An Effective Way of Teaching the Expression of Future Matters in English; Part Two: Objective versus Rhetorical Uses of Simple Future Tenses: Chapters Four and Five

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An Effective Way of Teaching the Expression of Future Matters in English;  
Part Two: Objective versus Rhetorical Uses of Simple Future Tenses:  
Chapters Four and Five

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Chapter Four:  
(F2) Declaration of a plan of voluntary action, of which the executant has complete ownership, and so it can easily be changed or abandoned: objective choices; rhetorical choices

Let us start from the following examples:
**F2** State-verb: We are going to hope that, sooner or later, our son will be released from prison.

**F2** Process-verb: When she gets her first paycheck, she is going to treat her mother to a delicious meal.

**F2** State-verb: He is going to live in Tibet.

**F2** Process-verb: I am going to go to Bali for my next summer holiday.

Here are two possible choices with which an Addresser can express almost the same content:

**F1 a** Will he come to my party, do you think?

**F2** Is he going to come to my party, do you think?

Now, what is the difference in communicative effect, between the uses of **F1 a** and **F2**, in the above examples?

### 4.1. **F2 and F1 a compared**

Among the various ways of expressing future matters that are offered by English, **F2** is the least complicated. We can demonstrate this most clearly by comparing the respective effects of the following two questions:

i) **F1 a** Is he going to come to my party, do you think?

ii) **F2** Will he come to my party, do you think?

Example (i) expresses its subject, /he/ as someone who has complete ownership of his plan of voluntary action. Thus, it in effect asks, ‘Do you think he has decided to attend my party, and can be expected to voluntarily carry out his plan?’ This is the Default-choice for the matter being asked about.

On the other hand, example (ii) is a Special-needs choice; for it treats its subject merely as a more or less predictable phenomenon – like the weather. It effectually asks, ‘Does what you know of his nature cause (or allow) you to predict his attendance at my party?’

The implication can be, say, that his nature causes him involuntarily not to respond to invitations to parties, or else to reply to say that he will attend, but then to change his mind at the last minute. The male person that is referred to is thus implicitly represented as not
fully in control of what he does – and also not subject to any one else’s control, either. Whether or not he will in fact attend the party is expressed as an involuntary outcome: as ‘ownership-impossible’.

Next, here are two possible choices with which Addresser B can express almost the same content:

A: F2 Where are you going to go during the summer vacation?
B: F2 I’m going to go to Bali, again.

A: F2 Where are you going to go during the summer vacation?
B: F1 a Oh, I expect I’ll go to Bali, again.

Here, the difference in communicative effect between F2 and F1 a, in B’s replies, is considerable. One rule that concerns the degree of politeness of the answer to a question determines that, in order to act politely, the Addresser that answers (i.e. B) must not change any of the wording used by the questioner (i.e. A) that he (i.e. B) needs to use, in order to answer that question. Therefore, in the first example, above, B’s use of F2 in his answer is the Default Choice.

So, what about the second example? Why does B break this rule, by choosing instead F1 a?

Basically, in example (iv), B is being slightly rude. And his awareness of his own rudeness shows, in his use of a prefatory /oh/.

/Ooh/ is here used as a discourse-filler – being a short, weakish sound or interjection that shows that the Addresser needs a little time to think, before giving the information that is expected of him. This signals that he does not yet have a plan. And therefore it softens the abruptness of the shift, from As F2 to his own F1 a. Yet this is a change that is unavoidable; for, since he does not yet have any plan to own, to use F2 would be deceptive, or fail to reflect his (B’s) actual feelings – which may be that he feels embarrassed about having no positive plan as to how to make best use of his precious summer holiday – especially as A’s question assumes that he will, as a matter of course, already have made such a plan.

Instead, by using (iv) B implies something like, ‘Now that you have reminded me of this, I realize that I have made no plan at all. Well, I’m afraid I can only be the sort of person that involuntarily tends to repeat trips that he knows he’s going to enjoy, rather than being
adventurous, and trying new trips, in a positive way. Thus, I can only predict what I’ll probably [almost involuntarily] do (↔/I expect).’

Thus, this Special-needs choice – which is close in effect to F1 b, and thus 

downplays the Addresser's own autonomy – is frequently used in order to sound rather humble and self-deprecatory.

Next let us consider two possible choices with which an Addresser who is a waiter in a restaurant can express almost the same content; but one of them is far more polite, as used by a waiter:

**F1 a**  What will you have for dessert, madam?

**F2**  What are you going to have for dessert, madam?

In the above examples, the difference in communicative effect, and also in degree of politeness, between the uses of F2 and F1 a, is again far from insignificant.

### 4.2. F2 compared with rhetorical use of F1 a

This effect of downplaying the Addresser's autonomy can also accompany a use of F1 a, in place of F2, in which the Addresser is not directly related to the future matter mentioned, but is still expressing humility. For instance, a waiter in an up-market restaurant that has well-trained staff will ask a customer,

v) **F1 a**  What will you have for dessert, madam?

On the other hand, another customer, dining with the Addressee, might, while they are looking at menus in order to decide their respective choices for the last course, ask her,

vi) **F2**  What are you going to have for dessert, my dear?

