sentences with gerunds and participial phrases:

***Turning the light on*** is necessary at night.

In this sentence, “turning the light on” is a **gerund**. We can tell this as a gerund because the phrase acts as a noun in the sentence. The rest of the sentence describes the gerund, by saying that it’s “a necessity at night.” So gerunds might look just like participial phrases, but make sure you figure out what the phrase is doing before you decide what it is.

***Turning the light on,*** Haley walks into the room.

Now the same phrase is a **participial phrase!** It’s set off from the main clause of the sentence “Haley walks into the room” with a comma. Also, if we take out the participial phrase, the sentence still makes sense. The phrase “turning the light on” describes the manner that Haley is in.

Gerunds and participial phrases can sometimes be the exact same words, but they have very different functions. Avoid confusing them by checking for signs that a phrase is a gerund or a participial phrase.

Verbs of this type used with the objective case are: **catch, discover, feel, find, get, have, hear, keep, leave, listen to, notice, observe, see, set, smell, start, stop, watch, want, etc.**

**2. Gerunds:** Gerunds act as nouns. Gerunds end with ‘ing’, being present participles. They may serve **as subjects**, **objects**, **complements** in sentences, and they stand alone, that is without an auxiliary. Barbara Dykes-Grammar for Everyone\_ Practical Tools for Learning and Teaching. (p, 119)

**A. Gerunds as Subjects:**

*Rowing* strengthens muscles.

*Eating pancakes* is a pleasant thing.

*Canning* is a way to preserve food.

Moving quickly is the key to survival.

1. **Gerunds as Objects:**

She hates waiting for trains.

I recommend reading books quietly to pass the time.

My parents prefer *eating dinner alone.*

We would not recommend *travelling without insurance*.

His daughter enjoys *fixing broken bicycles*.

Do they like *swimming with dolphins?*

**After some verbs, an –ing form (gerund) is necessary:**

***Stop finish practise recall carry on delay postpone detest. resent go on***

***fancy imagine dislike. regret keep / keep on admit deny envisage propose***

***miss risk hate give up involve enjoy miss put off***

1. **Gerunds as Subject Complement:**

Her biggest mistake was caring too much about the quality of the product.

A realistic assessment of the situation *is thinking rationally.*

My favorite pastime is *reading books quietl*y.

Our top priority was *getting everyone on the plane*.

1. **Gerunds as Object of a Preposition:**

The doctor suggested drinking warm milk for *sleeping through the night*.

By *crying like a baby****,***you won’t get anywhere in life***.***

Exercise is futile without *eating healthily*.

He wanted to learn more about *riding a bike*.

Detectives were relieved after *finding the evidence*.

**3. Infinitives with (to)**

**A. Infinitives as subject**

1. **To smoke** is harmful to health. (To smoke is used as subject.)

2. **To see** is to believe. (To see is used as subject.)

3. **To know her** is to like her. (To know her is used as subject.)

4. **To hesitate** is a pity/fatal. (To hesitate is used as subject.)

5. **To turn down her offer** seems rude. (To turn down her offer is used as subject.)

6. **Not to go back** was a mistake. (Not to go back is used as subject.)

1. **Infinitives used as Subject Complement**

1. What I want is to get to the airport as early as possible.
2. To decide is to act.
3. To be kind to the enemy is to be cruel to the people.
4. He seemed not to pay much attention to what I was saying
5. He seemed to be unable to get out of the habit.
6. This appears to be an important matter.
7. A lot remains to do.
8. I am to be blamed for my negligence.
9. His wish is to live in Las Vegas.
10. **The infinitive used as object:**
11. He began to work early in the morning every day.
12. I agreed to use a school computer to do my assignment.
13. He wants to pay a visit to his friend in Las Vegas.
14. What did Mr. Rami want to do?
15. She pretended not to see me while she was walking by.
16. I hope to be able to attend the meeting.

