

# BE + TO-INFINITIVE

by Tomoko Honjo

## Chapter 1 Introduction

Verb phrases form the heart of most English sentences and are of greater complexity than other sentence elements. And the English infinitive has manifold functions. It can be 'subject', 'object' or 'complement' (Nominals, or primaries, according to Jespersen), e.g. *To see is to believe/ I hate to lie*; it functions as a modifier of noun (secondary-use), e.g. *She wants somebody to love* and *somebody to love her*; it may be adverbial, indicating direction, purpose, result, etc., (tertiary), e.g. *I am glad to see you/ He came here to speak* to me, not to you; it may serve in quasi-imperative function as an absolute free adjunct, e.g. *Not to worry*; and it may be used absolutely, not as an adjunct, e.g. *to put* it another way, ...

It seems that the description of nature and mechanics of the infinitive may compose a miniature of grammar because of its manifold functions and of its relationship with other elements, built up with its connective power. The function as connective may be illustrated in the following example: "I want *to begin to try to learn to understand* how *to stop* feeling too sad *to keep* working without worrying about being arrested or attacked by wolves or sent to Devil's Island *to dig* up old bones or *to fret* about having *to promise* never *to be arrested* again."<sup>1</sup>

At any rate, however, with regard to the syntactic function it is of the utmost importance to remember that the infinitive always denotes a nexus between the subject and the verbal idea, though the subject need not always be expressly indicated.

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1. Quoted from Postal, "Review: *Grammar Discovery Procedures* (Longacre)," *IJAL*, 32:1, (1966), pp. 95-96.

Instances of latent subject are extremely frequent. That the infinitive always presupposes nexus between the subject and the verbal idea is shown clearly by the possibility of using a reflexive pronoun referring to the latent subject; e.g. She wanted *to kill herself*.<sup>2</sup> In terms of transformational grammar, so-called infinitives are derived only through procedures of some kind of embeddings. That is, the infinitive, though short in form, presupposes a full sentence. The latent subject is clear in the derivational history.

With analysis as such, we have to reconsider the school grammar's classification of 'simple', 'compound' and 'complex' sentences. Postal's sentence given above is considered as 'simple sentence' in school grammar because it has only one verb and it does not have any other clause. It is difficult to see any sense in the use of such classification, at least in grammar which is written from the speaker's side.

Now, take up the following sentences:

They are too complicated to understand.

They are too young to understand.

These two sentences are alike on the surface, but not identical in the deep structure. In the first sentence 'they' and 'understand' are related as they are in "you cannot understand them"; in the second, 'they' and 'understand' are related as they are in "they cannot understand you." This leads to another problem, ambiguity, seen, for instance, in a sentence like "It was too dark to see". Is 'it' the object of 'see' or is it an impersonal 'it' denoting 'weather'? The ambiguity is due to the original nature of English infinitive as well as the multiplicity of meaning or reading of 'it'.

Comparative grammar has shown that the infinitive in prehistoric times was a fully inflected verbal substance. Consequently,

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2. Cf. Otto Jespersen, *MEG*, V (Copenhagen: Ejner Munksgaard, 1940), pp. 152-3.

as noun, the infinitive could not express the idea of voice. In OE, the infinitive sometimes had clear passive meaning, though the form was active. To use passive form to express the passive idea was a later development. The function of infinitive sometimes still depends on the context, not like in Latin which has the clear inflectional distinction of active and passive.

Because of its manifold functions and ambiguous cases, it is easy to imagine that there are big divergence as to the treatment of the infinitive from grammarian to grammarian. Jespersen still thinks "sing" and "see" to be objects of "will" and "can" in "I will see" and "She can sing." It is interesting to know that the discussion whether "to" is adverb or preposition prevailed for a time.<sup>3</sup> Relating to the treatment of "to", Strang's proposal as to the marginal auxiliary may be mentioned here. According to Strang, *need, dare, use(d) to, be (about) to, be going to, have to, want to, ought to* are included in the group. She states: the particle *to* is felt as so closely clinging to them, it perhaps belongs to them rather than to a following infinitive, and totally, they are functionally parallel with the use of true closed-system items, *auxiliaries*.<sup>4</sup> Whereas the traditional grammar expresses as "be going + to-infinitive", for instance, according to Strang, the construction is analyzed as "be going to + Verb Base." From the following statement of Hill, we may assume that Hill

3. Goold Brown, *Grammar of English Grammars* (New York: William Wood & Co., 1871) pp. 165 ff.

4. Barbara M. H. Strang, *Modern English Structure* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1962), p. 138. Likewise, Twaddell proposes "Catenative Verbs," which are divided into three classes:

- 1) decaying modals like *ought to, need to*;
- 2) those which have acquired a formulaic function, e.g. *get participle, get -ing, keep (on)-ing, want to, have to, used to*; and
- 3) those composed of "be adjectival element 'to'": *be going to, be about to, be bound to, be supposed to, be to*.

