

Verbal Gerunds in English

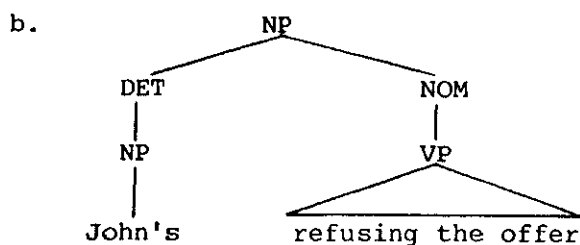
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In the recent works on transformational generative grammar (e.g., Horn (1975) and Schachter (1976)), English verbal gerunds are assigned the underlying structure more like that of ordinary noun phrases. Schachter, for example, claims that the basic structure of verbal gerunds should be provided by the following phrase structure rule, as is the case with noun-headed NPs:

(1) NP \longrightarrow (DET) NOM

In (1), DET is a determiner, and NOM is further rewritten as VP. Thus (2a) is assigned the basic structure (2b), in which there is no S node exhaustively dominating it:

(2) a. John's refusing the offer



This analysis seems to have been accepted by many subsequent investigators, including Jackendoff (1977) and Chomsky (1979, 1981), since the sentential and the nominal nature of verbal gerunds can be explained without recourse to any powerful transformations.

In this thesis, I have shown that the analysis illustrated in (2b) has a number of inadequacies, and proposed a more promising alternative on the basis of a wider range of data.