And one would suppose that, since the Addressee here has complete ownership of her choice of dessert, the waiter, too, would use F2. But, in terms of politeness, he must not. But why?

Here, we should first recall that /have/ means ‘be provided with’, and not ‘choose’; so, in using F1 a the waiter is not even inquiring into the customer’s choice; he is asking her to
predict an **inevitable** future result – that of her inevitably receiving a particular last course. And this is an important determiner of the degree of politeness expressed.

In example (vi), the Addresser is treating his Addressee as an **equal**. That is to say, he offers her – or even grants her – complete **ownership** over her choice.

On the other hand, a **waiter** must treat his customer-Addressee as a **superior**. Which is to say, that her having complete ownership is **so much a matter of course** that he cannot even offer such ownership – let alone grant it. In order to **acknowledge her complete superiority to him in status**, as a customer in the restaurant for which he himself merely works, he must avoid using F2. Instead he must treat her decision as, for him, an **inevitably-given future state-of-affairs**.

We have already seen a similar use of F1 in F1 c: /I will not tolerate such behavior in my subordinates/ emphasizes that ‘this is the inevitably-given state-of-affairs – so be warned!’

And, in example (vi), the Addressee is of such high status that she cannot be treated as anything other than equivalent to a huge, and august, natural phenomenon that is ‘an **involuntary** law unto itself’ – yet one that understands its own **nature**. So, instead of asking her to **declare a plan** – as, in example (v), her equal can ask her to do – the waiter **must** ask her to **predict what will happen**, from her knowledge of her own **nature**, **as though** that event were **beyond all control**:

\[v) \text{F1 a } \text{What will you have for dessert, madam?}\]

By making this **Special-needs choice**, he emphasizes the difference in their respective statuses: ‘her word is the staff of restaurant’s command’; and whatever wish she expresses will **inevitably** be obeyed.

(He can increase the same effect by not even addressing the customer directly, but instead using the extremely polite third-person in addressing his Addressee:

\[\text{F1 a What will \underline{madam} have for desert?}\]

This places his Addressee even higher above him – so high that he cannot even address her directly – just as in 「陛下」, used to **address** the Emperor, or the original function of 「お [ん] 前」, or that of 「御前 [さま]」. This is, in fact, very like asking, /What do you think the **weather** will do?/)
And, by the way, if the Addresser is another customer, yet happens also to be the person that is *hosting* the dinner (and thus paying for it), she or he too may use the same expression as the waiter; for it is *polite* for a host to pretend to be the servant of her or his guests. Thus, that Addresser may use not example (vii),

vii) **F2**  What *are you going to have*, my dear?

but, instead,

**F1 a**  What *will you have*, my dear?

*Humility* is not, however, *always* the effect of substituting **F1 a** for a more logical use of **F2**. Let us compare this next pair of examples:

v)  **Waiter:**  **F1 a**  What *will you have* for dessert, madam?

viii) **Customer:**  **F1 a**  *I should like* a lemon sorbet, please.

v)  **Waiter:**  **F1 a**  What *will you have* for dessert, madam?

ix)  **Customer:**  **F1 a**  *I will have* a lemon sorbet.

Wherein may lie the difference in the communicative effect of the Customer's replies, in (viii) and (ix); and which is the more polite reply?

As I have already suggested, in using **F1 a**, the waiter's question places him in subordinate status. On the other hand, a well-brought-up person does not necessarily *accept* higher status as soon as this is offered to her by her Addresser. She too will feel that she needs to be *polite* in return. So, while both use some form of **F1 a**, we need to consider which Addresser is the *more* polite – the customer in (viii) or the customer in (ix)?

At first sight, you may feel that the customer in (ix) is the more polite of the two, because she obeys the rule, concerning *answering questions*, that I have referred to twice before – that of *not changing any wording of Old Information that has already been used in the question* – whereas the customer in (viii) changes /will have/ to /should like/.

But this rule may, at any time, be overridden by a *more powerful* rule, which concerns *politeness in all utterances*. This rule says that one must *express matters concerning*
one's own wishes, desires, or needs, as indirectly as possibly. And the customer in (viii) has obeyed this, more important, rule better than has done the customer in (ix). If so, how has customer in (viii) done this?

We can answer this question best by first considering the effect of the reply of the customer in (ix).

What this Addresser does is to accept the high status accorded to her by the waiter's question. This means that she too treats herself as ‘a huge, and august, natural phenomenon that is “an involuntary law unto itself”, yet understands its own nature’. This is to say that, in effect, she tells the waiter, ‘You are quite right about my status – it is indeed far above your own. And so I shall tell you what will inevitably happen.’ But, although (as above) one does in fact often hear such replies in restaurants, in such a situation this is not what a truly polite customer will choose.

(By the way, this use of F1 a is very different in communicative effect from that seen in the following example:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{Waiter:} & \text{F1 a What will you have for dessert, madam?} \\
\text{Customer:} & \text{F1 a I think [OR I suppose] I'll have a lemon sorbet.}
\end{array}
\]

The reason for this difference is that /I think/ or /I suppose/ emphasizes that she has no choice but to make a prediction about herself, because she has not yet really made up her mind – thus humbly downplaying her own autonomy.)

