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SOMMARIO

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Giuliana Grego Bolli
Purpose expressions in contemporary english

INTRODUCTION *

The aim of this paper is to present several reflections on purpose expressions in contemporary English. In the first part I have examined the concept of causality in which the « final » cause is only one aspect, perhaps the most fascinating, in that it links man's behaviour and deeds to the will which is understood to be a sort of philosophical driving and inspiring « intelligence ». At the same time it is difficult to imagine the concept of will as ending in itself; that is it would be hard to imagine that the will expresses and consumes itself only in the action of which it is the product. If there is a will there can certainly be an action, but above all there is a purpose, either explicit or implicit, which is determined by the will and, at the same time, determines it; in this way it is nothing more than a means for reaching the purpose.

Will and purpose, therefore, are linked and dependent on each other. I have observed, in fact, that purpose expressions are usually linked with and dependent on verbs that epress will.

In the second part of this study. I have tried to point out some of the most common ways of espressing purpose in English, no longer only in relation to the verb but, above all, to the introductory conjunction. I have also tried, where possible, to point out certain similarities and dissimilarities between Italian and English.

I believe, however, that a systematic comparison of English and Italian in this field would not be useful as Italian language structure is much more complex and involved than that of English. Furthermore, purpose as well as finalism involve not only linguistic structure but such profound aspects of a language as the espression of a particular society at a particular time.

THE « FINAL » CAUSE

The concept of finality, as well as the concept of causality, has traditionally interested philosophers of every ilk and has, in more recent times, come to be investigated even by psychologists (Piaget, 1930; Michotte, 1963).

The first thinker to classify different types of « causes » was, of course, Aristotle. Aristotle's classification of causes, however, was undertaken in an effort to clarify some of the ideas or principles that underlie not only linguistic expressions but ordinary every-day thinking as well. The mere fact that this classification is still alive today is proof of a certain degree of success. Thus, it may well be worth looking at what Aristotle had to say. He had four types of causes;
1) the « material »,
2) the « formal »,
3) the « efficient »,
4) the « final ».
The order in which he presents them is determined by the reason he gives for attempting the classification: « knowledge is the objective of our inquiry, and men do not think they know a thing till they have grasped the " why " of it... So clearly we too must do this as regards both coming to be and passing away and every kind of physical change, in order that, knowing their principles, we may try to refer to these principles each of our problems [1] ».
The « final » cause is the fourth and last on Aristotle's list; this is because it is the most complete one. In his words it is; « that for the sake of which a thing is done, e.g. healt is the cause of walking about » [2].
Nowadays we could say, referring to a very popular sport, « so-and-so jogs for the sake of his health or *because* of his health » [3]. Now we have to examine what kind of conceptual structure this type of cause might be. As Aristotle said, the relation that matters here is that of means towards an end, activities enacted or instruments used to achieve a goal or a purpose. This is the thing against which some behaviorists have fought with unflagging constancy of purpose [4]. Fortunately we do not have to discuss here whether or not ends, purposes, and goals are viable concepts in the realm of psycology.
Whatever « end », « goal » or « purpose » might designate, there can be little doubt that it must be something that is wanted, projected and not

[1] ARISTOTLE 122.
[2] ARISTOTLE 123.
[3] ERNST VON GLASERSFELD 139.
[4] WHEN THE BEHAVIORISTS ASSOCIATED THEMSELVES WITH WATSON'S PUBLICATION (*Behaviorism, An Introduction to Comparitive Psychology*, New York, 1914), they introduced into psychology a new line of thought in wich « coscience », « spirit », « inner state », and « subjective state » were no longer acceptable concepts. Theri place was taken by the concept (previously described by Compte) that only what is objectively osservable and controllable is of any importance to the psyche. At first they even joined the mechanicalism movement according to which external stimuli are the cause of all behavior. The behavioral response to every stimulus is certain and, therefore, predictable. Today, this connection no longer exists, but still at the base of behaviorism there is a conviction that a methodology cannot describe scientifically wath is beyond objective observation. It is clear, therefore, that for the behaviorists the concept of purpose represents nothing more than a theological and metaphysical holdover. See Noam Chomsky's criticism (1959) against Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*. This paper has also been translated into Italian in, *Psicolinguistica: percezione, memoria e apprendimento del linguaggio*, edited by F. Antinucci and C. Castelfranchi: 21-65.

yet attained. That is to say, it can only be something we imagine and project into the future, and not something we experience in the same way as we experience something that we can really see or hear.