**Verbs like:** *advise, allow, ask, beg, beseech, bribe, cause, challenge, command, compel, dare* **are followed by to infinitives as their objects.**

1. **The infinitive used as object of a preposition**
2. He was **about** to die
3. They desired nothing **except** to succeed.
4. They desired nothing **but** to succeed
5. He seldom came **except** to look at my pictures
6. **Infinitives as Post modifier of a Noun phrase**

1. For us **to be invited to attend the conference** is a great honor.

2. It’s silly for anyone **to be angry with her**.

3. For me **to go there early** is unnecessary.

4. This project **to have been completed by the end of this month** is required.

5. The next ship **to arrive** was the Elizabeth.

6. It’s a great mistake not **to invite them to dinner.**

7.It is a great shame **to have been neglected.**

**F. Infinitives as Post modifier of an Adjective phrase**

1. It was good **to see you.**

2. It is a great pleasure **to meet you**.

3. He was too weak **to climb the wall**.

4. It was n’t wise **to do that sort of thing**.

5. It could be great **to be allowed**.

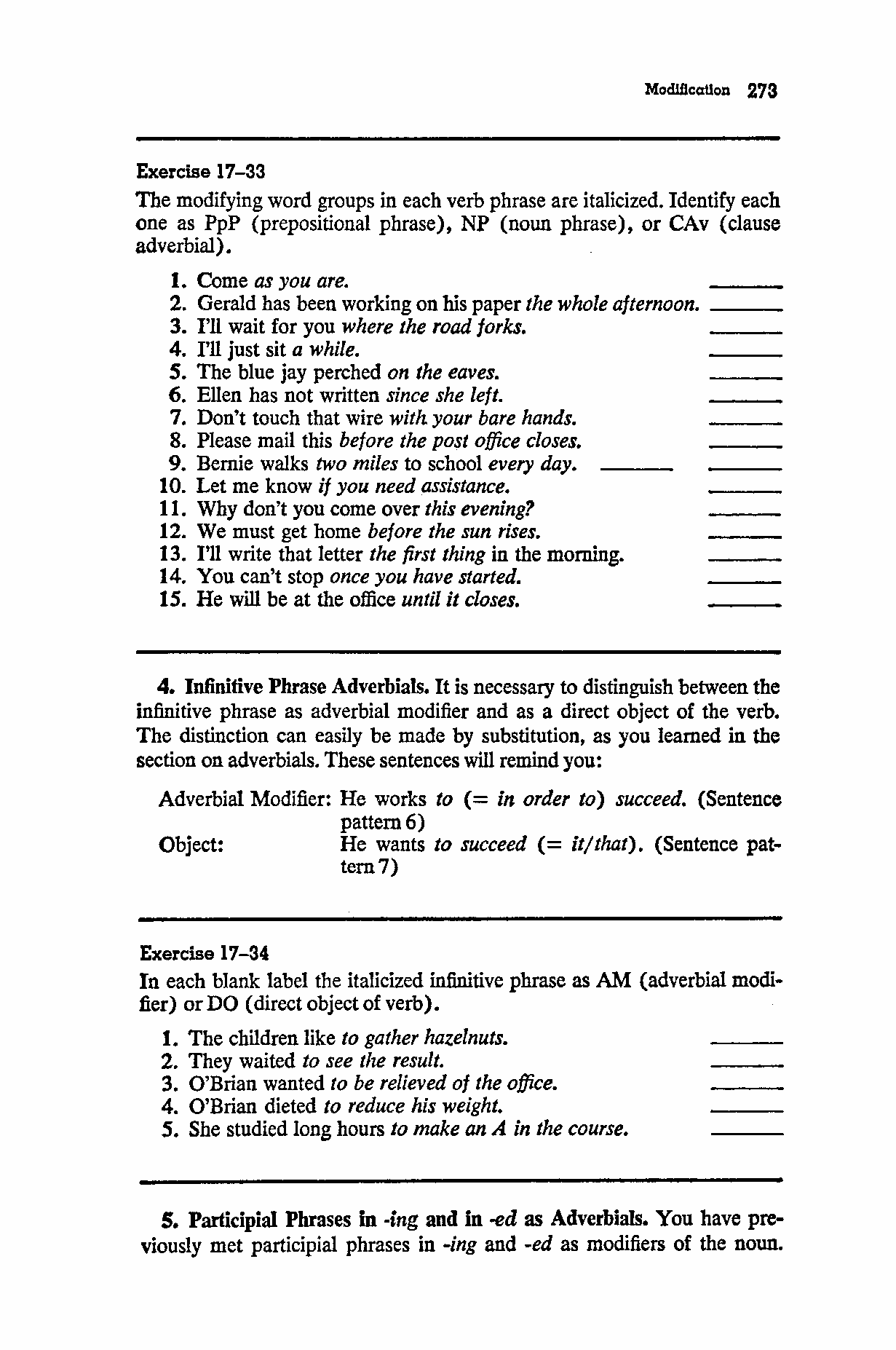
6.The boys were clever **to solve the math problem so quickly**.

