

**THE *NI V (N2) (TO-) INFINITIVE CONSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH*
IN VIEW OF THE *CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT*
METAPHOR**

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Vladan Pavlović

English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, Serbia

Abstract. *The paper analyses the use of the full as opposed to the bare infinitive in NI V (N2) (to-) infinitive construction in English (e.g. I helped them carry the load / I helped them to carry the load; I saw him cross the street / *I saw him to cross the street, I saw him to be obnoxious / *I saw him be obnoxious; I made him do it / I forced him to do it / *I forced him do it). While the opposition in the use of the two infinitives has been aptly analysed in literature, the paper puts forward the view that it may also be felicitously and insightfully approached via the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor posited in Lakoff / Johnson 1980, i.e. in terms of a metaphor that attempts to make a link between the form of a sentence as it is conceived of spatially, on the one hand, and its meaning, on the other hand.*

Key words and phrases: *to-infinitive, bare infinitive, meaning-based approach to syntax, conceptual metaphor, metaphor giving meaning to linguistic form.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of the paper is the use of the full as opposed to the bare infinitive in the *NI V (N2) (to-) infinitive* construction in English.

The aim is to present a qualitative analysis of the examples of this construction type already given in literature (Wierzbicka 1988, Dixon 2005 [1991], and Duffley 2001 [1992], in particular) in view of the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor, something that was not done in those (or any other) sources. This also involves comparing the analysis the paper offers with the analyses of the authors presented above, and examining whether our analysis corroborates and adds to their findings or not.

A total of 152 examples were excerpted. They form the corpus which, for the purposes of this paper, has been classified as follows:

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Corresponding author: Vladan Pavlović

English Department, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš, Serbia

E-mail: vladanp2@gmail.com

- Group 1: examples where the infinitive particle *to* can be present or omitted without changing any other word in the sentence, and where the propositional content expressed in a pair of sentences is similar (e.g. *I helped them carry the load* / *I helped them to carry the load*);
- Group 2: examples where one and the same main verb can be used with either the full or the bare infinitive, with a consequent change in meaning of that verb, so that it can be used with the full infinitive in sentences with one propositional content and with the bare infinitive in sentences with quite different propositional content (e.g. *I saw him cross the street* / **I saw him to cross the street, I saw him to be obnoxious* / **I saw him be obnoxious*);
- Group 3: examples where similar propositional content is expressed by the use of two different verbs, each of which exclusively requires the use of either the full or the bare infinitive (*I made him do it* / *I forced him to do it*).

In the analysis to follow, only representative examples of the three groups (rather than all those excerpted) are given. It should also be noted that examples with one and the same main verb can be classified as belonging to more than one of the groups above (for instance, the pair of sentences *But the circumstance which, more than any other, has made Ireland differ from Scotland, remains to be noticed* / *But the circumstance which, more than any other, has made Ireland to differ from Scotland, remains to be noticed* has been classified under group 1, whereas the pair of sentences *I made him do it* / *I forced him to do it*, has been classified under Group 3. Similarly, the pair of sentences *I helped them carry the load* / *I helped them to carry the load* exemplifies Group 1, whereas the following pair with the same main verb exemplifies Group 2 - *He helped me to climb the stairs by cheering me on* / *He helped me climb the stairs by propping me up with his shoulder* [i.e. *he assisted me in climbing the stairs*]).

The intuition of a native speaker (present at the gathering at which this paper was presented and which is cited in the Acknowledgement) has also been taken in account in the discussion of the excerpted material and in drawing conclusions.

1.1. Theoretical background

1.1.1. The treatment of the *NI V (N2) (to-) infinitive construction in literature*

Quite a lot literature has been written on the *NI V (N2) (to) infinitive construction* in English within different theoretical approaches.

In various grammar books, special attention has been paid to: 1) the syntactic and semantic properties of the given construction type(s), 2) the status of the N2 element that may appear in it, 3) the relation of the N2 element with the finite verb preceding it and the non-finite verb following it, 4) the use of the given construction types with respect to other construction types with which they can be paraphrased, 5) the cases in which the *NI V N2 to-infinitive construction* can be treated as the "accusative with infinitive" construction, 6) the cases where the N2 element is preceded by *for*, 7) the diachronic development of these constructions, 8) the passive versions and similar issues (for details see: Poutsma, 1928: 428-432, 463 and 790-828; Kruisinga, 1932:180 - 220; Jespersen, 1933:78-96, 329-348; Schibsbye, 1965:23-36; Zandvoort, 1967:12-19).