For this reason the following remark by Ernst Von Glaserfeld is interesting: « I propose to call this particular way of experiencing *Forward Representation* in order to differentiate it not only from actual present experience, but also from remembering... If someone says « *so-and-so jogs because of his health* », he is saying, among other things, that so-and-so (or may be he, the speaker) believes that jogging causes a change from less health to more health, and that he considers such a change desirable » [5]. This means that jogging is, or can be considered, an « efficient » cause of an improved state of health in the person who practices it.

On the one hand, then, a « finalistic » statement requires the belief in a causal connection of the efficient » type, but on the other, *qua* statement, it puts the expected change in the place of the effect. A diagram for « final » cause, therefore, would have to look like Diagram 4, where the subject X, at time 1, represents his own state of improved health by the effect caused by jogging, and then, since he wants to improve his health even more, and now believes in the efficacy of that causal connection, he carries out the activity of jogging at time 2.
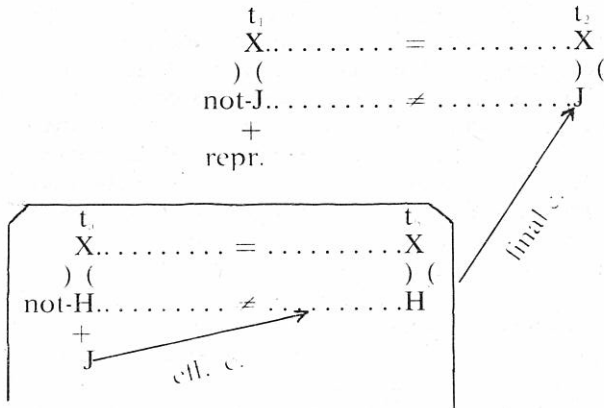
Diagram 4°.

This diagram could also be explained in another way: subject X at time 1 represents his own state of bad health which he wants to improve, hence he begins jogging and he carries on this activity until time 2; subject X at time 2 represents his own state of improved health by the effect caused by jogging.

We can immediately point out that the concept of « finality » involves an often optimistic and dynamic outlook on life; this is a « universal »

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[5] E. VON GLASERSFELD 140.
[6] E. VON GLASERSFELD 140.

feature of « finality » common to every language that can epress it. As we have already seen, Ernst Von Glasersfeld proposed to call the « end » or the « goal » that a purpose expression contains *Forward Representation*; this term perfectly describes the underlying, feature of a purpose expression, that is, a sort of plan conceived in the human mind in order to achieve, in the more or less near future, a « goal » or an « end ». For this reason purpose expressions generally depend on verbs with a strong « voluntative » [7] quality.

Every verb expression must have a « voluntative » quality in order to participate in an agentive construction, that is an action performed with the deliberate intent and volition of the suject, I mean an activity in which the subject participates as a voluntary agent. There is almost no doubt that will and purpose depend on each other [8].

PURPOSE EXPRESSIONS DEPENDIG ON VERBS WITH A STRONG VOLUNTATIVE FEATURE.

The theme has been particularly developed by H. V. King, who dealt with the problem of purpose expressions as regards their dependence on « voluntative » verb expressions [9]. « The idea of intention and purpose seems as if it ought to be consistent only with voluntative verb expressions, but the most that can be said grammatically is that nonvoluntative verbs resist being modified by purpose expression and also resist incorporation into purpose expressions » [10]. G. Lakoff explains that a nonvoluntative verb expression can be a predicate which has the general characteristics of a stative verb and does not occur, for instance, with and adverb like « intentionally » or « enthusiastically » [11].

In the following sentences the expressions in italics are some of King's examples of « nonvoluntative » verb expressions;

« 20) They *ran out of fuel* so as to reduce the load.

21) We *inherited it* for the sake of maly peace.

22) I *saw it happen* for some purpose or other.

23) She *gets inspirations* in order to improve herself.

24) We *had a storm last night* to cover out tracks.

We doubt some of these are flatly ungrammatical, but the only obvious conclusion is that almost any desired degree of grammatical deviance can be illustrated by combining purpose expressions with nonvoluntative verb expressions » [12].

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[7] This word is used by HAROLD V. King 5.
[8] This point has also been stressed by C. CASTELFRANCHI and D. PARISI, *Quando sappiamo che un individuo ha un certo scopo (contingente) e sappiamo anche che compie certe azioni, inferiamo che tali azioni siano compiute per raggiungere quello scopo*, 190.
[9] « (The " Verb Expression " of a sentence does not include the auxiliary, but only the verb itself plus the objects and complements, if any, that go with it.) » H. V. King 1-2.
[10] H. V. King 10.
[11] G. Lakoff 11-16.
[12] H. V. King 10.

