

# Creating Surprise in Complex Predication

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## Abstract

In many languages, the verbs *take* and *go* may combine with another predicate to yield an inceptive reading, where the onset of the event denoted by the main predicate is in some sense focalized. Some of these cases have a touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness to them. Using data mainly from Swedish, this paper seeks to identify the components that are responsible for this *surprise* reading. It is argued that surprise in the relevant constructions is derivable from a combination of three factors: (i) the particular event structure(s) associated with the predicates involved, (ii) choice of lexicalization of this structure, and (iii) pragmatic inferences about the particular event involved. The data presented in this paper offer support for Ramchand's (2008) treatment of light verbs in terms of underassociation of lexical category features and constraints thereon.

*Keywords:* aspect, complex predicate, inceptive, light verb, surprise reading

## 1. Introduction

In a wide variety of languages, including Swedish, the verbs *go* and *take* may combine with another verb to produce certain aspectual readings:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Tycho **gick** och läste en bok. (Swedish)  
*Tycho go.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
'Tycho went and read a book.'
- (2) Ragna **tog** och läste en bok. (Swedish)  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
'(%Ragna took and read a book.'

The construction in (1) is present also in English (see e.g. Carden and Pesetsky 1977; de Vos 2005), and related constructions can be found in Hebrew (Idan Landau p.c.) and the Marsalese dialect of Italian, see (3) (from Cardinaletti and Giusti 2003).

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<sup>1</sup>Abbreviations: CAUS = causative, CIRC = circumstantial modal, DEF = definite form, DET = determiner, ERG = ergative case/(transitive) subject, EXIS = existential, F = feminine agreement, INF = infinitival form, M = masculine agreement, NOM = nominative case, PAST = past tense, RED = redirec-tive (relational) transitivizer, SG = singular, PERF = perfective, SUBJECT = (indicative) subject.

- (3) Vaju a pigghiu u pani. (Marsalese)  
*go.ISG to fetch.ISG the bread*  
 'I go to buy bread.'

The literal translation of (2), in turn, is fine in Irish English and certain American dialects. Similar constructions with *take*, are also attested in the Romance, Slavic, Baltic, and Finno-Ugric languages (see Ekberg 1993) and in Hindi/Urdu, see (4) (from Butt and Ramchand 2005).

- (4) nadya=ne xat lk<sup>h</sup> li-ya. (Hindi/Urdu)  
*Nadya.F=ERG letter.M.NOM write take-PERF.M.SG*  
 'Nadya wrote a letter (completely).'

Common to all of the above constructions is the fact that the predicates involved are conceived of as making reference to one single (albeit complex) event. Syntactically, the concept of a single complex event is reflected for instance by the fact that the predicates involved cannot be independently tensed and higher level adverbial modification can only apply to the event as a whole and not to its subparts. Semantically, the presence of some kind of emphasis on the initiation/onset of the event denoted by the second predicate is often mentioned in descriptions of the interpretation yielded. Sometimes there is also a touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness in the reading produced. To my knowledge, no systematic investigation of the contexts in which such *surprise readings* are present in the above constructions has been carried out. This paper is a first step, using data mainly from Swedish.

(1) will be labelled *go-V* and (2) will be referred to as *take-V* when they need to be distinguished. The *inceptive complex predicate construction* or the *inceptive construction* for short will be used as cover names for both types. In what follows, I will seek to identify the circumstances under which the surprise reading is present and eliminate factors that seem irrelevant to this surprise. In this process, an analysis within the framework Ramchand's (2008) 'First Phase Syntax' will be explored. I will show that surprise in the relevant constructions is derivable from a combination of three factors: (i) the particular event structure(s) associated with the predicates involved, (ii) choice of lexicalization of this structure, and (iii) pragmatic inferences about the particular event involved. To the extent that the analysis proposed here proves successful, it offers a nice piece of support in favour of Ramchand's treatment of light verbs in terms of underassociation.

## 2. Background

In the literature on Swedish, the *go-V* and *take-V* constructions (repeated below) have been included in the class of *pseudosamordningar* (pseudocoordinations), see e.g. (Teleman et al. 1999:III; 902-909), Josefsson (1991), and Wiklund (1996).

- (5) a. Tycho **gick** och läste en bok. (Swedish)  
*Tycho go.PAST & read.PAST a book*

- b. Ragna **tog** och läste en bok.  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*

Both verbs carry identical inflectional morphology (past tense in the examples above) and the element *och* that appears in between the verbs is pronounced the same as the conjunction element *och* ‘and’, the reduced form of which is pronounced /ɔ/ (used in casual speech). Similar constructions exist also in the other Scandinavian languages, e.g. Norwegian *gå/ta og V* ‘go/take and V’ (see Lødrup 2002 and Vannebo 2003); Icelandic: *fara og V* ‘go and V’ (Gunnar Hrafn Hrafnbjargarson p.c.). Extensive arguments for treating the linking element as a subordinating conjunction and for treating the multiple occurrence of inflection in terms of agreement (obtained via Agree) are presented in Wiklund (2007). Argument and adjunct extraction is possible from the second ‘clause’. The prosodic properties of the construction pattern with complementation structures, not with coordination structures; the first verb does not bear phrasal stress. The doubling of inflection can be shown to be top-down, subject to locality, and involving some kind of feature sharing. I refer the reader to Wiklund (2007) for a detailed review of these and additional arguments. In what follows, the second predicate will be referred to as the *embedded* predicate and I will in large part abstract away from the agreement between the verbs involved.