W. F. Twaddell, *The English Verb Auxiliaries* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1960), p. 18. Also Joos proposed "Quasi-auxiliaries" and temporarily he includes in this: *be to, be going to, be able to, be about to, used to, to be supposed to*. Martin Joos, *The English Verb: Form and Meaning* (Madison and Milwaukee: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), pp. 20 ff.

thinks “ready” modifies “to go” rather than “to go” modifies “ready.” Namely,

... though constructions like “John is to readily go” occur, a construction like “John is \*to ready go” in place of “John is ready to go” is impossible. That is, *to* and infinitive is a construction like preposition and pronoun, in that modifiers do not readily occur between the preposition and the head of the phrase.<sup>5</sup>

Now, let's take up the ‘be+to-infinitive’ construction as introductory step towards the study of English infinitive.

## Chapter II Be + To-Infinitive

The duality of form and meaning allows us to study syntax from two points of view. That is, formal syntax starts from the grammatical forms, and explains their use; logical syntax starts from the grammatical categories expressed in language generally, and describes the different forms by which they are expressed, as when we describe the different ways in which predication is expressed—by a single verb, by the verb *to be* with an adjective, or noun, and so on.

Here we have the form “be+to-infinitive”, and we take the former stand point. The form be+to-infinitive is by no means simple. It carries many meanings, and has complexity in various respects. Each of the following sentences, “The boy is to play/ The motor is to drive the shaft/ The candy is to eat/ I am to blame/ To see her is to love her,” contains be + to-infinitive, but the structural meaning is not the same. In other words they are different in deep structure, or, they are derived from different underlying structure. The grammar must show the difference among such overtly parallel sentences.

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5. Archibald A. Hill, *Introduction to Linguistic Structures: From Sound to Sentences in English* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1958), p. 250.

§ 1. The boy is to play.

Perhaps it is not easy to account for the origin of the be+to-infinitive. However, we will have a glance of it, taking an example from Old English usage.

þa gesomnedon hi gemot and þeathedon and ræddon, *hwæt him to donne wære*, hwær, *him wære fultum to secanne* to gewearnienne and to wi scufanne swa reðre hergunge and swa gelomlicre þara nor þeoda (=Then they gathered an assembly and took counsel together, as to what should be done, and where they should look for help to avoid and repel such savage and repeated devastations of the northern nations).—Bede, I. xi.

The literary translation of *hwæt him to donne wære*, is “what them were to do (=what they had to do)” and *him wære fultum to secanne*, “them were help to seek (=they had to seek help).” Such examples are found in great numbers in translation from Latin, and they must be due to Latin influence as rendering Latin sum+gerundive or similar Latin construction. In other words, *hwæt is us to donne* was the translation of Latin *Quid nobis faciendum est?*<sup>1</sup> We must remember that originally the infinitive was a noun and did not have the idea of voice and that in OE such infinitive as used here usually had passive meaning. Consequently, it is noticed that the verb used here was always transitive. It is assumed that two Modern English expressions may be developed from this construction. One: in *hwæt me is to donne*, “hwæt” came to be considered as object of “donne,” and dative “me” became subject, thus it developed to “I am to do something.” The second will be mentioned in the next section.

At any rate, the combination of be+to-infinitive becomes increasingly common in Modern English. The idea of necessity which this structure carries comes to have many shades of

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1. Cf. Fumio Nakajima, *Eigo Hattatsu-shi* (The History of English Language) (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1963), p. 215.

meaning. It indicates that something must take place in accordance with the will of a person or of Destiny, or as the outcome of events or a natural development, or in accordance with some plan or agreement. It rarely denotes simple future, except with *come*. Zandvoort classifies "arrangement" as follows:<sup>2</sup>

1. Personal: a. mutual (agreement)  
e.g. We are to be married next week.  
b. one-sided (command)  
e.g. You are to be home before ten.
2. Impersonal: (destiny)  
e.g. The worst is till to come.

With a passive infinitive *is to* may, differently from the use in the active, imply possibility or permissibility (= *can* or *may*); e.g. Such things *are to be seen* any day. Negative order, "You are not to go out," is equivalent to prohibition. A question in the first person, "Am I to be home before ten?" generally implies "... do you want me to ...?"