The two most comprehensive grammars of English written within the last 30 years have also dealt with the given construction. Quirk *et al.* (1985: 1185-1186 and 1216-1220 *et passim*) addressed, among other things, 1) the types of infinitive (active / passive,

perfective / progressive / unmarked for aspect, and their various combinations) that may appear in the given constructions, and 2) the possible monotransitive, ditransitive and complex-transitive interpretation of the *NI V N2 to-infinitive* construction. In addition, Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 65, 1176-1193 and 1200-1206), , 1) approached the given construction types as (simple and complex) catenative constructions, 2) analysed the cases in which the N2 element can be considered a plain or a raised object, 3) explored the verbs that appear as the main ones in the given constructions, 4) discussed the effect of passivation of the N2 to-infinitive part on the meaning of the constructions as a whole.

The given construction types have also been given ample attention in generative grammar and its various models (for details on how non-finite clauses and the related concepts of control and raising are treated in the GB model, see Wekker / Haegeman, 1985: 157-198).

Construction grammar, and its treatment of different construction types as potentially meaningful in and of themselves, can also be considered a fruitful theoretical approach for exploring the construction type in question (for details see e.g. Goldberg, 1995).

The most important sources for our purposes in this paper come from the field of “functionally oriented linguistics”, namely Cognitive and Functional Linguistics, in the way Nuyts, 2007:543 *et passim* presents them. In that sense, we will now briefly focus on the views of the given construction types in Wierzbicka 1988, Dixon 2005 [1991] and Duffley 2001 [1992].

Wierzbicka claims that language is an integrated system, where everything ‘conspires’ to convey meaning – words, grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices (including intonation). Especially important for the purposes of this paper is her statement that grammar is *not* semantically arbitrary - on the contrary, grammatical distinctions are motivated [...] by semantic distinctions; every grammatical construction is considered to be a vehicle of a certain semantic structure; this is its *raison d'être*, and the criterion determining its range of use (Wierzbicka, 1988:3). Among other phenomena, she explored different complementation constructions (with *that*, *-ing*, *to*, *for to* vs. *to*, etc., as in *He continued to read* vs *He continued reading*, and the like). She concluded that the choice among them is neither arbitrary nor determined by some formal, non-semantic constraints, but is predictable from the intended meaning. Meaning is conveyed by grammatical constructions (including those with the full as opposed to the bare infinitive) as much as by words, and it is conveyed jointly by all levels of linguistic structure. There is no such thing as ‘grammatical meaning’ or ‘lexical meaning’. There are only lexical and grammatical *means* of conveying meaning – and even here no sharp line can be drawn between the two (Wierzbicka, 1988:8).

Dixon (2005 [1991]) adopts a comparable starting standpoint. He pays special attention to meaning, analyses the different sorts of meaning words have, and shows that varying grammatical behaviour of words is a consequence of their meaning differences. In addition, this source deals with the issue this paper is concerned with - omitting *to* from (*for*) *to* complements (Dixon, 2005 [1991]: 251-253). For example, analysing the following pair of sentences: *John helped me to write the letter* and *John helped me write the letter*, Dixon claims that the former sentence (the one with *to* between the N2 element and the non-finite predicate) might be used to describe John facilitating somebody writing the letter, for example by providing pen and ink, by suggesting some appropriate phrases, or by telling that other person how one should address e.g. a bishop. But in this scenario, it is the referent of the pronoun *me* that wrote the letter himself / herself. In that

sense, this construction type is used to express a more *indirect* help on the part of the referent of the sentential subject. On the other hand, the latter sentence (the one in which the N2 element and the non-finite predicate are *not* separated by the given infinitive particle) can be claimed to describe a cooperative effort where the referents of both N1 and N2 (namely *John* and *me*) did the letter together, perhaps writing alternate paragraphs, i.e. to describe a more *direct* help provided by the referent of the sentential subject to the referent of the pronoun *me*.

Duffley 2001 [1992]) also presents views that are important for the purposes of this paper. Relying on Wierzbicka's conclusions, this author first stresses that there is *no* unbridgeable gap between syntax and semantics, that words and their distribution are both instruments for expressing meaning, and then exclusively focuses on the contrast in *meaning* between the two versions of the English infinitive (the full and the bare infinitive), i.e. views the use of the one as opposed to the other as *a meaningful distinction*.