### 3. Surprise, inception, distance, and involuntariness

#### 3.1. The surprise reading

In both (5a) and (5b) above, the superordinate predicate has – in coarse semantic terms – the effect of emphasizing the *initiation/onset* of the event denoted by the embedded predicate (the *inceptive* reading). On top of this reading, (5b) also has a touch of surprise, suddenness, or unexpectedness to it:

- (6) Ragna tog och läste en bok. (Swedish)  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
 ‘≈{Surprisingly, unexpectedly, suddenly,} Ragna read a book.’

Curiously, this reading is not present in (5a), despite the fact that (5a) seems to share important syntactic and semantic characteristics of (5b)/(6). Importantly, the prosodic properties of the two are identical; in none of the examples does the superordinate verb bear phrasal stress. Moreover, no reflection of the emotional state of being surprised is required in the prosody of (5b)/(6) for the sentence to yield a surprise reading. Obviously, finding out why the surprise is absent in (5a) will be a key to identifying the ingredients required for the production of a surprise reading.

Before we go on to look at what I will call the inceptive reading in some detail, let me first point out two things. Firstly, I have not found any distributional difference between *surprise*, *unexpectedness*, and *suddenness* that does not bear on the context in which the examples are uttered. In fact, it is not even clear that

the three cannot be subsumed under the same reading, granted that *a surprise* is a *sudden* and *unexpected* event. For want of evidence to the contrary, I assume that *surprise*, *unexpectedness*, and *suddenness* can be unified in the linguistically relevant sense and I will therefore continue to use the term *surprise reading* to refer to the touch of surprise/unexpectedness/suddenness that is present in some of the examples and only briefly touch upon a potential cognate reading below. In the examples that follow, the relevant reading will be marked as [SURPRISE]. Secondly, past tense seems necessary for the production of a surprise reading. Although admittedly important, this factor will not be considered here. All examples from Swedish that follow will therefore be in the past tense.

### 3.2. The inceptive reading

Attempts to describe the readings associated with the Swedish *take-V* and *go-V* constructions can be found in e.g. Ekberg (1993), Teleman et al. (1999:IV; 907), and Wiklund (2007), see also Vannebo (2003) for Norwegian. Prima facie, the reading looks very similar to that of *starting* or *setting off to do something*, the Swedish counterpart being *börja att göra något* (start to do something). Whereas a denial of the completion of a telic event selected by *börja* is impeccable, see (7a), however, such a denial is not possible with *ta*, cf. (7b) (cf. Ekberg 1993).

- (7) a. Han började att gå 20 km (men stannade efter halva vägen).  
*he start.PAST to go.INF 20 km but stop.PAST after half way*  
 b. Han tog och gick 20 km (\*men stannade efter halva vägen).  
*he take.PAST & go.PAST 20 km but stop.PAST after half way*

Likewise, only *take-V* can be modified with respect to the result state:<sup>2</sup>

- (8) a. Han började att gå 20 km (\*på 1,5 timme).  
*he start.PAST to go.INF 20 km in 1.5 hour*  
 b. Han tog och gick 20 km (på 1,5 timme).  
*He take.PAST & go.PAST 20 km in 1.5 hour*

The same results obtain with *gå-V*:

- (9) a. Han gick och simmade 400 meter (\*men simhallen var stängd).  
*he go.PAST & swim.PAST 400 meters but swimming-hall was closed*

<sup>2</sup>(8a) is marginally possible on the (irrelevant) iterative reading where the subject referent started the habit of walking 20 km on 1.5 hour, e.g every day:

- (i) Han började att gå 20 km på 1,5 timme varje dag.  
*he start.PAST to go.INF 20 km on 1.5 hour every day*

- b. Han gick och simmade 1000 meter (på 20 minuter).  
*He go.PAST & swim.PAST 1000 meters in 20 minutes*

Thus, whereas *börja-V* restricts reference to the beginning of the event denoted by the embedded predicate, *take-V* and *go-V* may refer to a result state while also adding emphasis to the initiation of the event. For ease of exposition, I label the restrictive reading imposed by *börja* the *ingressive* reading and the non-restrictive reading yielded by *ta* and *gå* the *inceptive* reading. In the examples that follow, the latter reading will be indicated by [INCEPT]. Note that this lack of restriction with *ta* and *gå* can not be derived from the presence of tense inflection on the selected verb. In many varieties of Swedish, also *börja* can combine with an inflected verb and still keep the semantics of the infinitival counterpart. Replacing the infinitival form *gå* in the examples involving *börja* by an agreeing past form *gick* does not change the acceptability of (7a), cf. (10a), nor the unacceptability of (8a), cf. (10b).