Jespersen points out the marginal case which has relation with the construction we are going to deal with in the next section. Namely, in the following passages, "are" has the pregnant meaning 'exist' and the infinitive is a sort of 'purpose'.

Starres are to be looked at, not reached at,  
Princes to be yielded unto, not contened with;

Jespersen then mentions that it shows one of the ways in which the idiom *is to* may have arisen.<sup>3</sup>

The description above is contrary to the claims of so-called structural linguists in that it violates 'ahistoricism'; it is concerned with the unobservable, and it utilizes meaning as a

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2. R. W. Zandvoort, *A Handbook of English Grammar* (London: Longman, 1962), § 32.

3. Jespersen, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-8.

criterion, and so on. In the *Structure of English* by Fries, nothing is dealt with, concerning with this structure, because there is no overt signalling whatever. Be + to-infinitive is named Class 2 altogether in his frame, and meaning which the structure carries is ignored.

In Lees' *The Grammar of English Nominalization*, "be + to" is included in alternation with M (odal auxiliary) to yield such sentences as: "He is to leave tomorrow/He was to have left then,"<sup>4</sup> The related rules are:

VP → (Prev) Aux MV  
 Aux → Aux 1 (Aux 2)  
 Aux 1 → Tns { M;  
                   | be + to |  
 Aux 2 → (have + En) (be + Ing)

As mentioned above *be* with *to* has a sense close to that of *must* or *ought*, like "You are to be congratulated," or of *will* of futurity, e.g. "They are to be married next week." Also it follows the pattern of other modals in having no infinitive—there is no "\*to be to ...", *-ing* form nor past participle. Furthermore it is not preceded by other modals—"He will be to go". Lees rules cover all these, by inclusion of 'be to' in Aux 1, which then makes complimentary distribution with other modals, and by setting its position before Aux 2. Compare with wordy comment of Jespersen:

While *have to*-infinitive is freely used in all tenses and moods, there are some restrictions to the use of *am to*: *I have (had) been to* seems never to be used; *being to* is nowadays avoided though it was formerly used to some extent; *be to* both as infinitive and as subjunctive is very rare indeed.<sup>5</sup>

4. Robert. B. Lees, *The Grammar of English Nominalization* (*IJAL* 26, No. 3. Publication 12 of the Indiana University Research Center Anthropology, Folklore, and Linguistics, 1960), p. 19. Neither in *English Syntax* by Robert, nor in *Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English* by O. Thomas 'be to' is included in Modal auxiliary.

5. Jespersen, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-8.

*Be + to* differs in one respect from other modals; namely, it has the finite form, *am, is, are, was* and *were*, in contrast with *can* and *could*, etc. However, in the transformational grammar, this fact does not give big influence.

Lees is also cautious in giving adjustment for the failure of *be to* to occur as Aux 1 before *have + En* as Aux 2. That is, the adjustment avoids the occurrence of such sentence as "He is to have left."<sup>6</sup> The given rule is "Tns+be+to+have+En→Past+be+to+have+En."

Fillmore recognizes the modality of "be+to-infinitive" and names it "telescoped future." His interpretation of the construction is, in short, that "John is to finish it", for example, is derived from "I advised John to finish it", by the deletion of "I advise."<sup>7</sup> With "advise," *allow, appoint, ask, authorize, urge, want, warn*, etc. compose one class of verbs, distinct from those which cannot produce sentence like "John is to finish it" by deletion of itself; e.g. *like, love, hate*, etc. This may be one interpretation, indicating that out side of the subject there is some determining factor—it is not John's will or decision for 'to finish it', but I, in this case. However, the writer cannot agree to Fillmore fully. Isn't "I advised John to finish it" resulted from embedding of two sentences, 'I advised Comp,' and 'John finished it'? Then, doesn't his treatment mean to delete the matrix sentence? It seems that Fillmore put cart before the horse in that in order to explain the modality he used "I advised" and what not. These can be used for explanation of the underlying 'meaning' but not underlying 'structure'.

Return to Lees. Lees' inclusion of 'be to' among the auxiliaries is the first step toward formularizing the grammar of that

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6. Schachter opposes this, saying that "You are to have done your homework by the time I get home" is grammatical. "Bookreview: *The Grammar of English Nominalization* (Lees)," *IJAL*, 28 (1962), p. 136.