He presents the following view of the two infinitive types. As far as the *to*-infinitive is concerned, he says that *to* in this infinitive type is a dematerialized preposition, and a *sign that the event expressed by means of the infinitive is posteriorized in time with respect to some point of reference*. *To*, this author continues, signifies this relation of subsequence in virtue of its potential meaning of a movement from one point in time to another, in which sense it has two basic meanings: 1) *subsequent actualization* (the infinitive evokes an event that is actualized as a consequence of a previous event bringing it into being), as in: *She got me to break down the door, He managed to get free*; and 2) *subsequent potentiality* (the infinitive evokes an event whose actualization is futurized with respect to that of the main verb): *She ordered me to break down the door, He tried to get free*.

On the other hand, the use of the *bare* infinitive is used for *coincident actualization*, i.e. *this infinitive evokes the notion of coincidence in time between the infinitive and the verb to which it is incident*, with the latter being inconceivable as a before-position with respect to the infinitive's event. In other words, the event denoted by this infinitive is not represented as beginning to exist in time before that of the main verb, as in *I watched him cross the street* (in cases where auxiliaries, such as modal auxiliaries, are used, the bare infinitive expresses *coincident potentiality*; for this and similar details cf. *ibid.*; for an alternative and complementary view of the issue see Talmy, 2001: 39-48 *et passim*).

Duffley explores this distinction in meaning in the use of the two infinitives, citing dozens of examples (usually using semantically different verbs, e.g. verbs of perception, verbs denoting causation, and others, as the starting point).

One such example is briefly presented here. Similarly to Dixon, Duffley states that the pair of sentences *I helped them carry the load* and *I helped them to carry the load by having my secretary get them a cart* differ in the fact that in the former the helper participates *directly* in the activity for which he / she is giving assistance, whereas in the latter one that assistance is more mediate or indirect, the proof of which can be omitting the particle *to* from the latter sentence, rendering the whole sentence unacceptable: **I helped them carry the load by having my secretary get them a cart*.

Since the basic aim of this paper, as stated above, is to put forward and test the view that this construction type (the *N1 V (N2) (to-) infinitive* construction in English) and its concrete examples, may also be felicitously and insightfully approached via the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor posited in Lakoff / Johnson 1980, something the sources just discussed do not do, the following subsection of the paper will address the views related to the given metaphor of the two authors.

1.1.2. Metaphor giving meaning to syntactic form

This subsection of the paper will primarily rely on Lakoff / Johnson, 1980: 126 – 138.

They state that we speak in linear order – some words we say come *earlier*, some *later*. Speaking is therefore correlated with time, which, in turn, can metaphorically be conceptualized in terms of space (e.g. *Annie was born a few days before Christmas*, etc.). In other words, they state *that it is natural for us to conceptualize language metaphorically in terms of space*. The writing system reinforces this conceptualization (for example, words can be said to occupy the *first position* in a sentence, two words can be *close* or *far apart*, a word can be e.g. *long* or *short*, and the like).

In that sense, Lakoff and Johnson go on to claim that because we conceptualize linguistic form in spatial terms, *it is possible for certain spatial metaphors to apply directly to the form of a sentence, as we conceive of it spatially*. This can provide *automatic direct links between form and content*, based on general metaphors in our conceptual system. Such links make the connection between form and content *anything but arbitrary*, and some of the meaning of a sentence can be due to the precise form a sentence takes (Lakoff / Johnson, 1980:126).

Thus, the two authors first refer to the CONDUIT metaphor (cf. Reddy 1979 and Lakoff 1993), which defines a spatial relationship between form and content in the following way: LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS ARE CONTAINERS (implying thereby that the meaning of linguistic expressions can also be conceptualized as the content of those containers). In that sense, Lakoff and Johnson posit the following metaphor: MORE OF FORM IS MORE OF CONTENT (which can be exemplified by the difference in meaning between the following two pairs of sentences: *He ran and ran and ran and ran* vs *He ran, He is very very tall* vs *He is tall*, as well as by the sentence such as *She is bi-i-i-i-ig!*).

This brings these authors to posit the metaphor that is crucial for our purposes in this paper, namely the metaphor CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT, which they define in the following way: *If the meaning of form A affects the meaning of form B, then the closer the form A is to form B, the stronger will be the effect of the meaning of A on the meaning of B*. Thereby, the word *closeness* applies to syntactic elements of a sentence, whereas the word *strength* refers to meaning of the given sentence (Lakoff / Johnson, 1980: 129).