- (10) a. Han började och gick 20 km (men stannade efter halva  
*he start.PAST & go.PAST 20 km but stop.PAST after half*  
*vägen).*  
*way*  
 b. Han började och gick 20 km (\*på 1,5 timme).  
*he start.PAST & go.PAST 20 km in 1,5 hour*

Note also that the inceptive construction (*take-V* and *go-V*) does not imply a resultative reading of the embedded event, even if the whole complex event seems to yield a momentaneous interpretation (cf. Ekberg 1993). Adding *ta* to an activity predicate (in the terminology of Vendler 1967) does not give rise to telicity in the event denoted by the embedded verb, see (11a). In this sense, (11a) is similar to its counterpart without *ta* (henceforth *plain-V*), cf. (11b).

- (11) a. Hon tog och dansade i ett par minuter.  
*she take.PAST & dance.PAST in a couple minutes*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced for a couple of minutes.’  
 b. Hon dansade i ett par minuter.  
*she dance.PAST in a couple minutes*  
 ‘She danced for a couple of minutes.’

To the extent that (12a) below is possible, *på två minuter* measures the time up to the initiation of the event of dancing in the very same way that it does when added to the verb *dance* alone, cf. (12b).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>This reading is yielded with durative events without a result state and with punctual verbs. It is reflected by the fact that *på två minuter* (in two minutes) can be replaced by *efter* (after), cf. (Piñon 1997):

- (i) ?Hon tog och dansade efter två minuter.  
*she take.PAST & dance.PAST after two minutes*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced after two minutes.’

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- (12) a. ?Hon tog och dansade på två minuter.  
*she take.PAST & dance.PAST on two minutes*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced in two minutes.’  
 b. ?Hon dansade på två minuter.  
*she dance.PAST on two minutes*  
 ‘She danced in two minutes.’

Similar examples can be constructed with *gå*. Although the above tests seem to show that *gå* and *ta* contribute to the aktionsart of the (macro-)event in the inceptive construction rather than function as aspectual auxiliaries, another test demonstrates that there is a difference between the inceptive construction and their *plain-V* counterparts, beyond (or perhaps due to the structure behind) the inceptive reading:

- (13) a. Hon tog och dansade klockan ett på natten.  
*she take.PAST & dance.PAST clock.DEF one at night*  
 b. Hon dansade klockan ett på natten.  
*she dance.PAST clock.DEF one at night*

Whereas (13a) implies that the subject referent did not dance before one AM, (13b) does not say anything about when the dancing started, only that there was an event of dancing taking place at one AM.<sup>4</sup> This is a property that the inceptive construction shares with the ingressive construction. Like (13a), the sentence in (14) below implies that the subject referent did not dance before one AM.

- (14) Hon började att dansa klockan ett på natten.  
*she start.PAST to dance.INF clock.DEF one at night*

Thus, the inceptive construction differs from the *plain-V* construction but shares with the ingressive construction the fact that a temporal adverbial locates the onset of the event in time. However, it differs from the ingressive construction but is similar to the *plain-V* construction in that it does not restrict reference to the onset; the completion of a telic event cannot be denied.

The above facts – taken together – seem to suggest that we are dealing with a case where two partially separate event structures still contribute to form one single albeit complex event, one that yields an inceptive reading. From the fact that the inceptive construction but neither the ingressive nor the *plain-V* construction involves an element of surprise, (15a) vs. (15b) and (15c), we may conclude that whatever it is that yields the inceptive reading must be partly responsible for the surprise reading.

- (15) a. Han tog och gick 20 km.  
*He take.PAST & go.PAST 20 km*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he walked 20 km.’

<sup>4</sup>Swedish present and past tense is vague between the progressive and the habitual (generic) reading.

- b. Han gick 20 km.  
*he gick.PAST 20 km*  
 ‘He walked 20 km.’
- c. Han började och gick 20 km.  
*he start.PAST & go.INF 20 km*  
 ‘He started walking 20 km.’

The inceptive component can only be partly responsible, however, given that *ta* but not *gå* in the above contexts gives rise to surprise, (16a) vs. (16b).

- (16) a. Han tog och gick 20 km.  
*He take.PAST & go.PAST 20 km*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he walked 20 km.’
- b. Han gick och simmade 100 meter.  
*he go.PAST & swim.PAST 100 meter*  
 ‘≈[INCEPT] he swam 100 meter.’

Thus, the touch of surprise seems to be a special type of inceptive but the inceptive alone is not enough to yield surprise readings or, alternatively, there must be factors that override the surprise reading in examples like (16b). Obviously, we need to look for potential differences between the verbs *ta* and *gå* that can account for the facts.