7. Charles J. Fillmore, "Desentential Complement Verbs in English," *POLA*, No. 7 (1964), pp. 96-7.

interesting class of function words that Joos calls Quasi-auxiliaries, Strang, marginal, and Twaddell, the Catenatives. The next step is to investigate whether we can modify Less' rule so as to include all as a class like

$$\text{Aux} \rightarrow \text{Tns} + \begin{cases} \text{M} \\ \text{Cv} (= \text{Catenatives}) \end{cases}$$

and, decide what we can include in Cv.

First of all, included members are not identical among these scholars. Joos' Quasi-auxiliaries are *to be*, *be going to*, *be able to*, *be supposed to*, and *used to*. In Strang's class, *need*, *dare*, *use (d) to*, *be (about) to*, *be going to*, *have to*, *ought to* are included. The last group of Twaddell's Catenatives is consisted of *be going to*, *be about to*; *be bound to*, *be supposed to*, and *be to*. At this stage, perhaps, we had better pay attention to the common members, namely, *be about to* and *be going to*, 'be to' apart.

In the following sentences,

The reporter is to give a lady books.

The reporter is about to give a lady books.

The reporter is going to give a lady books.

the difference is that when *about* precedes *to*, the potentiality is immediate, and that when *going* precedes *to*, the potentiality is more remote. It is safe to say that they function like extra-tense aspects.

According to Jespersen, 'to-infinitive' is used as the object of a preposition, and the only one preposition which can take a 'to-infinitive' is now *about*, apart from the obsolete *for to go*. And it should be noted that *about* may only be used in this way—'he was about to retire'—in this signification 'on the point of, going to'. Otherwise it requires the -ing form like other prepositions—'he spoke about retiring.'<sup>8</sup> NED mentions that in this

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8. Jespersen, *MEG*, III, p. 11.

use 'about' passes from the adverb to the preposition. So, Jespersen is right in calling 'about' preposition. However, as well known, assigning words to parts of speech involves many problems. Advantage of the transformational grammar is made clear through this evidence. At this moment, we may put an optional symbol 'Cv', having 'about' and 'going' as members, between *be* and *to* in Lees' grammar, namely,

$$\text{Aux 1} \longrightarrow \text{Tns} \begin{cases} \text{M} \\ \text{be} + (\text{Cv}) + \text{to} \end{cases}$$

The transformational grammar spares us the trouble of assigning members of Cv to parts of speech which for the traditional grammars, including Jespersen's, is indispensable.

Now, we have to be concerned with membership of Cv. Whitehall admits such combination as "The reporter ought to have been about to have been giving a lady books,"<sup>9</sup> thought it seems awkward. If the insertion of 'about' or 'going' between *be* and *to* makes it permissible to have 'to have been to', contrary to the previous statement, we have to reconsider the matter. In fact, Joos mentions two tests that will exclude quasi-auxiliaries: one is the colligability of quasi-auxiliaries with modals, and the other is the familiar rule for negation.<sup>10</sup> But these two test again will not exclude 'be to'. It is best to keep Lees' rules as they are. We have to investigate more carefully about others in respect of relationship with Tense and co-occurrence with other auxiliaries, possible sequences, and so forth.

Change the angle. The comparison of use of the infinitive in *Oxford New English Bible* with other versions shows the high frequency of the form in the former. Let us take up "Gospel of

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9. Harold Whitehall, *Structural Essentials of English* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1951), p. 87.

10. Joos, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

Matthew” as an example. The distribution will be illustrated in the following table.<sup>11</sup>

	N	R	AS	AV
be to	23*	11	2**	0
will	1	5	0	1
shall/should	1	5	16	17
can	2	0	0	1
must (-needs)	1	1	1	1
base form (EV)	0	1	6	4
imperative	0	2	2	2
progressive	0	1	0	0
other construction	2	4	3	4
	30	30	30	30

This table justifies the treatment of ‘be to’ as alternative of ‘M’. This small data also shows the status of ‘shall’ as well as ‘be to’. It seems that ‘shall’ and ‘will’ come to be used as marker of futurity, yielding modal meaning to others, in this case, to ‘be to’. In connection with the high frequency of ‘have to’ as well as ‘be to’, we are to pay attention to the following information.

“You have to get up at seven” implies that you fully appreciate the necessity, while “You are to get up at seven” suggests that you do not understand the necessity but obey blindly. “I have to go to the lawyer” means that I have business about which I wish to consult him,” but “I am to visit the dentist” implies that someone else has arranged the appointment for me and I am not a free agent.<sup>12</sup>

11. N: *The New English Bible* (1671); R: *Revised Standard Version* (1946); AS: *American Standard Version*; AV: *Authorized Version*.