On the other hand, the customer in (viii) sacrifices one rule for a stronger one. She too makes a prediction: /*I should like ~ */; but notice that, here, her prediction concerns not what she will inevitably receive, but only what she will inevitably enjoy receiving, should the prevailing conditions make that a possible future event. In effect, she says something like ‘I predict that I will enjoy eating a lemon sorbet, if it proves possible for me do this; but I also see that your restaurant is very busy; so, by now, there may well be no more lemon sorbet, left in the kitchen. While I can confidently predict my enjoying eating a lemon sorbet, at the same time I cannot at all as confidently predict that the present conditions will inevitably allow me to do that.’

Thus, the customer in (viii) is in fact the more polite of the two; for she makes a prediction that is limited by certain conditions, the fulfillment of which is a matter that she expresses as ‘ownership-impossible’. And what she is not saying is, ‘Of course I shall
inevitably receive a portion of lemon-sorbet, because I have infinite power here, and so my desire for this outcome makes it inevitable. On the other hand, that is exactly what the customer in (ix) does say.

The customer in (ix) may, in fact, be an arrogant person; or she may instead be a person whose sense of the rules of politeness is not very reliable, and who often overlooks the potential arrogance of the use of F1 a. And, as already observed above, by now it is quite common to overhear customers unthinkingly replying to waiters’ F1 a questions with F1 a answers, such as /I'll have a lemon sorbet/.

4.3. F2 compared with rhetorical use of F3 c

Finally, let us return to example (vii):

vii) F2 What are you going to have, my dear?

This Addresser could also ask,

vii) F3 c What are you having, my dear?

Strictly speaking, F3 c should only be used to ask the Addressee what she has already ordered, but has not yet been served to her, as in

F3 c Remind me, my dear: what is it that you are having for dessert?

or (more likely, because the Addressee’s order has already been placed),

F3 c Remind me, my dear: what was it that you were having for dessert?

Here, because the waiter has presumably already reported the order to the restaurant kitchen, the Addressee is given only partial ownership (F3 c) of the future schedule. Consequently, that future schedule is now owned by both the Addressee and also the kitchen staff. (And – should the Addresser also be the host, and so paying for the meal – he too has some ownership of the schedule in question.)

On the other hand, perhaps because both /What are you going to have?! and /What are you having?! use a present participle, it seems that some Addressers unconsciously assume
that F2 and F3 c may be used interchangeably – as though both meant almost the same thing.

The fact that F3 c is shorter, and is therefore less trouble to say, may also contribute to this blurring of the basic distinction between F2 and F3 c: thus, for many Addressers, the use of F3 c, as in example (x), instead of F2, as in example (xi), below may not necessarily be intended to express only partial ownership; (x) may just be, as it were, a lazy abbreviation of (xi):

  x)  F2  Where are you going to go for your summer holiday?
  xi) F3 c Where are you going for your summer holiday?

Nevertheless – as we shall see when we later consider the normal uses of F3 c – I think most Addressers that are sensitive to language would choose (xi) only if they assumed, or knew, that the Addressee had already made his travel-arrangements (bought tickets, booked seats and hotel-rooms, etc.), and thus no longer had complete ownership of his travel-schedule, as again in (xii), below:

  xii) F3 c Process-verb: In summer, my parents are taking me to Paris. (I myself should prefer to go to New York.)

4.4. Rhetorical use of F2 compared with F1 a

I began this chapter by saying that F2 is the least complicated of the ways of expressing future matters that are offered by English. But there is a common Special-needs pattern of use of F2 that is, objectively speaking, quite illogical, and so is another example of rhetorical choice.

As far as we know, only such living beings as people and animals have brains, and so they alone have some degree of willpower. While, on one hand, even a very small animal, such as a rat, can make a plan and then carry it out – whether from simple reasoning about its needs or from instinct – on the other hand, nothing else in the universe has a brain, and therefore willpower.

Something that has no brain cannot make a plan, let alone act according to one. And so, objectively speaking, example (xiii) is a use of F2 that is logically acceptable, while example (xiv) is not.

  xiii) F2  Don’t worry about your cat. She’s going to come home in her own good
time.

xiv) **F2** Look at those clouds! Eventually, it’s going to rain.

In (xiv), *iti* means ‘the weather today’. None of the sky, the clouds in the sky, or the moisture in the clouds has a brain. So, if the Addresser of (xiv) applies the English-language system of expressions of future matters **objectively** – and because the clouds don’t look as though they will discharge their moisture ‘soon’, but rather ‘later on’ (*cf.* *eventually*) – she must choose not **F2** but, instead, **F1 a**:

xv) **F1 a** Look at those clouds! Eventually, it will rain.

And yet (xiv) is a choice that Addressers frequently make. **Semantically** speaking, it is ill-formed, for the weather cannot form a plan, because it has no brain. But, **pragmatically** speaking, it is in fact well-formed. Why can this be?