### 3.3. The distantive reading

One fact that I have ignored in the discussion so far is the fact that (16b) differs from (16a) in that the subject referent actually has to walk away from the reference location for the truth conditions of the sentence to be met.<sup>5</sup> This reading seems related to the *distantive* (or *andative*) aspect referred to in Cinque (1999) and Cinque (2004).<sup>6</sup> In principle, the distantive reading may be the reason why *take-V* but not *go-V* yields a surprise reading in the examples we have seen so far. We will return to this difference between the two below. Anticipating that discussion, I will propose that the distantive reading derives from encyclopedic content of *gå* surviving in the inceptive construction. As I will show, this survival is constrained. When this content survives, this will be indicated by [DISTANT]. Thus, the reading of (16b) above is more appropriately rendered as in (17) below, including the distantive reading (English: *He went and swam 100 meter*).

<sup>5</sup>Swedish *gå* is more restricted than English *go* in that it can only refer to a walking event when used with animates.

<sup>6</sup>The feature encoding distinctness from the reference location must be divorced from the motion or path involved in the above examples because the first feature can also be present in stative contexts and thus without a path in Swedish. I abstract away from this here. The sentence below means that the subject referent was *away* swimming. The inceptive reading is absent in this context.

- (i) Han var och simmade.  
*he be.PAST & swim.PAST*  
 ‘[DISTANT] He was swimming.’

- (17) Han gick och simmade 100 meter.  
*he go.PAST & swim.PAST 100 meter*  
 ‘[DISTANT][INCEPT] he swam 100 meter.’

### 3.4. The out-of-control reading

Returning to the surprise readings, I have concluded that they must form a proper subset of the inceptive readings. At first sight, the so-called *out-of-control* circumfix *ka-...-a* in St’át’imcets (Lillooet Salish) seems to yield readings that are similar to the surprise reading in the Swedish *take-V* construction in contexts like (18a) and (18b) below (from Davis 2006, cited in Davis et al. 2007), the latter involving an ‘accidental flavour’ of surprise.<sup>7</sup>

- (18) a. qwaqwx-mín=lhkan ta=scwelálhp=a,  
*nightmare-RED=1SG.SUBJ DET=ghost=EXIS*  
**ka-cwák=kan-a** aylh. (St’át’imcets)  
*CIRC-wake=1SG.SUBJ-CIRC then*  
 ‘I had a nightmare about a ghost, then I woke up suddenly.’  
 b. **ka-sék’w-s-as-a** ta=nk’wanústen’=a ta=twéww’et=a.  
*CIRC-break-CAUS-3ERG-CIRC DET=window=EXIS DET=boy=EXIS*  
 ‘The boy broke the window accidentally.’

However, *ka-...-a* does not induce an inceptive reading; the onset of the event referred to does not appear to be focalized. Secondly, *ka-...-a* never yields a deliberate-but-sudden reading. It produces only an accidental reading where an agent – who could in principle be in control of the event – does not have a choice or has no control over what is happening, see Davis et al. (2007). The fact that there may be (in some varieties must be) an agent involved that has control over the event in the Swedish construction, cf. (19) below, enables us to distinguish this (*inceptive*) surprise reading from the *out-of-control* surprise readings attested in Salish.

- (19) Ragna tog och läste en bok.  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
 ‘[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] Ragna read a book.’

In (19), the subject referent is responsible for bringing about the reading event; it is the subject of the initiation expressed by *ta* (*tog* in the example). The Swedish *take-V* counterpart of (18b) above makes the picture even clearer; it does not have an accidental reading but a reading where the boy broke the window deliberately and suddenly (/unexpectedly/surprisingly):

- (20) Pojken tog och krossade fönstret. (Swedish)  
*Boy.DEF take.PAST & crush.PAST window.DEF*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] the boy broke the window.’

<sup>7</sup>St’át’imcets is a Northern Interior Salish language spoken in the southwestern interior of British Columbia, Canada. I am indebted to Gillian Ramchand for drawing my attention to Salish.

Finally, the St'át'imcets circumfix *ka-...-a* has additional readings that the inceptive construction lacks, including *be able to* and *manage to*. This has led Davis et al. (2007) to hypothesize that the morpheme encodes circumstantial modality and that its various meanings reduce to either an existential (ability) or universal (involuntary action) reading. Not surprisingly, Swedish has to use the modal *råka* in order to yield an accidental (involuntary action) reading, cf. (21).

- (21) Pojken **råkade** krossa fönstret. (Swedish)  
 Boy.DEF happen.PAST crush.INF window.DEF  
 'The boy accidentally broke the window.'