An example: N: ... we recall how that impostor said while he was still alive, ‘I am to rise after three days.’ R: ... we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ AS: we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I rise again. AV: we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. (27:63)

\* two instances with ‘bound’ between *be* and *to*. (18:33 and 24:63).

\*\* one instance with ‘about’ between *be* and *to*. (20:22).

12. George Kostitch and Isabel Garride, *A Description of English Grammar for Foreign Students* (Cambridge: W. Haffer and Sons, 1935), p. 31.

If this is psychological reality of the native speaker, English learners have to have some access in some way. How will the transformational grammar gain the access to such psychological reality? Perhaps such a matter will be included, or treated, in the lexicon or dictionary, though 'purpose', 'direction' and what not are indicated as category.

§ 2. The motor is to drive the shaft

The candy is to eat

I am to blame

According to Lees, the word *for* serves to mark the occurrence of the infinitival nominal. And Lees assumes that examples given above contain a prepositional phrase led by *for* which functions as the adverbial of "purpose", answering to the question, 'what is N for?' That is, "the motor is for driving the shaft" and "the candy is for eating" and so on. Where the phrase 'for Nom' is missing, the subject of the two source-sentences are identical.<sup>13</sup>

The motor is for it	}	→	The motor is for for the
The motor drives the shaft			motor to drive the shaft → The motor is to drive the shaft

However, the candy is for it	}	→	impossible.
the candy eats			

The 'candy' is the object. In this case, we have to take the following procedure.

The candy is for it	}	→	The candy is for for us (=we) to
We eat the candy			eat the candy → The candy is (for us) to eat.

That is, because of the parallelism between "the motor is for

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13. Lees, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

the driving of the shaft/ the motor is to drive the shaft” and other such examples, we may analyze the sentences in question as containing *for* of “purpose” followed directly by *for N to V* of the infinitival nominal, with the usual obligatory reduction of prepositions before nominals, optional deletion of *for Nom*, and obligatory deletion when it repeats the subject.<sup>14</sup> The following rules may be presented just to show the basic structure.<sup>15</sup> Notice *be* follows the same pattern of *be to* in Aux 1.

- a.  $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{D} \\ \text{Nom}' + \text{Vt} + \text{Nom}'' \end{array} \right\} \longrightarrow \begin{array}{l} \text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{for} \\ + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + \text{Nom}'' \end{array}$
- b.  $\text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{for} + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + \text{Nom}'' \longrightarrow \text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + \text{Nom}''$
- c.  $\text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + \text{Nom}'' \longrightarrow \text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt}$       When  $\text{Nom} = \text{Nom}''$
- d.  $\text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{Nom}' + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + (\text{Nom}'') \longrightarrow \text{Nom} + \text{Tns} + \text{be} + \text{to} + \text{Vt} + (\text{Nom}'')$   
obligatory when  $\text{Nom} = \text{Nom}'$

Let's have a look at the historical background, namely a second development from “hwæt me is to donne.” Here *hwæt* was considered as subject and dative *me* was dropped. An example will be taken from *Canterbury Tales*: Our counsel was not long to seek. In OE, this must be “him was not long our counsel to seek (=he did not have to wait long for our opinion.)” This structure came down to “the end is yet to seek/the cause is not far to seek.” “This hous is to let” and “I am to blame” are also traceable back to that structure.<sup>16</sup> It must be noticed.

14. Lees, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

15. Cf. Lees, *op. cit.*, p. 80. To follow the new model proposed by Chomsky, the rule on the derivational process may be:  $\text{Nom} + \text{be} + \text{for} + \text{S}'$ . S' goes through infinitival transformation.

16. Cf. Nakajima, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

that originally the main verb following *to* was transitive, and that it had reference to the preceding item as object. This fact makes the adjectival use of infinitive possible like 'house to let' and 'candy to eat', which is specially named retroactive infinitive.