Let us start from a very similar example of Japanese usage:

xvi) また雨が降りあがりそうだ。この梅雨め！まったくもう！

What the Addresser of (xvi) is doing is to **personify** the tsuyu season’s characteristic weather; this is clear from his use of *～あがる* and also *～めり*.

This is what the Addresser of (xiv), too, has done. I myself suspect that this pattern of use began in Britain, where the weather is very unreliable, and often extremely unpleasant; and many people find their moods, and even their health, influenced by it. So it is hardly surprising that people should have taken to treating the weather as though it were something with a mind and ‘a will of its own’ – willful and unpredictable, and sometimes apparently malevolent.

This use of **personification** may be extended to other things without brains – for example, cars that give trouble:

**F2** Damn it! This bloody car’s not going to start!

Another common, illogical but rhetorical use of **F2** can be seen in the following example:

**F2** If you aren’t more careful, some day you are going to have your wallet
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stolen.

All changes can be divided into voluntary and involuntary ones: for example, /write/ is (usually) a voluntary change, while /sneeze/ is not. And, if an Addresser is applying the English system for expressing future matters strictly objectively, of F1 and F2 she will of course choose F2 (or F1 c) only to express voluntary changes, and F1 a or F1 d (or F1 b) to express involuntary ones.

Having something stolen from one is obviously an involuntary change. So why has the Addresser used not F1 a but instead F2 (that this is not an example of the use of F1 d is shown by /some day/, which means not 'soon' but 'later on')?

Again, this is an illogical but common rhetorical choice, which we may call 'quasi-plan'. What it implies is 'Judging from the careless way in which you manage your wallet, anyone would be justified in thinking that you were deliberately planning to get it stolen.' That is to say, this emphasizes the Addressee's carelessness much more strongly than F1 a does:

F1 a If you aren’t more careful, some day you will have your wallet stolen.

and so it meets the Addresser's Special communicative Needs.

4.5. Ambiguity between objective use of F1 d and rhetorical use of F2

When the event predicted is something involuntary that will happen 'soon', however, it can be difficult to decide whether the Addresser intends a rhetorical choice of F2, or an objective use of F1 d:

F1 d OR F2? If you drink any more whiskey, you are going to be sick.

Here, without any tone of voice being indicated, it is equally possible either that the Addresser intends, 'The way you are drinking tonight would make anyone believe that you are trying to overload your body, and make yourself ill' [= F2], thus adding to her prediction a subjective criticism of the Addressee as someone who is deliberately behaving in a stupid way, or else that the Addresser is simply making an objective prediction [= F1 d]; and only tone of voice will reveal which she intends: a calm, deliberate tone for F1 d, but a rather irritated, or again anxious, tone for F2.
4.6. The semantic relation between F1 d and F2

What does /be going to ~ / basically mean?

It means ‘already be on a path or course that will lead to ~ happening’.

The element, ‘already’, explains its use to express F1 d – an involuntary change that will occur ‘soon’, or an involuntary state that will start ‘soon’: the cause has already started to operate, or will operate very shortly. Another way of expressing this is /be about to ~ /.

Though F2 specifies no segment of future time, the cause – this being the executant’s plan – has already started to take effect: her, or his, or their, affairs are already ‘in train’ so as to result in the execution of the plan – whenever.

In the case of F1 d, no one has chosen that course (i.e. it is ownership-impossible); in the case of F2 the executant has chosen it (i.e. she has complete ownership).

4.7. Further ambiguity between F1 d and F2

As F1 d and F2 share the same phrasing, /be going to ~ /, you may meet with utterances in which, at first sight, it seems difficult to decide whether /be going to ~ / is being used to express F1 d or F2. And, case by case, this may or may not be important with regard to interpreting the utterance correctly.

If it is important, then, in many cases, a little thought about the meaning of the main verb, /~/, and other possible choices of main verb, may often help one to decide what is intended by the Addresser.

Let us take the following example:

xviii) Is he going to die?

At first sight, this could be asking either of two things:

1) Is his life inevitably going to end soon? [(xviii) expresses I d]
2) Has he already planned to cause his life to end? [(xviii) expresses F2]

But, if we think about the Addresser’s choice of verb, we can soon see that she has chosen a verb, /die/, that expresses an involuntary (= ownership-impossible) change. Thus, we cannot ask whether or not someone committed suicide by saying, or writing, simply,
Did he *die*?

Regardless of *whether* he in fact committed suicide *or not*, if he is already dead the answer can only be ‘Yes, he did’ – which tells us nothing about the cause of his death. If we want to know whether or not someone committed suicide, and (for whatever reason) wish to use /

Did he die *by his own hand*?

This shows that /

by itself can *only* express an *ownership-impossible* change. At the same time, the Addresser of (xviii), above, had at least two other possible choices:

Is he going to *kill himself*?

Is he going to *commit suicide*?

Both verbs differ from /

in that they express the result of a *complete-ownership plan*. That the Addresser has *not* chosen either of these verbs shows that (xviii) is intended as expressing /F1 d/, and not /F2/, and means ‘Is the end of his life inevitably very near in future time?’