In the following examples the verb expressions in italics.
5) John *didn't eat* for two to show his stamina [13].
6) John *was absent* during mid-terms to avoid failing.
7) They *speeded up* in order to run out of gas.
8) We *flattered* her to inherit the jewels.
9) He *set out* early so as to learn there was a concert [14], imply a voluntary involvement of some animate agent, that is the subject himself, who builds up a « plan » to achieve a precise goal expressed in the purpose expression.

On the other hand, we cannot really say that it is impossible to have well-formed purpose expressions that depend on nonvoluntative verbs. Firstly, it is difficult to classify verbs as nonvoluntative since there are a number of verbs or adjectives which usually refer to involuntary processes: *to dream, to be born, to die, to vomit, to blush, to perspire, to be able/not to be able, to be tall, to be short...* in a particular context one occasionally hears of people who can *blush* or *vomit* at will, and such propositions are not contradictory; almost everything can be done for a purpose [15].

The following examples illustrate this point:
1) The child *fears* the dark in order to get attention from his parents.
2) She *dreams* about her dead son in order to resolve her guilt feelings.
3) She *hears* strange noises in order to get me out of bed.

No one knows if the subject of these sentences initiated the events with « deliberate intent and volition »; it is very likely that he did not. These events may well be « non-voluntary » and only psychosomatic products of the subjects subconscious desires.

It thus appears that for a purpose expression to be well-formed it is non necessary to have the « deliberate intent and volition » of the subject. This condition is well stressed by Robin Lakoff's analysis of purpose expressions. She proposed that their underlying constituents include the abstract verbs of wanting and cause [16].

In the following examples, sentence (1) (b) is the analysis of (1) (a).
(1) (a) [$_{S1}$The child *fears* the dark]$_{S1}$ in order to [$_{S2}$get attention from his parents.]$_{S2}$
(1) (b) [$_{S3}$The child wants [$_{S2}$he get attention from his parents]$_{S2}$]$_{S3}$ causes [$_{S1}$ he *fears* the dark]$_{S1}$.

Viewed thus, the subject of *cause* in (1) (b) is not the child, but the entire S_3, so the event described by S_3 is causing what is happening in S_1, whether or not the child himself is consciously aware of participating in this chain of events.

In this manner such nonvoluntative verbs ad *to fear, to dream, to love, to*

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[13] We very often find, especially in the spoken language, « *to* » instead of « *in order to* ».
[14] The examples no. 4, 5, 6 are taken from GEORGE L. DILLON. The examples no. 7, 8, 9 are taken from H. V. KING 10.
[15] This is the reason why it is quite difficult in English, as well as in Italian, to make a precise list of verbs which can be used as the main predicate of a purpose expression.
[16] R. LAKOFF, For examples of Italian causative construction see L. BURZIO, 1-71.

hear do occur, given an appropriate context, as the main predicate of « psychological » purpose expressions such as the one in example (1) (a). However, for such « psychological » purpose expressions some grammatical conditions also need to be satisfied. For example, the subjects of the verb *want* in S_1 and S_2 must all be identical. Notice that the following example is totally inacceptable:

(X_1) The child *fears* the dark in order for his brother to get attention from his parents.

With a voluntative verb occuring as the predicate of S_1, the constraint on the identity of the subject applies somewhat more loosely.

(X_2) The child *screamed* in order for his brother to get attention from his parents.

Observe that (X_2), though not perhaps entirely natural, is far better than (X_1) and in some contexts could be acceptable.

PURPOSE EXPRESSIONS DEPENDING ON VERBS OF WANTING

In our discussion of purpose expression we have assumed that the subject of S_1 is identical to S_2. However, this is not always the case. Take for example a sentence like:

Giraffes are tall in order to eat leaves from trees.

This sentence could be interpreted in this way:

Giraffes are tall because God wanted them to eat leaves from trees [17]. This sentence can be considered as an instance of religious language and it also show that for a given purpose expression to be well formed the subject of S_1 does not necessarily have to be identical to S_2. Moreover, the concept of a devine being intervening to carry out his purpose on men, animals or Nature has been and still is very common in many parts of the world. A good example is the Italian Middle Ages and particularly the philosophy of St. Augustine.

Purpose expression which are meaningful only in a providential sense may be perfectly acceptable in a society where the basic orientation evolves around supernatural power.