Again, there is another point of view. In spite of the active form 'to let' and 'to blame' in "The house is to let" and "He is to blame," the notion is passive. Jespersen states :

Traces of the (active or indifferent) form as a notional passive are still found in English, for instance, "They were not to blame," "The reason is not difficult to see," where *reason* is the subject of *is*, but at the same time may be considered a kind of object for *to see*, or subject for *to see*, if this is taken in the passive sense.<sup>17</sup>

Compare "The house is to let" with "The house is to be let." The latter sentence belongs to the pattern discussed in the previous section. The same thing can be said with "The candy is to eat" and "The candy is to be eaten." *Sanseido's Dictionary of English Grammar* treats the section 1 and 2 of this paper under the same category, "Adjectival Nature of Infinitive," and the former, the construction of section 1, is called non-retroactive, the latter, retroactive.<sup>18</sup>

Palmer suggests that 'to let' and 'to blame' must be treated as idioms, on the ground that 'the house is to paint'/'He is to punish' are not acceptable.<sup>19</sup> The formula 'to let' survives because

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17. Jespersen, *Philosophy of Grammar* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1924) p. 182. Also see Palmer, *A Linguistic Study of the English Verb* (London: Longmans, 1965), p. 143. However, Long gives another interpretation: "There is no need to regard the italicized verb forms as passive in force. . . . Of course he *is to blame* is equivalent to "Of course he faces people's blaming him": *is to* is here semantically close to *faces*, as *is toward* would be." Ralph B. Long, *The Sentence and Its Parts: A Grammar of Contemporary English* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 120.

18. Takanobu Otsuka, ed., *Sanseido's Dictionary of English Grammar* (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1959), p. 495. Apparently, Lees does not consider the construction in question as "Adjectival". The difference comes from the different interpretation of 'be': to take it vi 'exist' or copulative.

19. Palmer, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

there is no convenient substantive which could have taken its place in the same way as 'for sale' has been substituted for the old 'to sell' as found in "That is to sell in Fysshstrete, or in Chepe."<sup>20</sup> Jespersen includes in this formularized group "seek" and "do" as well as "blame" and "let". Obviously the co-occurrence of the subject with these forms is much restricted. Correlation would be: with 'blame', [+ human]; 'let', [+ real estate] or even only [+ living place]; 'seek', [+ cause] or [+ aim], but not 'purpose'; and 'do', 'it', 'they' furthermore with '(over) again'.

To conclude this section, to bring in the idea of "passive meaning" is questionable from the stand point of the description. The relationship of verb and object, for instance, *eat* and *candy* in "The candy is to eat" is not always crucial. There is such relation between *paint* and *house* in "The house is to paint," and yet it is not acceptable. After all, to accept Lees approach is the best to describe Present-day English. In other words, if the predicate which follows 'be' can be interpreted as 'for purpose', the sentence is grammatical. By this criterion, "The house is to paint" is excluded, because to think that a house exists for painting is odd. "The house is to be painted" is a good sentence. Likewise, "He is to punish" must be changed into "He is to be punished" to gain acceptability. "A pencil is to buy" is ungrammatical, but "A pencil is to write with" as well as "A pencil is to be bought" is grammatical. Base component might look simple, but the operation of S'-Transformation for predicate of 'be' must be complicated. The same problem exists in the construction which will be dealt with in the next section.

After all, this section had better be subdivided into two, 1) those which can be interpreted as 'for-purpose' and 2) those formularized forms.

Though trivial, in case of "We are to help you", we can interpret it in two ways. One is "We are (here) for helping

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20. Jespersen, *MEG* V, p. 231.

you,” and the other, ‘are to’ as modal. As noticed here and there, the section 1 and 2 are closely related. It might be safe to say, at least, that when a passivized form follows ‘to’, the sentence must be interpreted as one containing modal, group of section 1. Capability of clarifying from what underlying structure the sentence is derived is important.

The frequency of this structure in four different versions of Matthew is as follows :

N	2
R	4
AS	0
AV	0

All examples are “be+to fulfill”.

e.g. N: This was in fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy. (12:17)

R: This *was to fulfill* what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah.

AS: ... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying, ...

AV: ... that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, ...

### § 3. To see her is to lover her

Now we come to deal with the use of infinitive as primaries. Subjective use does not concern us here; only the primary as complement of verb *be* does.

Strangely enough, Lees does not touch upon this use of infinitive, though he mentions the use as subject in a copulative sentence.<sup>21</sup> Does he consider this construction should be dealt with under the section 1? It is clear, however, in “To see her is to love her” ‘is’ is a copulative main verb, not auxiliary. If ‘is to’ is taken for auxiliary, it violates the rule of combination of the subject and the verb ‘love’. Then, is it to be treated in

21. Lees, *op. cit.*, p. 73. Same with “factive nominals”.

the section 2? It is clear, again, here 'be' does not function as 'serve', nor the predicate corresponds to "for it" as in the case of "The motor is to drive the shaft." In other words, we may assume "to see is for us to believe" as a stage of derivation to produce "to see is to believe", but we cannot admit the evidence of deletion of "for" of purpose before the phrase. 'Be' is purely copulative, and this construction must be treated separately.