Thus the question of the *possibility of ownership* on the part of the subject of the change or state expressed is the standard by which /F1 d/ and /F2/ can often be distinguished, by considering the relationship between ownership and the meaning of the main verb.

As mentioned above, the same idea as is expressed by /F1 d/ can also be expressed by a *present* tense, /be about to ~ /. And, *if* the Addresser of this example,

Is he going to *die*? [F1 d OR POSSIBLY F2]

intended to use /F1 d/, and *because* the expression of /F1 d/ is *morphologically identical* to that of /F2/ and is therefore slightly *ambiguous of meaning*, then that Addresser would not use /be going to ~ / but, instead, /be about to ~ /:

I d Is he *about to die*?
4.8. **Objective use of F2 and rhetorical use of F1 a further compared**

Even with verbs such as /kill [one]self/, or /commit suicide/ – which imply complete ownership of the change by its executant – it is possible to implicitly cancel the executant’s ownership, by using, instead of F2, F1 a (but not F1 d, which – as above – is morphologically identical to F2).

Thus, an Addresser might predict,

**Example (xix)**

\[ F1 \text{ a } \] If we do not look after him better, he will kill himself.

When compared with a use of F2,

**Example (xx)**

\[ F2 \] If we do not look after him better, he is going to kill himself,

the use of F1 a in example (xix), above, suggests, again, that this change is ownership-impossible: there is something in his nature, or character, that makes it inevitable that he will end his own life – if later, rather than sooner. And therefore the Addresser feels that she and her Addressee must look after ‘him’ better – from now on.

**Chapter Five:**

*(F3 a) report of a schedule of ‘voluntary’ action that is unilaterally imposed, and so is impossible to change – ‘this is how things stand’*

5.1.1. **Semantic origins of F3 a and F3 b i**

i) **F3 a** State-verb: We are not to doubt the truth of what he says. After all, he is our boss. [involuntary]

ii) **F3 a** Process-verb: You are to tidy your bedroom. ['voluntary']

iii) **F3 a** Process-verb: You are never to speak to my daughter again. ['voluntary']

iv) **F3 a** Instant-verb: I fear I am never to see my father again. [involuntary]

How can the verb /be/ have come to be coupled with an infinitive form, /[not] to ~/? For, as English, this is rather an exceptional verbal formation.

My own guess is that it may have developed as a customary abbreviation of /be required [not] to/; and also that it is in some way related to /have [got] [not] to/.

For example,
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You *are required to tidy* your bedroom

is, in communicative effect, identical with

You *are to tidy* your bedroom

and

You *have [got] to tidy* your bedroom

in at least two respects: (1) the executant has *zero-ownership* of the schedule that is expressed; (2) the schedule is expressed as *ownership-opaque*.

5.1.2. The origins of the rhetorical force of F3 a

The similarity among

You *are to tidy* your bedroom

and

You *have [got] to tidy* your bedroom

and also

You *are required to tidy* your bedroom

is that *all* of these, basically, mean ‘You are *now* in a situation in which tidying your bedroom *is no longer* something that *you alone* can *choose* whether or not to do’.

And, here, let us note that all of

You *are* to ~

You *are required* to ~

You *have [got] to* ~

and

You *are* now in a situation in which ~

use *state*-verbs (shown in *bold* type); and the Addressee is told simply that this is the state in which he must recognize that he *already is*. This seems to be the major source of the
rhetorical force of F3 a. While, on one hand, one may be able to choose whether or not to bring about some change that is required of one, or desist from bringing about some change that is forbidden to one, here the emphasis is on not the change but a state that the Addressee is reminded, or bidden, to recognize as already prevailing: ‘this is how things stand for you.’

Deciding whether or not to bring about some change is a relatively simple mental operation. On the other hand, deciding how to get out of a particular state requires much more active ingenuity. Thus, for example, of the following two examples, the second has much more persuasive force:

v) F1 b Instant-verb: If I were you, I shouldn't marry him.
vi) F1 a State-verb: Marry him and you'll be in trouble.

Example (v) offers guidance about not bringing about a certain change. On the other hand, (vi) posits a change, and then predicts an inevitably resultant state. Since a state is something that inherently continues – that is to say, has no inevitable finish (while every change must have a finish), the subjective effect on the Addressee is likely to be a feeling of helplessness; and giving the Addressee this feeling is likely to make a major contribution to persuading her that she should not marry that particular man: if she does, there will be 'no easy way out' of her consequent troubles. ‘A state has no inherent end; what on earth will you be able to do, to bring that state to an end?’

And exactly the same nuance is the major part of the rhetorical force of

F3 a Process-verb: You are to tidy your bedroom.

‘This is the state in which you now find yourself. What on earth can you do, to end this state?’

And the answer that the Addressee is urged to acknowledge as being inevitable is, ‘Oh dear! Nothing at all!’

5.1.3. Two different kinds of declaration: F3 a, and F2

In making comparisons with other choices, we have, in previous chapters, already considered two other examples of F3 a:
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F3 a You are to go up to your room, and [are to] do your homework. ['voluntary']

F3 a Cinderella is to go to the ball! ['voluntary']

The main characteristics of F3 a are:

1) the executant of the schedule has no ownership at all of the schedule;
2) therefore the executant is offered no choice at all but to execute the schedule;
3) the actual, unilateral ownership of the schedule does not (usually) have to be acknowledged.

