

15-6 USING A POSSESSIVE TO MODIFY A GERUND

<p><i>We came to class late. Mr. Lee complained about that fact.</i></p> <p>(a) FORMAL: Mr. Lee complained about <i>our coming</i> to class late.*</p> <p>(b) INFORMAL: Mr. Lee complained about <i>us coming</i> to class late.</p>	<p>In formal English, a possessive adjective (e.g., <i>our</i>) is used to modify a gerund, as in (a).</p> <p>In informal English, the object form of a pronoun (e.g., <i>us</i>) is frequently used, as in (b).</p>
<p>(c) FORMAL: Mr. Lee complained about <i>Mary's coming</i> to class late.</p> <p>(d) INFORMAL: Mr. Lee complained about <i>Mary coming</i> to class late.</p>	<p>In very formal English, a possessive noun (e.g., <i>Mary's</i>) is used to modify a gerund.</p> <p>The possessive form is often not used in informal English, as in (d).</p>

**Coming to class late* occurred before *Mr. Lee complained*, so a past gerund is also possible: *Mr. Lee complained about our having come to class late.*

□ EXERCISE 12. Using a possessive to modify a gerund. (Chart 15-6)

Directions: Combine the pairs of sentences. Change *that fact* to a gerund phrase. Use formal English. Discuss informal usage.

1. Mary won a scholarship. We are excited about *that fact*.
→ *We are excited about Mary's (Mary) winning a scholarship.*
2. He didn't want to go. I couldn't understand *that fact*.
→ *I couldn't understand his (him) not wanting to go.*
3. You took the time to help us. We greatly appreciate *that fact*.
4. We talked about him behind his back. The boy resented *that fact*.
5. They ran away to get married. *That fact* shocked everyone.
6. You are late to work every morning. I will no longer tolerate *that fact*.
7. Ann borrowed Sally's clothes without asking her first. Sally complained about *that fact*.
8. Helen is here to answer our questions about the company's new insurance plan. We should take advantage of *that fact*.

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