Historically, in OE poetry, there is no example of the to-infinitive used as subject or as complement of 'be'. As a source for this use, *hit is ungeliefedlic to secganne* (=it is unbelievable to say) may be thought of. However, in this sentence, 'hit' is the subject, and 'to secganne' means something like "in respect of speaking." This is the translation from Latin *incredibile dictu est*. That is, 'to-infinitive' was used for the translation of Latin Supine.<sup>22</sup> In many similar sentences a shifting of the syntactic perception naturally takes place and to-infinitive is felt more and more as the subject. In other words, in the sentence, "The path is easy to find," we are apt to think logically that it is not so much the path is easy, as the finding of the path. Then we get "it is easy to find the path" and "to find the path is easy." It seems that the primary use in the predicate nominal came after the establishment of primary use as subject in a copulative sentence. The original meaning of 'to' is now completely lost. The nominal notion is most abstract.

Subject of the predicate which consists of infinitival nominal must be abstract—non-personal pronoun, factitive nominal, action nominal and infinitival nominal—just as the predicate of infinitival subject must be appropriate for abstract nominal subject.

This construction is often found in the definition type expression, for instance, "To exploit a person is to make money out of her without giving her an equivalent return." In the case of "To see her is to love her," the sentence does not really denote

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22. Cf. Nakajima, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

complete identity of the act, for it is not possible to reverse the order. What is meant is that seeing immediately leads to loving.

Another thing to be added here is that in American English, 'to' is often omitted, specially after "All I did" and the like: for instance, "All I did in the morning was yawn/ All you got to do is change your attitude"<sup>23</sup>

In writing grammar concerning this construction, we must remember that this 'be' does not co-occur with 'be to' of aux 1. Also it hardly becomes 'have (had) been' or 'being' in this construction. Colligability with other modals is limited. Again, though the phrase structure seems simple at a glance, what can follow 'be' in relation to the subject is not simple to say. In order to manage the matter in grammar perhaps we need complicated selectional rules. The relationship between subject and predicate with 'be' as MV needs detailed investigation. Such study probably belongs to Logic, a broader field than Semantics, at least. At any rate, Verb 'be' is a special verb.

As concerns the use of this construction in the four versions, there are four cases in New English Bible, and none in the others. One example suffices:

N: To receive you *is to receive me*, and to receive me *is to receive* the One who sent me. (10:40)

R: He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives him who sent me.

AS & AV: He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

The idiomatic expression, "That is to say," may be included in this section.<sup>24</sup> This is used to introduce a more explicit or intelligible restatement of what immediately precedes, or a limiting clause necessary to make the statement correct. Where to insert this expression probably belongs to rhetoric rather than

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23. *Sanseido's Dictionary*, p. 492.

24. 'It is to laugh' is mentioned as an idiom by Hill. It seems to be similar to "I am to blame". Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

grammar.

Strangely enough, "That is to say" appeared twice in American Standard and Authorized Version. Perhaps, the use of "That is to say" is a matter of formalism.

AS & AV: And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, *that is to say*, The place of a skull.  
(27:33)

N: So they came to a place called Golgotha (which means 'place of a skull')...

R: And when they came to a place called Gol-go-tha which means the place of a skull...

§ 4. Related Phrase Structure rules:

1.  $S \rightarrow \text{Nom} + \text{VP} + (\text{Adv})$
2.  $\text{VP} \rightarrow \text{Tns} + (\text{Aux}) + \text{MV}$
3.  $\text{MV} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{be} + \text{Pred} / \text{Tns} \text{---}^* \\ \text{Vb} \end{cases}$
4.  $\text{Aux} \rightarrow (\text{Aux } 1) + (\text{Aux } 2)$
5.  $\text{Aux } 1 \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{M} \\ \text{be} + \text{to} \end{cases}$
6.  $\text{Aux } 2 \rightarrow (\text{have} + \text{En}) + (\text{be} + \text{Ing})$
7.  $\text{Tns} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{Past} / \text{---} \text{be} + \text{to} + \text{have} + \text{En} \\ \text{Present} \\ \text{Past} \end{cases}$
8.  $\text{Pred} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{Nom} \\ \text{for } S' \\ \text{FF} \\ (S')^{***} \\ \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{cases}$
9.  $\text{Nom} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{to} + \text{Vb} + \text{X} / \text{Nom} [+ \text{Abstract}] \text{---}^{**} \\ \text{NP} \\ \text{---} \\ \text{---} \end{cases}$

10. FF → to let/  
to blame/ { NP: [+ real estate]—  
to seek/ [+ human]—  
to do/ [+ cause] or [+ aim]  
'it' or 'they'—

\* Some modals may co-occur, but surely with some restriction.