7. He is hard **to convince**.

8. This river is dangerous **to bathe in.**

9. Good conversation is interesting **to listen to.**

**Stageberg page (273)**



**G. Infinitives as Adverbials**

**infinitive adverbs** modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. They typically answer the question 'why?'

Why did you go to the park?

I went **to exercise.**

The teacher came **to explain the test results**.

The fireman climbed the ladder **to rescue the injured woman**.

I cook **to save money**.

I study for the exam **to get a good grade**.

He goes to the gym every day **to exercise**.

She talks to the boss **to ask for a raise.**

My mom cleans the bathroom regularly **to get rid of bad smells**

Buy the ingredients **to make dinner.**

My dad has gone to the electronics store **to get his computer fixed.**

Call the landlord **to tell them about the broken tap.**

Note: We use infinitive adverbs to provide the following information:

***Purpose of an action***: I went to the park **to exercise**.

*Reasons for feeling a certain way*: I was surprised **to see her short hair.**

*Basis for some judgment*: He was **right to buy land there.**

**Participles and Infinitives:**

Verbs of this type used with the objective case are: **catch, discover, feel, find, get, have, hear, keep, leave, listen to, notice, observe, see, set, smell, start, stop, watch, want, etc.** It is to be noted again that a present participle cannot take a possessive pronoun/noun. Instead, we use its object case because a participle is not a gerund. Let us consider the following:

*I saw him going there just now. (\*I saw his going there just now.)*

*I watched him/John looking at the picture. (\*I watched his/John’s looking at the picture.)*

But we can say:  *I don’t mind him/his/John/John’s coming*

*To stay up late at night* is harmful to health*. (Infinitive used as noun, being the subject)*

*Staying up late at night* is harmful to health*. (Gerund, being the subject to the verb is.)*

I don’t like *staying up late at night. (Gerund, being the object of the verb like.)*

I don’t like *to stay up late at night. (Infinitive used as a noun, being the object of the verb like.)*

I don’t hold *with the idea of staying up late at night. (Gerund, being object of the preposition of)*

There is no need *to stay up late at night. (Infinitive used as adjective, post-modifying the noun need.)*

*To stay up late at night,* we relaid the fire with coal. *(Infinitive as adverb, modifying the verb)*

*Often staying up late at night,* he has been failing fast in health*. (participle used adverbially)*

*Those staying up late at night* do not realize the evils of doing so*. (Present participle is functioned as adjective, post-modifying the pronoun those.)*

What will impair your health is *staying/to stay up at night. (Gerund or infinitive as Cs.)*

**4.Bare Infinitives:**

1. **Bare Infinitive used as Subject Complement**

The only thing I can do now is *go on by myself*

What I really wanted to do was *drive all night.*

1. **Bare Infinitive used as Object:**

Let me *go*

I helped them *carry the boxes*

These strict and unfair rules make us *reject strongly*.

How dare you *do that!*