Though I have used the term 'report' for this subcategory, too, use of F3 a in fact amounts to a declaration: ‘this is what it has been decided will happen, and therefore will happen’, or ‘this is how things are to be’. But, as you can see from (1~3), above, it is a declaration of a kind that is entirely opposite to that of F2, as can be expressed in the following way:

F3 a
1) the executant of the schedule has no ownership at all of the schedule;
2) therefore the executant is offered no choice at all but to execute the schedule;
3) the actual, unilateral ownership of the schedule does not (usually) have to be acknowledged.

F2
1) the executant of the plan has complete ownership of the plan;
2) therefore the executant can choose to change or abandon the plan at will;
3) the executant’s unilateral ownership of the plan is acknowledged.

5.1.4. Enforcement of future changes or states: the effect of the use of F3 a compared with the effect of the use of direct commands and prohibitions

(1~2), above, mean that, when the verb expresses a voluntary state or change, that voluntariness is effectually cancelled. An Addresser that uses F3 a i in a positive statement is, in effect, giving the Addressee a command, which he is either to himself obey, or communicate to a third person or third persons, who is or are then to obey it.

When it is used in a negative statement, as in examples (i) and (iii), shown again below,
it is **effectually** equivalent to an act of **prohibiting** the occurrence of some change or state:

i) **F3 a** State-verb: We are not to doubt the truth of what he says. After all, he is our boss. [involuntary]

iii) **F3 a** Process-verb: You are never to speak to my daughter again. ['voluntary']

Thus, **F3 a** is the only way in which an Addresser can effectually express the (ownership-opaque) **enforcement of a future change or state**.

Occasionally, as in (i) above, the Addresser herself may be one of the executants that must obey the effectual command or prohibition, and is communicating this to one or more others, who must likewise obey it.

Yet, whichever be the case, the **communicative effect** of this expression of a command or prohibition is very different from that of using a **direct** command or prohibition. Let us compare the following sets of examples:

ii) **F3 a** Process-verb: You are to tidy your bedroom.

    vii) Tidy your bedroom!

iv) **F3 a i** Process-verb: You are never to speak to my daughter again.

    viii) Never speak to my daughter again!

    viii) I forbid you to speak to my daughter again.

A direct command or prohibition is, in a way, always **potentially** a confrontation of, or challenge directed at, the Addressee. In a way, it says – or at least may say – ‘I dare you to disobey me.’ It also acknowledges the inevitable voluntariness (on the part of the executant) of a desired but voluntary change or state. Thus, by choosing the imperative form of the verb, the Addresser **implicitly acknowledges** two things: (1) that the Addressee **may possibly refuse** to obey; and (2) that the schedule expressed by the command **is being imposed by the Addresser, herself**:

    [I am telling you to tidy your bedroom.

    [I am telling you never to speak to my daughter again.

That is part of what the imperative form communicates; and thus the Addressee is,
implicitly yet unmistakably, told by whom the command is being issued.

On the other hand, by using instead F3 a, an Addresser can, when necessary, avoid doing all of these things. Contextually, it may be perfectly clear to the Addressee who it is that actually has ownership of the schedule being unilaterally imposed: in each of the cases of both (ii) and (iii), below, this is quite obviously the Addresser herself:

   ii) F3 a  Process-verb: You are to tidy your bedroom. [voluntary]
   iii) F3 a  Process-verb: You are never to speak to my daughter again. [voluntary]

Nevertheless, these utterances do not acknowledge this semantically; and, psychologically-speaking, an anonymous authority – invisible, but placed somehow ‘beyond’ or ‘behind’ the Addresser herself – may seem (especially to a child) far more irresistible: it may appear much harder to confront, or argue with, because it is presented as unidentifiable. Thus, though a command may seem more direct, and therefore more effective, in fact expressing what is in fact an order, but using F3 a has (or can have) a communicative impact that is much stronger: someone, or something, neither mentioned nor implicitly specified is going to make sure that this schedule is executed, without fail. Thus, we can call F3 a a schedule that is ‘ownership-opaque’.

(An Addresser can, of course, explicitly express the owner of any schedule being unilaterally imposed, if doing this suits her communicative needs – needs such as that of avoiding any implicit admission of ownership of the schedule on her own part:

Daddy says you are to tidy your bedroom.)

Thus, pragmatically speaking, of (ix) and (x), below, B will find (x) much harder to refuse to obey:

   (ix) Please sit down.
   (x) You are to sit down, please.

5.2. A note on /please/ and politeness

As /please/ is an adverb that used almost entirely concerning future matters, it seems appropriate to add a note concerning its real communicative effect, which is often completely

misunderstood by EFL learners.

Despite their inclusions of /please/ – which may initially lead learners to suppose otherwise – in pragmatic effect neither (ix) nor (x) is particularly polite.