\*\* Contrary to the statement that each infinitive presupposes a full sentence.

\*\*\* Substitution to take care of \*\*

S' must go through T-to transformation.

### Chapter III Next Step

In this paper, the topic was narrowly limited to the pure 'be + to-infinitive' construction, except that 'be about to' and 'be going to' were slightly touched upon. 'Be + to-infinitive' construction must be expanded, that is, 'be + X + to-infinitive' would be the next topic. X can be divided largely into three: 1) those which are contained in Catenative or Quasi-Auxiliaries—*about, going, bound, supposed*, etc.; 2) Nouns; and 3) Adjectives.

The relative order of quasi-auxiliaries will be one of the main themes. Ota found examples of 'be going to have to', but none of 'have to be going to'.<sup>1</sup> Also Ota reported that he had one instance of 'be going to be able to' but none of 'be able to be going to' in his corpus.<sup>2</sup> The order is not random.<sup>3</sup> When certain types of quasi-auxiliaries or catenatives appear together, one of them is always first. Together with colligability with other members of the group, possibility of colligation with perfect:

1. Akira Ota, "Bookreview: *The English Verb* (Joos)," *Language*, 41:4 (1965), p. 673. The present writer came across in *Indiana Daily Student* (May, 18, 1966) the following sentence: "President Johnson has now realized that he is going to have to make some more exacting decision in his Viet Nam policy."

2. *Ibid.*

3. Twaddell states that the maximal order of a complex chained verb-construction is: Modal Primary Catenative(s) Primary, Lexical Vb. *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

infinitive as well as possibility of perfect and progressive form of itself must be investigated. 'Be apt', 'be able' do not allow perfect infinitive to follow. 'Be supposed', on the other hand, may be followed by perfect infinitive regardless of its own tense. The aim of the investigation is to know whether it is worth while to set up another symbol in the grammar for this group, and how to interweave this in the grammar.

'N+to-infinitive' can be derived naturally from the construction treated in the section 1 and 2 in the previous chapter. However, we have to pay attention to the difference between two sentences such as "There was no fruit to eat" and "There was no time to eat."

Hill thought of a 'pattern' like "ready to go/ about to go, eager to go/ willing to go", etc., by saying that 'to go' is the head of the phrase. However, we may think of a 'pattern' like "ready to go/ ready to eat/ ready to fight", etc. If we can set a pattern frame in two ways, it becomes the very proof of circularity, and consequently, a defect of "Substitution Method."

The famous examples, "He is eager to please" and "He is easy to please" come under this heading. It seems that those which can take place of 'easy' are small in number, and the correlation in use is limited. Furthermore, to make list of *Adjx*, *Adjy* and *Adjz*<sup>4</sup> will be useful. Next, 'be adj to vb' will be

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4. *Adjx* can be followed by such prepositions as *of* and *for* (as well as by a PRO form), and also can be followed by factitive nominals that substitute for the preposition and the PRO form. e.g. John is *certain* of SOMETHING/ John is *certain* that Mary is going.

*Adjy* can be followed by prepositions and a PRO form, and slo can be followed by infinitival nominals that substitute for the preposition and the PRO form. e.g. Mary is *eager* for SOMETHING/ Mary is *eager* to go there.

*Adjz* bears some resemblance to the *Adjy*, since they can also be followed by an infinitive. But in addition, the infinitive that follows any *Adjz* is related transformationally to a factitive nominal that can occupy position one in a similar sentence. e.g. That John types all his term papers is wise/ John is *wise* to type all his term papers. Owen Thomas, *Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English* (New York, etc.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 160-161.

expanded to the construction of 'be too adj to vb' or 'be adj enough to vb.' As Less points out in his article, "A Multiply Ambiguous Adjectival Construction in English," (*Language*, 36.2: (1960)), there are many things to be studied carefully.

"Be to-infinitive" is just a small part of English infinitive. What should be studied in the scope of the study of English infinitive cannot be enumerated. The ultimate goal is to write a grammar of English infinitive in which all the facts are reflected. The particular concern of the writer is to know how the transformational generative grammar discloses the historical development of English infinitive.

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