Lakoff and Johnson provide some of the following examples for this. Firstly, they consider the following pair of sentences: *I found the chair to be comfortable* and *I found the chair comfortable*, and claim that the latter sentence indicates that somebody found out that the chair was comfortable by *direct experience* – by actually sitting on it, whereas the former leaves open the possibility that somebody found this out more *indirectly*, e.g. by asking people or taking a survey. Similarly, when comparing the sentences such as *Sam killed Harry* and *Sam caused Harry to die*, the given authors put forward their standpoint that causation is more direct in the former sentence also because of the reasons explained above.

Generally speaking, from these and similar examples Lakoff and Johnson conclude that in all these cases a difference in form (i.e. in syntax) in otherwise semantically similar sentences always produces *subtle differences in meaning*, and that those differences can be accounted for in terms of the metaphor posited above. In other words, the subtle shades of meaning that can be seen in the examples above are taken to be consequences not of special rules of English but of a metaphor that is in our conceptual system applying naturally to the form (i.e. to the syntax) of the language (Lakoff/Johnson 1980:132)¹.

¹ The author would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for pointing out that the above standpoints put forward by Lakoff and Johnson may not always be true and that they are underspecified. For example, if we

As already stated above, it is precisely this approach that this paper adopts and puts to test with regard to the *N1 V (N2) (to-) infinitive* construction in English, which the given authors did not address in the light of what has just been explained. As also explained above, the paper does so not only with examples which express similar prepositional content and differ only in the presence or absence of the infinitive particle *to*. It also attempts to apply the given metaphor in the following two cases: 1) examples where one and the same main verb must be used with the full infinitive in sentences with one propositional content and with the bare infinitive in sentences with quite different propositional content, and 2) examples where similar propositional content is expressed by the use of two different verbs, each of which exclusively requires the use of either the full or the bare infinitive.

2. DATA AND DISCUSSION

We will first concentrate on the examples belonging to Group 1 outlined above. They predominantly include examples with the verb *help*, as well as (less frequently) examples with the verb *make*.

As stated above, the *help + to-infinitive* construction tends to be used when the assistance is felt to be mediate or indirect, whereas *help + bare infinitive* is used when the helper participates directly in the activity of helping: *Will you help me to get these letters addressed / Will you help me get these letters addressed?* The first sentence, the one with the *to*-infinitive, might be used to describe somebody asking somebody else to facilitate getting the letters addressed, e.g. by relieving the speaker of other duties and tasks. But here, it is the referent of the pronoun *me* that addressed the letters. On the other hand, in line with what the relevant authors stressed above, the second example (the one in which the N2 element and the non-finite predicate are *not* separated by the given infinitive particle) can be claimed to express somebody's desire for a cooperative effort, in which the referents of both N1 and N2 (namely *you* and *me*) address the letters together, i.e. to describe a plea for a more *direct* help to be provided by the referent of the sentential subject to the referent of the pronoun *me*.

As already stated, the main aim of this paper is trying to explain such differences in terms of the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor as described above. Namely, in the first sentence, the pronoun *me* and the verb *get* are separated by the infinitive particle *to*, i.e. they are *further apart*, whereas in the second sentence they are as *close* as possible to each other (i.e. they come in an uninterrupted sequence). This corroborates the view that *distance* among the relevant sentence constituents indeed implies more *indirect* help, whereas *closeness* of the same constituents implies more *direct* help on the part of the referent of the pronoun *you*.

Indicative examples belonging to Group 1 can also be found with the verb *make* as the main verb. Namely, Duffley (2001 [1992]: 3) stresses that this particular verb need not only be used with the bare infinitive as in the example that follows: *But the circumstance*

follow Lakoff and Johnson's reasoning, *un-freaking-believable* should have weaker negative meaning than *unbelievable* just because the negative prefix is further away from the adjective in the former case, which clearly is not true. Along the same lines, Lakoff and Johnson, among other things, did not specify whether the idea they proposed is applied differently from construction to construction or not, and which exact constructions or construction types it can be applied to.

which, more than any other, has made Ireland differ from Scotland, remains to be noticed, in which case the bare infinitive verb - the verb *differ*, evokes not the resulting state but the operation leading to the result (i.e. *become different*), an operation whose locus in time coincides with that of *make*. In addition, it can actually be used with the full infinitive (in the active voice!), as is the case in the following: *But the circumstance which, more than any other, has made Ireland to differ from Scotland, remains to be noticed*. In such a construction type, Duffley says, the verb *make* expresses *antecedent causation*, i.e. it evokes a process of causation giving rise to a state of affairs that comes into being at the end of the process, wherefore the use of the full infinitive construction can be considered felicitous.