The modal construction in (21) has no inceptive reading but admittedly there is a touch of surprise to it. The potential surprise involved in (21), however, is arguably derivable from pragmatic inferences about accidental events; accidents are most often sudden or surprising in some sense. This is what Davis et al. (2007) proposes for the suddenness reading of *ka-...-a* that arises in similar contexts. The surprise reading of the inceptive construction, on the other hand, does not seem to be reducible to conversational implicatures, at least not as transparently. There is no immediate way to derive the surprise or suddenness of an event taking place from the emphasis on its onset, cf. the discussion of *börja* (start) and *ta* (take) above. In order to find out more about how the surprise involved in the inceptive construction comes about and why it is not present in all of these, we need to return to differences between *take* and *go*. Before we do, I will give the (partial) structure that I assume for the inceptive construction.

#### 4. Light verbs and underassociation to event structure

In the context relevant to us, *ta* and *gå* appear to have a status in between that of auxiliaries and lexical verbs. They resemble auxiliaries in that they do not bear phrasal stress. They are also semantically light; less specified compared to other verbs within the same semantic domain.<sup>8</sup> In the inceptive construction, as we have seen, the verbs have a functional rather than a lexical use, especially with *ta* this is very clear. As we have seen, though, manner of motion survives with *gå* (walk) (§3.3). Moreover, unlike modal verbs and the auxiliary *ha* 'have' used to form the perfect, *ta* and *gå* inflect for all forms in the inceptive construction (imperative, present, past, and supine). Another indication that these verbs are not auxiliaries in the standard sense is the fact that they do not modify the Aktionsart of the embedded predicate (§3.2), which we would expect if they were functioning as aspectual operators higher up in the clause. Based on these facts, I take *ta* and *gå* to be light verbs in a complex predication in the construction that we are concerned with here, following Wiklund (2007). I will shortly describe what I take to constitute a light verb in syntactic terms. In my analysis of the inceptive construction I shall assume the syntactic components of event structure building proposed in Ramchand (2008). Ramchand's proposal is that vP/VP can be split in the same

<sup>8</sup>They may both be used with inanimates and abstract expressions in other contexts. Examples include: *TV-tittande tar tid* (TV-watching takes time) and *Tiden går fort* (Time goes by quickly).

spirit that Pollock (1989) splits up IP and Rizzi (1997) splits up CP. In essence, event-structure syntax contains three subevental components, each represented as its own projection, hierarchically ordered as in (22): a causing subevent (*InitP*), a process-denoting subevent (*ProcP*), and a subevent corresponding to a result state (*ResP*).

(22) [InitP [ProcP [ResP ]]].

InitP licenses the external argument (*initiator*), ProcP licenses the entity undergoing the change or process (*undergoer*), and ResP licenses the entity that comes to hold the result state (*resultee*). Ramchand assumes that lexical items carry category features through which they may associate with nodes in the syntactic structure. In the verbal domain, these features are [*init*], [*proc*], and [*res*], which associate to the corresponding heads of the projections in (22) above. Thus, one lexical item may multiply associate to different syntactic heads within the same phrase. The Vendler (1967) class of *Activities* corresponds to the class of verbs that have [*init*, *proc*] or [*proc*] alone in their lexical specification, (23); *Accomplishments* correspond to verbs that are [*init*, *proc*] with incremental theme or Path complements, (24); *Achievements* are [*init*, *proc*, *res*] or [*proc*, *res*], (25).<sup>9</sup>

(23) [InitP she ran [ProcP <she> <ran> ]]

(24) [InitP she painted [ProcP the wall <painted> [ResP <the wall> red]]]

(25) [InitP she arrived [ProcP <she> <arrived> [ResP <she> <arrived> ]]]

Under certain circumstances, a verb may leave features unassociated in syntax. Ramchand labels this *underassociation*, see also Ramchand (this volume). In the specific case where a verb is underspecified for conceptual content and associates to syntactic structure via only a subset of its features, the verb is a *light verb* in that particular context even though it may have a lexical use (associating via its full set of features) in other contexts. This is what I shall assume for *ta* and *gå*. In the inceptive construction, these verbs associate to syntactic structure via the feature [*init*] alone. The embedded predicate can then be taken to identify the process portion and the result portion (where there is one) of the event. Leaving the subordinating conjunction element and the potentially bi-clausal nature of the construction aside for the moment, the structure will roughly be as in (26) below.

(26) [InitP subject *light verb* [ProcP verb2 [ResP <verb2> ]]] (Inceptive)

From the above structure, the basic properties of the inceptive constructions follow. The inceptive reading arises from the fact that the light verb alone expresses the initiation of the event by associating to the causing subevent (InitP) via its [*init*] feature.<sup>10</sup> Underassociation is enabled by the ‘lightness’ of the verbs *ta* and

<sup>9</sup>Whether or not the feature [*init*] is present in the lexical specification depends on whether or not the verb can causativize. Ramchand (2008) assumes that causativization is impossible if [*init*] is present.