In my opinion, however, a straightforward purpose expression is a sentence in which the subject of the verb *want* is also the initiator, either subconsciously or with « deliberate intent and volition » of the state of affairs represente by S_1. Sometimes, with some « imperative » verbs which express an order or a command and where there is a strong « voluntative » involvement, such as: *to order, to command, to urge, to incite, to induce, to convince*, or even with some other weaker verbs such as: *to advise, to warn, to remind, to beg, to demand, to encourage, to call upon, to invite, to remind, to persuade, to admonisch, to implore, to exort,*

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[17] The problem of paraphrases in Italian language structure, even if it is not directly connected to the concept of purpose, has been studies by R. SIMONE and R. AMACKER 50-58.

the subject of S_1 is not the same as S_2, but rather the object of S_1 is subject of S_2.

To give some examples:

1) The general *commanded* the troops to move forward

   or

   The general *commanded* that the troops move forward.
2) The building code *forced* the landlord to remodel the apartments.
3) The leaders *incited* the peasants to revolt.
4) The host induced the guests to stay a second night.
5) The registrar *advised* all students to register immediately

   or

   The registrar *advised* that all students register immediately

   or

   registrar *advised* alla students that they should register immediately [18].
6) The police *warned* the crowd to disperse [19]

   or

   The police *warned* the crowd that they should disperse.
7) The students *demanded* to see the president

   or

   The students *demanded* that they see the president.
8) The teacher *encouraged* the students to turn in their work on time.
9) His father *persuaded* him to go to college

   or

   His father *persuaded* him that he should go to college [20].
10) The revivalist *admonished* the congregation to repent.
11) She *implored* the principal to give her son a second chance

   or

   She *implored* the principal that he give her son a second chance.
12) The general *exorted* his troops to do their best

   or

   The general *exorted* his troops that they do their best.

In all the examples the subject of S_1, with deliberate intention, is the originator of the process of events; he is equally the subject of the verb *want*, but the plan that he conceived does not involve himself but another person; so the subject of the real purpose expression is different.

CLAUSES OF PURPOSE

« Clauses of purpose are more often infinitival than finite:
— *To improve the garden*, we shall plant shrubs.
— I left early *to catch the train*.
Such infinitival clauses, like most adverbial clauses, have no subject [21] ».
As we already observed, clauses of purpose introduced by *in order to* or *to*

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[18] *Urge* will also work in these sentences.
[19] *Order* will also work in these sentences.
[20] *Convince* will work in both sentences.
[21] R. QRUIRK, G. LEECH, J. SVARTRIK 753.

have the same subject as the main clause or, with some « imperative » verbs, the subject of the infinitival clause is the object of the main clause itself.

Even in Italian infinitival purpose expressions generally present the same subject as the main clause:
- Io ho quarant'anni, faccio il mutualista *solo per sopravvivere*
- gente (...) che sa benissimo di rischiare la vita *per godere* della libertà delle proprie opinioni [22].

The subordinators (or more fully the subordinating conjunctions) that more often introduce infinitival clauses of purpose in Italian are: *per, a, di*.

Sometimes we can find other indicators of purpose: *allo scopo di, con lo scopo di, al fine di, nell'intento di* [23].

In English « moi plicit indicators of purpose are the combinations *in order to* and *so as to*.
- *In order (for the police) to catch the culprits*, elaborate plans were made.
- Students should take notes *so as to make revision easier*.

Finite clauses of purpose may be introduced (in formal style) by the compound subordinators *in order that* (very formal), *so that* or (more rarely) simply *that*.

| The decision was made | in order that so that that | peace should prevail |

Informally, the *that*, of *so that* is omitted:
- I took no notice of him, *so*, he flew into a rage » [24].

The modal auxiliaries *should* and *may* are generally used in some purpose clauses which have a « putative » meaning. « Elsewhere, *schould* is used quite extensively in *that*-clauses to express not a subordinate statement of fact, but a putative » idea. One may contrast in this connection:

| The idea is Someone is suggesting | that education for the over-sixteens should be improved |

| The fact is We know | that education for the over-sixteens will be improved |

The first sentence pints forward an idea or plan which may not be fulfilled, while the second (with the *that*-clause without *should*) asserts the improvement as a fact and assumes that the plan will be carried out...
A *that*-clause with *should* is frequently replaceable by an infinitive clause:
- The idea is *for education for the over-sixteens to be improved*.
Also, when a plan or hope for the future is at issue, it is possible to substitute the subjunctive:
- The idea is that education for the over-sixteens be improved » [25].