More importantly for our purpose in this paper is the fact that such differences can once again be accounted for in terms of the given CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor. Namely, here we can also claim that in the first example the verb *differ* evokes not the resulting state but the operation leading to the result (i.e. *become different*), an operation whose locus in time coincides with that of *make*, precisely because the sequence *made Ireland differ* is uninterrupted by the infinitive particle *to*, i.e. primarily because the N2 element and the non-finite verb (*Ireland* and *differ*) are physically as close to each other as possible. Conversely, in the latter example, the verb *make* can indeed be taken to express *antecedent causation*, i.e. to evoke a process of causation giving rise to a state of affairs that comes into being at the end of the process, precisely because the same N2 element and the non-finite verb are now separated by the infinitive particle. In other words, they are physically more distant from each other than they were in the first sentence, which, once again, may be the reason for the corresponding change in meaning.

Group 2 encompasses examples where one and the same main verb can be used with either the full or the bare infinitive, with the consequent change in meaning of that verb, so that it must be used with the full infinitive in sentences with a particular propositional content and with the bare infinitive in sentences with quite different propositional content. This was found with the verbs of perception (in their various uses, including those denoting direct and mental perception), with the verb *know* and with the verb *find*.

Let us first consider the following illustrative pair of examples with the verb *see* as a perception verb - *I saw him cross the street*, and *I saw him to be obnoxious*. Whereas the first sentence, the one without *to*, expresses direct perception on the part of the referent of the pronoun *I*, the second one, the one with the bare infinitive, expresses more indirect perception, i.e. *mental recognition* of somebody being obnoxious. Yet again we can say that the presented metaphor is at work here. Namely, we can claim that the former sentence, the one without the *to*, expresses *direct* perception on the part of the referent of the pronoun *I*, as a result of the fact that the words *him* and *cross* are *next* to each other in the given example. On the other hand, the latter one, the one with the bare infinitive, expresses more *indirect* perception, i.e. *mental recognition* of somebody being obnoxious, once again as a result of the fact that in such cases the words *him* and *be*, are separated from one another by the particle *to*, i.e. are more distant from one another.²

Yet another illustrative pair of examples, now with the verb *find*, also deserves attention: *Rather surprised to find them break the fence at this season* and *I measured the tail of the dead rat and found it to be two inches long*. The given examples confirm that

² Naturally, a sentence such as *I saw him crossing the street* is also possible, but the use of *-ing* forms is outside the scope of this paper, so that such examples / construction types will not be considered here.

when the verb *find* is used with the bare infinitive, it denotes a *direct* experiencing of and consequent contemporaneity in time with an action or state denoted by the non-finite verb. On the other hand, when used with the *to*-infinitive, this verb denotes a more *indirect* discovery of a fact. Namely, it is not an immediately perceivable fact that the rat's tail is exactly two inches long, i.e. this requires a previous act of measuring and / or additional mental processing in order to be known. In other words, the *to*-infinitive is required here to denote that the act of finding (by measuring and / or by using additional mental effort) logically precedes the state of affairs established in that way. So once again we can conclude that the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor is again operational here, since the absence of the infinitive particle in the former sentence, i.e. the N2 element and the non-finite verb being physically closer together than in the latter one (where the infinitive particle is actually used) can indeed signal directness as opposed to indirectness of experience denoted by the verb *find*.

Group 3 includes examples where similar propositional content is expressed by the use of two different verbs, each of which exclusively requires the use of either the full or the bare infinitive. These primarily refer to the use of various causative verbs. (*I made him do it / I forced him to do it*).