<sup>10</sup>This is a simplification. Plausibly, there is also a requirement that the embedded verb has a causation component (underassociated). This captures the fact that causativization, which involves a similar

*gå*; these need to be capable of unifying conceptually with the more specific lexical item (verb) in its complement. Since the verb associates to syntactic structure via its [init] feature alone, the verb does not qualify as an eventive predicate the way it does on its lexical use, assuming association to the Proc head (the core of an eventive structure) to be necessary for a verb to have a status beyond that of a light verb. This captures the interpretation of the relevant verbs as more functional than lexical. Yet some conceptual content may survive (e.g. manner of motion), which I assume is one property that distinguishes items inserted in event structure syntax from those inserted outside of this domain, at least within the verbal realm. The light verb may inflect for all forms since it associates to syntax low down in the structure. Finally, the embedded predicate but not the light verb will bear phrasal stress. A couple of issues remain. These concern aktionsart and constraints on underassociation. I will return to these when we have identified the components responsible for the surprise reading. As we will see, a more elaborate structure is called for.

## 5. Creating surprise: thematic properties and event types

The present section aims at identifying the syntactic ingredients that are necessary for a surprise reading to arise by investigating hypotheses based on the thematic properties of the verbs involved and the event types that are constructed when the verbs associate to syntactic structure.

### 5.1. Surprising initiators

Suppose that the difference between *take-V* and *go-V* with regard to distribution of surprise readings derives from the ‘thematic’ properties associated with the light verbs involved. Using the terminology of Ramchand (2008), *gå* differs from *ta* (at least in their ‘lexical’ use) in that the *initiator* of the event is identical to the *undergoer*; the initiator of the walking event is also experiencing the change of location. The patient-like role associated with the subject of *gå* could in principle be responsible for suspending the surprise reading in inceptive constructions involving this verb. Another difference between *ta* and *gå* concerns animacy. The latter requires an animate subject whereas the former allows inanimate subjects in many varieties (including mine).<sup>11</sup> Examples like (27a) and (27b) below, however, tell us that thematic differences between *ta* and *gå* are not likely to be responsible for differences between the two with respect to surprise readings:

structure (cf. Ramchand 2008), does not yield surprise. Possibly, fine-grained thematic issues are also relevant, but see below. I need to leave a more articulated definition of the *inceptive* component for future research.

<sup>11</sup>Weather predicates are possible in some variants (including mine):

- (i) %Det tog och regnade.  
     *it take.PAST & rain.PAST*  
     [SURPRISE][INCEPT] it rained.’

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- (27) a. Han gick och vann två miljoner dollar.  
*he go.PAST & win.PAST two million dollar*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he won two million dollar.’
- b. Han gick och dog.  
*he go.PAST & die.PAST*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he died.’

The picture is now complicated by the fact that the surprise reading indeed *can* be present also with *gå*. One way in which (27a) and (27b) differ from e.g. (17) above, repeated below, is that the subject referent in the former two cannot be said to cause or have control over the events of winning and dying the way he causes the event of swimming in the latter example:

- (28) Han gick och simmade 100 meter.  
*he go.PAST & swim.PAST 100 meter*  
 ‘[DISTANT][INCEPT] he swam 100 meter.’

Suppose therefore that the surprise readings of (27a) and (27b) arise from the clash between the initiator and the eventuality of the embedded predicate; from having the initiator be identical to the undergoer in the context of a verb that perhaps does not have an [init] feature in its lexical specification and with which a causativization in this context would yield a funny result.<sup>12</sup> The reading yielded in (27a) and (27b) is one where the subject referent is in some subtle way involved in the force leading up to the events of winning and dying. Importantly, however, (27a) does not mean that the subject referent has any control over the event of winning (besides having undertaken the purchase of a lottery ticket or the like) and (27b) does not refer to a suicide. While the surprise readings of (27a) and (27b) are indeed strong, the surprise reading of (19) above, repeated in (29a) below, remains unaccounted for on this hypothesis.

- (29) a. Ragna tog och läste en bok.  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
 ‘[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] Ragna read a book.’
- b. Ragna läste en bok.  
*Ragna read.PAST a book*  
 ‘Ragna read a book.’

In (29a), there is no clash between the existence of an initiator and the eventuality of the embedded predicate. The subject referent initiates the book-reading event also in the absence of *ta*, cf. (29b), yet there is an element of surprise in (29a). In fact, surprise readings with *gå* do not seem to be different from those with *take* in this respect, as shown by examples like (30a) below.

<sup>12</sup>The word *perhaps* in the above sentence is added to signal that whether or not the relevant predicates have an [init] feature in their lexical specification is an issue that is not settled.

- (30) a. Han gick och gifte sig med henne.  
*he go.PAST & married.PAST REFL with her*  
 '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he married her.'
- b. Han gifte sig med henne.  
*he married.PAST REFL with her*  
 'He married her.'