As we have noted in the previous chapter, politeness requires the expression of the Addresser’s own needs or desires as indirectly as possible. This is because one of the first objects of polite behavior is (1) to make one’s Addressee feel as free as possible to do what he himself wants to do; and another is (2) modestly to lower the status that the Addresser expresses as assumed for herself, by herself (‘You, and not I, are the important person, here’), and particularly in relation to her own autonomy.

To do this, the Addresser must use either an indirect invitation (through inquiry as to the Addressee’s wishes) to sit, or else beg (‘imprecate’) the Addressee to seat himself:

Indirect invitation: Would you like to sit down?
Imprecation: Do sit down, won’t you?

The invitation is very polite, even though it does not (and cannot) contain /please/, because the Addressee is consulted, as to his wishes; and the imprecation is polite – though less so than the invitation – because the Addresser at least expresses her own lack of presumption of control over the Addressee’s freedom, which, she implies, ‘forces’ her to resort to begging him to seat himself.

The Modern English adverb, /please/, however – and although it derives from the conditional adverbial clause, /should [OR if] it please you [so to do]/ – has by now entirely lost its former conditional force, and so no longer draws an Addressee’s attention to his freedom of choice.

Instead, it is now used in three ways:

1) As a token of politeness, taught to (and extracted from) young children that have not yet mastered the (more complex) speech-patterns that express real politeness;
2) [extension of 1] as a (rather childish) intensifier, which merely says ‘I really want this to happen’;
3) in public, transient transactions, a token of impersonal, formal courtesy: it implies something like, ‘If we in fact were beginning a personal relationship that was going to last for some time, I should have to be properly polite to you; as
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we are not, however, I am merely signaling that my position requires me to slightly *soften my commands*.

**Child's politeness-token:** Parent: What do you want to drink?

Child: Milk.

Parent: Now, what *should* you say?

Child: Milk, *please*.

**Intensifier:** Mummy, *please* can I have more pocket-money?

**Token of impersonal formal courtesy:** Your passport, *please*.

None of these uses constitutes a *real* expression of politeness – indeed, because of its present associations with *transient, impersonal* interactions, if the Addressee is someone with whom an adult Addressee *does* have an enduring personal relation, a use of */please/* may strike that Addressee as slightly *impolite*.

Thus, an airline-employee is, in one sense, acting as a representative of the airline that employs her; and any airline of course hopes to be chosen again – that is to say, to remain in an enduring and pseudo-personal relationship with each customer. And so a *well-trained* employee working at a check-in counter will use not */Your passport, please/*, but the following *personal request*:

**May I see** your passport, sir?

Though it does not contain */please/*, this is, in fact, *very polite*, while

**May I please** see your passport, sir?

is in fact *less* polite, because the */please/* is unnecessary as a token of *impersonal* courtesy (the Addresser has already used */May I ~ /* (= *personal* politeness), and thus */please/* can only be an *intensifier*, which (impolitely) draws attention to the Addresser’s *own needs or desires*. Therefore, a well-trained check-in clerk might use it *only* if she has made a more polite request all of *twice already*, and her Addressee’s unnecessary failure to respond to these requests is now holding up her work, and thus perhaps delaying other passengers queued up behind the Addressee. Here, */please/* would act as a reminder that this is the *third* time she has had to ask to see the Addressee’s passport, and thus in fact convey an *indirect criticism* of her Addressee.
To return to (ix), below, however, the Addresser is here imposing her will on the Addressee quite directly – if also formally:

(ix) Please sit down.

(x) You are to sit down, please.

In the case of (x), above, the use of /please/ is almost mocking, or insulting: the use of F3 a forcibly draws the Addressee’s attention to the fact that he has no choice whatsoever, and thus can never be polite: using a token of politeness with this can only add insult to injury.

5.3. Use of F3 a compared with explicit expressions of obligation:

justifications for refusal to carry out a schedule

Since a schedule unilaterally imposed gives the executant not even part-ownership of that schedule, it of course constrains his freedom. Another way in which an executant’s freedom can be expressed as constrained is through expressions of obligation, such as /must ~/ and /have [got] to ~/ . So how does an Addresser usually choose, between expressing a schedule unilaterally imposed on her, and expressing an obligation?

Here are two possible choices with which Addresser B can express an excuse for a refusal to respond to a request:

(xi) A: I feel so tired, tonight. Could you do the washing-up for me?
       B: Sorry. I have to get this report finished by tomorrow.

(xii) A: I feel so tired, tonight. Could you do the washing-up for me?
      B: F3 a i Sorry. I am to get this report finished by tomorrow.

Here, what is the difference in communicative effect, between B’s replies in (xi) and (xii)?

The obligation that is expressed in (xi) does constrain B's freedom, just as much as does the schedule unilaterally imposed that is expressed in (xii). But an obligation is a constraint to which the executant has, to some extent, voluntarily submitted – or at least voluntarily acknowledges. That is to say, an executant that feels bound by an obligation has some degree of ownership of that (sense of) obligation.
Now, ownership very much involves responsibility: however much she may wish that she were not so obliged to do, or be, something, when an Addresser expresses an obligation, she is effectually confessing that her being bound by this obligation is, in part, her own responsibility: at the very least, she herself is responsible for not having evaded the obligation; or, again, she herself is responsible for having in some way brought the obligation upon herself. It is 'her own business', and, at times, 'her own fault'.

