

**« C'est en chantant que des muets ont retrouvé l'usage de la parole ».  
Nouveaux regards sur le gérondif**

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**Abstract:** During the last 10-15 years, gerund (*le gérondif*) has been studied from almost all possible points of view, in other words, from morphological, syntactic, semantic and discourse perspectives. Nevertheless, investigators have not yet reached any agreement on the origin of this non-finite verb form of French, neither with regard to the existence of a connection with the Latin *gerundium* (*gerundi [modus]*), nor with regard to the presence of a common semantic representation with the other *-ant form*, the present participle. A certain consensus has been reached only regarding its status and its syntactic behaviour. However, the results of recent studies are not quite conclusive.

In our opinion, it is not possible to interpret and describe how the French gerund functions in discourse if its mental representation in language is neglected. Our contribution aims at analyzing how the mental representation of the gerund ensures the production of so many effects within a text and how it works when language is represented in discourse.

**Key words:** *-ant forms*, gerund, present participle, non-finite verb form, adverbial, (relations of) loose overlap.