In (30a) above, the subject referent cannot be said to *not* have control over the (wedding) event that results in him being a married man. On the contrary, the reading yielded is one where the subject referent is responsible for the fact that he got married, a reading that the sentence shares with the corresponding sentence without *gå* in (30b). Nevertheless, (30a) has a touch of surprise to it. This means that while the addition of an 'unexpected' initiator may potentially add extra emphasis to the surprise in examples such as (27a) and (27b), the surprise reading itself cannot be derived from some kind of unexpected causativization or clash between the existence of an initiator and an event over which one cannot have control. Note finally that focalizing the onset of the event of reading in (29a) above is not 'unexpected' in any sense. Therefore, the surprise reading cannot be derived from the mere addition of emphasis on the initiation of an event. Crucially, the inceptive reading does not always give rise to surprise, as we have learned from examples like (28).

## 5.2. Surprising initiations of punctual events

The task in front of us at this point is twofold. First, we need to find the feature that unites (27a), (27b), and (30a) and that makes these different from (28). This feature must be responsible for the uneven distribution of surprise readings within the class of *go-V* constructions. Then we need to investigate how *take-V* fits that picture. There is an obvious sense in which (27a), (27b), and (30a) above differ from (28). The embedded predicates of the former are *Achievements* in Vendler's (1967) terminology, whereas the embedded predicate of the latter refers to an *Accomplishment*. At this point, we may hypothesize that a punctual event is a necessary ingredient for the surprise reading to arise. The intuition behind the proposal is that an emphasis on the initiation of an event that does not have much of a duration is surprising, yielding the touch of surprise that is present in examples like (27b), repeated below:

- (31) Han gick och dog.  
*he go.PAST & die.PAST*  
 '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he died.'

If this is correct, then something more needs to be said about *take-V*. As noted above, there is nothing unexpected in emphasizing the onset of a reading event, which can be taken to last for more than a couple of seconds, see (32). Yet there is an element of surprise.

- (32) Ragna tog och läste en bok.  
*Ragna take.PAST & read.PAST a book*  
 ‘[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] Ragna read a book.’

So far, we know that whatever it is that yields the inceptive reading is partly responsible for yielding surprise. We also know that with *ta*, surprise is always present, whereas with *gå*, an embedded punctual event is required. Suppose then that *take* and *gå* differ in that the former but not the latter has the effect of producing a punctual reading of the embedded predicate on its light verb use. Only the former yield surprise readings when combining with events that are not achievements. On this hypothesis, the presence of an accomplishment in (32) would only be illusory. The fact that the ‘aktionsart’ of the embedded predicate does not change with the addition of the relevant light verbs, however, falsifies this hypothesis. Recall that the addition of *ta* to an activity predicate does not give rise to telicity in the event denoted by the embedded verb:<sup>13</sup>

- (33) Hon tog och dansade i en hel timme.  
*she take.PAST & dance.PAST in a whole hour*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced for a whole hour.’

At present, we have a hunch that punctuality or a feature that is present in the lexical specification of punctual verbs must in some sense be involved in the creation of surprise readings. Nevertheless, facts concerning the aktionsart of *take-V* do not yet fit this picture. I ask the reader to keep this in mind as we proceed to investigate two more differences between *take* and *gå* that will lead us further.

### 5.3. The survival of the distantive killing the surprise

The attentive reader may have noticed that (27a), (27b), and (30a) above differ from (28) not only in yielding surprise readings. Interestingly, the distantive reading that was claimed to be present in *go-V* is lost in the examples referring to events of *winning*, *dying*, and *marrying*, cf. (34) involving *die* vs. (35) involving *swim* below.

- (34) Han gick och dog.  
*he go.PAST & die.PAST*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he died.’
- (35) Han gick och simmade.  
*he go.PAST & swim.PAST*  
 ‘[DISTANT][INCEPT] he swam.’

<sup>13</sup>There is variation regarding what kind of event *ta* can combine with. In my variant, all kinds of eventive predicates are possible, also certain ‘stage-level’ stative predicates (given the right context), see (i).

- (i) %Hon tog och var sur.  
*she take.PAST & be.PAST grumpy*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she was grumpy.’

The sentence in (34) above does not make reference to a walking event; the subject referent does not have to walk away from the reference location before he dies for the truth conditions of the sentence to be met. In contrast, the only reading available for (35) is one where the subject referent walked away from the reference location and then swam. Taking this fact into consideration, we may hypothesize that the survival of the distantive reading kills the surprise or alternatively that whatever is responsible for the absence of the surprise reading rescues the distantive reading. As we will see, the latter seems to be true. I take the distantive reading that survives in (35) to be parasitic on the existence of an embedded event that involves more than a single transition. That is, in the presence of an event with some internal duration, the manner component of *gå* (walk) and the concomitant distantive reading survives via the lexical-encyclopedic content of *gå* when this verb is used as a light verb. This is why the distantive reading is absent in (34) and similar examples involving punctual verbs. That this proposal is on the right track is supported by the fact that punctual events that can be perceived of as taking place iteratively (so-called semelfactives) enable the distantive reading to survive:

- (36) Han gick och hoppade på soffan.  
*he go.PAST & jump.PAST on sofa.DEF*  
 ‘[DISTANT][INCEPT] he jumped on the sofa.’