For this reason, an Addresser that, as does B in (xi), uses an expression of obligation, in order to justify her refusal of a request, in effect confesses to the Addresser that has made the request, (A), that he, the Addresser that is refusing, (B), has – from the point of view of the requester – in some way mismanaged his recent life: he admits that he might perhaps have managed to avoid the obligation that now binds him.

Doing this, as does B in (xi), leaves any Addresser that refuses in a position in which he is potentially vulnerable to such subsequent accusations – made by the Addresser that has expressed the request – as, 'Well, you should have managed things better. I do not accept that you are justified in not responding to my request.' Thus, in the case of (xi), A could easily then retort to B, 'Well, I'm sorry; but I am going to bed. Someone has to do the washing-up. You should have got your report written earlier. I only hope you don't have to stay up all night to get it written, after you've done the washing-up. But, ultimately, that's your own problem. Do your best. Good luck, and good night!'

This is to say that, because obligations are – if sometimes only in part – the responsibilities, of their executants, their degree of bindingness is inherently vulnerable to negotiation, possibly resulting in change of schedule. Thus, obligations are absolute, or binding, only for their executant[s]; and not at all for other people that are not themselves bound by them, too.

In contrast, by using instead F3 a, in (xii) B acknowledges no responsibility at all, on his own part, for the schedule that has been imposed, with unilateral and absolute force, upon him – indeed upon his entire world, too – and thus (he implies), indirectly, upon his Addresser, A.

In short, the fulfillment, or non-fulfillment, of an obligation is still negotiable, while a schedule unilaterally imposed is not. And the opacity of ownership of a schedule unilaterally imposed contributes greatly to this implicit non-negotiability.

Thus, an Addresser will choose an expression of obligation if she is ultimately ready,
even if unwillingly, to renegotiate, say, her refusal to respond to a request; but will choose

\textbf{F3 a} – report of a schedule unilaterally imposed – if she really wishes to express that her
situation lies \textit{‘beyond negotiation’}.

Next, here are two possible choices with which an Addressee can express almost the
same content:

\begin{itemize}
  \item iv) \textbf{F3 a} Instant-verb: I fear I am never \textbf{to see} my father again.
  \item xiii) \textbf{F1 a} Instant-verb: I fear I \textbf{shall} never \textbf{see} my father again.
\end{itemize}

How can we explain the difference in communicative effect between the uses of \textbf{F3 a}
and \textbf{F1 a} in the above examples?

\section*{5.4. \textit{Rhetorical use of F3 a to express a schedule owned by fate, or
destiny, compared with objective use of F1 a}}

Though the owner of a \textit{schedule unilaterally imposed} – unless that ownership is made
explicit – remains not even implicitly specified, and because what is being expressed is a
\textit{schedule}, the Addressee normally apprehends that someone [or some group of people]
must be the owner[s] of the schedule; logically speaking, no other kind of being can (normally)
formulate schedules.

There is, however, one use of \textbf{F3 a} in which the ownership of a schedule unilaterally
imposed is implicitly attributed to something that, logically-speaking, cannot formulate a
schedule – and perhaps does not even exist. (iv) is one example of this use of \textbf{F3 a}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item iv) \textbf{F3 a} Instant-verb: I fear I am \textbf{never to see} my father again.
\end{itemize}

In communicative effect, this is very close to a prediction; so let us compare that effect
with the effect of the expression of an \textit{objective} prediction – \textbf{F1 a}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item xiv) \textbf{F1 a} I fear I \textbf{shall never see} my father again.
\end{itemize}

The objective use of \textbf{F1 a} in (xiv), above, merely \textbf{predicts} a future \textbf{inevitable} result of
the \textit{(merciless) nature of human life} – or perhaps of some cruel organization that has captured
the Addressee’s father. (By using ‘I fear’, the Addressee softens the inevitability of result that
it expresses, by saying that it is, as yet, only a strong if unwelcome possibility – it is only ‘probably inevitable’.) In (xiv), nobody’s will is implied as being involved in the coming-about of this result.

On the other hand, the rhetorical use of F3 a, as in (iv), draws attention to the fact that a coercive and irresistible will has already designed this schedule, and will somehow cause it to come about [i.e. owns it, and does so only unilaterally]. And the usual implication is that the owner of this will is fate, or destiny, or (in certain contexts) some all-powerful deity – another illogical, but common, choice, ultimately based on implicit personification of something that is – even if it exists – presumably in fact an impersonal force.

Fate is also ‘unknowable’: the Addresser of (iv) is speaking from a personal intuition; but, unless she believes in fortune-telling, there is no source of information available to her, that can help her to decide whether or not her fear is justified. Thus, this special use of F3 a shares with other uses of the same method of expressing future matters implicit opacity of ownership.

In the final three chapters of Part Two, I shall examine the reporting of schedules that, due to the incompleteness of executant-ownership inherent in schedules, are understood as being either (1) inflexible (difficult to change or abandon) [F3 b i-ii], or else (2) flexible (relatively easy to abandon or change) [Fc].