Duffley (2001 [1992]: 61), says that the verbs such as *make* or *have* are typically used with the *bare* infinitive (*Oops! I'm sorry! I just made you miss your bus, He made me laugh, He made / had me do it!*), and denote causation as *direct* and 'concurrent' with the production of the effect. On the other hand, the verbs such as *cause*, *occasion*, *get* or *force* are used with the *full* infinitive, as in: *Raising the temperature causes them to decompose into their elements, He forced me to laugh, He forced me to do it!* The latter group of verbs denote causation as *indirect* or *antecedent*, i.e. as doing something which provokes the occurrence of an effect, or, in other words, a succession between a cause and effect. This explanation neatly ties in with the kind of explanation that can be given when the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT METAPHOR is factored in. Namely, the above examples with the *bare* infinitive (*Oops! I'm sorry! I just made you miss your bus*, etc.) can indeed be taken to denote causation as *direct* and 'concurrent' with the production of the effect precisely because the sequence *made you miss* is uninterrupted by any other element, including the infinitive particle *to*. On the other hand, the examples such as *Raising the temperature causes them to decompose into their elements* or *He forced me to laugh*, can indeed be taken to present causation as *indirect* or *antecedent*, on the grounds that the same (*V N2 non-finite verb*) sequence is interrupted by the given particle, i.e. because the N2 element and its non-finite predicator are now separated / are further away from one another when compared to the previous group of examples (for additional details regarding causation, see also Lakoff/Johnson, 1980: 69-76).

3. CONCLUSIONS

The presented data and discussion corroborate the standpoint that the CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT metaphor as explained above can indeed apply at the syntactic level, that it can indeed "give meaning to form", and that, as such, it can help shed additional light on the use of the full as opposed to the bare infinitive in the *N1 V (N2) (to-) infinitive* construction in English. In other words we have found the reliance on

this metaphor useful in trying to explain: 1) why sentences with different syntactic form (differing only in the use or omission of the infinitive particle *to*) show subtle semantic differences, 2) why one and the same main verb must be used with the full infinitive in sentences with one propositional content and with the bare one in sentences with quite different propositional content, and 3) why similar propositional content (involving e.g. causation) is expressed by the use of different verbs, some of which exclusively require the full, whereas some other verbs belonging to the same semantic type exclusively require the bare infinitive.

In other words, it indeed seems to be true that, because we conceptualize linguistic form in spatial terms, it is possible for certain spatial metaphors to apply directly to the *form* of a sentence, as we conceive of it spatially, that this can provide automatic direct links between form and content, based on general metaphors in our conceptual system, that such links make the connection between form and content anything but arbitrary, and that some of the meaning of a sentence can be due to the form the sentence takes (Lakoff / Johnson 1980: 126). Naturally, there remain plenty of other construction types that can also be analysed along the same lines, so as to test such observation further as well as to address the potential problems and inconsistencies regarding the application of the given metaphor that were raised above.

Eventually, it should also be briefly stressed here that studying syntactic constructions along such lines (i.e. by applying relevant conceptual metaphors directly to the syntactic level) can also have important pedagogical implications in the sense that students could be made aware of this additional domain that the conceptual metaphor theory can be applied in.

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KONSTRUKCIJA TIPa NI V (N2) (TO-) INFINITIVNA KLAUZA U ENGLESKOM JEZIKU U SVETLU METAFORE BLIZINA JE SNAGA UTICAJA

*U radu se analizira upotreba punog spram krnjeg infinitiva u konstrukciji tipa NI V (N2) (to-) infinitivna klauza u engleskom jeziku (npr. I helped them carry the load / I helped them to carry the load; I saw him cross the street / *I saw him to cross the street, I saw him to be obnoxious / *I saw him be obnoxious; I made him do it / I forced him to do it / *I forced him do it). Dok razlika u upotrebi ove dve vrste infinitiva već jeste detaljno analizirana u literaturi, u radu se izlaže i ispituje stav da se te analize mogu svrsihodno dopuniti uvidima koji daje primena pojmovne metafore BLIZINA JE SNAGA UTICAJA (CLOSENESS IS STRENGTH OF EFFECT) koju postuliraju Lejkof i Džonson u svojoj poznatoj knjizi *Metaphors We Live By*, tj. korišćenjem metafore koja nastoji da uspostavi sistematsku vezu između rečenične sintakse (u smislu načina na koji elementi rečenice mogu da budu prostorno organizovani), sa jedne strane, i značenja takve rečenice, sa druge strane.*

Ključne reči i sintagme: puni infinitiv, krnji infinitiv, pristup sintaksičkom nivou jezičke strukture zasnovan na značenju, pojmovna metafora, metafora kao sredstvo davanja značenja lingvističkim oblicima.