[22] G. Grego Bolli 138.
[23] G. Grego Bolli 145.
[24] R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, G. Leech, J. Svartrik 753-54.
[25] R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, G. Leech, J. Svartvik 789.

In Italian this « putative » meaning is expressed with the subjunctive. In fact, the mood of the finite clause of purpose is the subjunctive that generally expresses possibility, doubt, something planning but not yet obtained. There are two subjunctive tenses:
– the present subjunctive, which depends on present or future tenses;
– the imperfect subjunctive, which depends on past tenses.
The existence of just two subjunctive tenses (which always signal, in Italian, a contemporary or posterior relationship) is justified by the fact that purpose and the readiness or tendency to attain it are contemporaneous, while purpose, as an action, is projected decidedly into the future.

« BECAUSE » AS A SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION OF PURPOSE CLAUSES

According to Ernst Von Glasersfeld even the conjunction *because* can be used to express a «final» cause and then introduce a purpose clause, but only when there is a strong involvement of the will and the achievement of the cause is projected into the future and conceived at the moment [26]. If we hear, for instance, « *John left because he was hungry* » [27], the classification of the cause depends on how we define *hungry*. One way is to define it is as a physical state, a sort of pain in the stomach. In this case we could paraphrase it: « His hunger caused him to leave » [28]. In so doing the cause may be classified as an « efficient » one, even if with certain reservations. Alternatively we might define *hungry* as « desiring to eat » in which case we may classify the cause as a « final » one.
In other instances, we need to know a good deal about the situation to make a decision. Another sentence such as «*Mary left because of John* » [29], taken by itself, may involve an « efficient » or a « final » cause and it is only when we discover that John insulted Mary a momento ago, or alternatively, that he has to be at the airport in half an hour that we can resolve the problem.
Lastly, when *because* marks a casual relation of the « final » type, the underlying conceptual situation necessarily involves the representation of a desired change and the efficient cause that it is believed to produce, as expressed in the linguistic expression.

A because B.

Phrase A designates this efficient cause, while B designates the effect projected into the future. In this case the statement could be paraphrased by a purpose expression.
The translation of the subordinating conjunction *because* in Italian is

[26] Usually the conjunctions *because*, *as*, *or*, and *since* are used to introduce clauses of reason or cause. R. QUIRK, S. GREENBAUM, G. LEECH, SVARTVIK 752.
[27] E. VON GLASERSFELD 143.
[28] E. VON GLASERSFELD 143.
[29] E. VON GLASERSFELD 143.

perché and is often used to introduce clauses of purpose:
- « Forse sopravvivi perché un giorno io ti possa punire di più. Breznev, ricevendo a Mosca l'uomo d'affari americano: Armand Hammer, ha insistito perché l'America torni " ad una politica realistica.
- Si continua a sperare perché l'azienda turismo o, (...) il comune provvedano a far sistemare dei cartelli indicatori delle varie cose da vedere a Spoleto.
- Non faceva niente perché non ci si accorgesse della sua disapprovazione » [30].

As the above mentioned examples show, the conjunction *perché*, as the introductory element of a purpose clause, is generally followed by the subjunctive and, in this case, there is no ambiguity as to the type of cause it designates [31]. However, also in Italian, *perché* can be ambiguous regarding the type of cause it indicates when it is not followed by the subjunctive:

Ti ho detto questo, *perché* (così) tu vai via.

In spite of some reserve, in this case we can call this a « final » cause especially because the underlying verb, « to want », undoubtadly emphasizes the « final » meaning of the entire expression.

It should be noted that the choice between « final » cause and « efficient » cause is open as the interpretation is personal or connected to the text. If the clause introduced by *perché* is considered a « final » cause, it means that particular importance, both syntactic and logical, has been given to the second part of the text. In other words, the desire that you *home* is the goal of the main action. If it is considered an « efficient » cause, on the other hand, it means that the speaker's interest has been focused on the action of *saying* and *your leaving* is only a motivation.

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[30] GIULIANA GREGO BOLLI 136.
[31] « Per + Subjonctif, le resultate semantique est finale », taken from, SCHMITT JENSEN J. 518
« Va anche rilevato che la presenza in una frase del componente desiderio, quando tale componente è assegnato a livello contestuale a perché..., e segnalata dal modo congiuntivo del verbo... », taken from, GRISARI M., PARISI D., PUGLIELLI A. 123.

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