As soon as an episodic interpretation is available, as in (37a), the reading produced approaches that yielded by *take-V*, cf. (37b). The distantive reading fades away and a surprise reading is available. Again, punctuality seems relevant to surprise.<sup>14</sup>

- (37) a. Han gick och hoppade i sjön.  
*he go.PAST & jump.PAST in lake.DEF*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he jumped into the lake.’  
 b. Han tog och hoppade i sjön.  
*he take.PAST & jump.PAST in lake.DEF*  
 ‘[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he jumped into the lake.’

#### 5.4. The presence of [res]: Punctuality revisited

We are looking for an explanation for the fact that surprise readings with *go-V* are more restricted than surprise readings with *take-V*. The working hypothesis is that surprise is derived in an identical fashion in the two construction types, given that both yield inceptive readings and given that there seems to be no difference between the two with regard to the surprise reading produced. We have seen that thematic properties of the verbs involved seem to have little to say about the distribution of surprise readings. Event type of the embedded predicate seems relevant for *go-V* but not *take-V* in that the former require an embedded punctual verb for the surprise reading to emerge. Along with the emergence of a surprise reading in these goes the disappearance of the distantive reading. The question that we

<sup>14</sup>(37a) also has an irrelevant locative reading similar to (36). On that interpretation, the distantive reading survives and the jumping takes place iteratively.

are posing at this point is what it is that *take-V* possesses regardless of embedded predicate that *go-V* only has when a punctual event is involved. I propose that this is the encoding of a result state; i.e. a [res] feature (unassociated to syntactic structure) in the lexical specification of the light verb. Using the diagnostics of Ramchand (2008), the verb *ta* but not the verb *gå* can take locational state prepositions to describe the final location of the undergoer of the process involved. The sentences in (38a) and (38b) show that both Place PPs and Path PPs can describe the final location with *ta*.

- (38) a. Han tog henne i sin famn. (PP = goal)  
*he take.PAST her in his arms*  
 'He took her in his arms.'
- b. Han tog henne till sin famn. (PP = goal)  
*he take.PAST her to his arms*  
 'He took her into his arms.'

With *gå*, a Place PP can not alone describe the final location; (39a) below only has a locative reading. In order for a resultative interpretation to be available, a Path particle is required, cf. (39b).

- (39) a. Han gick i rummet. (PP ≠ goal)  
*he go.PAST in room.DEF*  
 'He was walking in the room.'
- b. Han gick in i rummet. (PP = goal)  
*he go.PAST to in room.DEF*  
 'He went into the room.'

I take this to mean that *ta* but not *gå* has a feature encoding the result state of the event in its lexical specification: [res]. We will soon be in a position to revisit the hypothesis that punctuality counts for surprise readings in the inceptive construction. In fact, *ta* but not *gå* is a punctual verb. Although not sufficient, one prerequisite for a punctual reading to arise is the presence of [res] in the lexical specification of the verb associating to event structure (Ramchand 2008). The hypothesis that [res] has to be present on either of the verbs involved seems to be the one that yields the correct predictions regarding the distribution of surprise. *Take-V* will always yield surprise readings, since the light verb has a feature [res] in its lexical specification, even if this feature is left unassociated to event structure in the inceptive construction, an issue that I return to below. In Swedish, *take* is the only light verb that I know of that qualifies for this purpose but we predict that e.g. *throw* and *fall* in languages where these verbs can be used as light verbs should be capable of producing similar readings, provided they underassociate in the same fashion (via [init] alone). We have seen that with *gå*, which does not encode a result state, an embedded punctual verb like *win* or *die* is required to yield a surprise reading. These verbs, like all verbs that yield a punctual reading, have [res] in their lexical specification.

Importantly, result augmentation is not sufficient; i.e. the mere presence of a result state in the sentence does not yield a surprise reading. The feature [res] has to be present in the lexical specification on either of the two verbs. This can be demonstrated by the addition of a resultative (Path) particle to an accomplishment predicate under *gå*. I follow Ramchand (2008) in assuming that an accomplishment verb does not itself encode a result state. In (40) below, the particle is doing this job. As predicted, the surprise reading is missing in this case; the distantive reading is the only one available.

- (40) Han gick och åt upp mackan.  
*he go.PAST & eat.PAST up sandwich.DEF*  
 ‘[DISTANT][INCEPT] he ate the sandwich.’

I adopt Ramchand’s assumption that an achievement (punctual) interpretation is yielded when a lexical verb identifies both process and result. Duration, in this sense, requires a verb which does not simultaneously identify both process and result. In (40) above, the result state is encoded by the particle. Since the verb *eat* does not simultaneously identify both process and result, the eating event refers to an extended process. On the assumption that the distantive reading is dependent on the presence of an extended process to emerge (§3.3), whereas the surprise reading is dependent on punctuality (identification of process and result by one lexical item), the distantive-inceptive reading of (40) follows. Note that it is in the above sense that *ta* but not *gå* is a punctual verb, at least on its lexical use where the verb associates via its full set of features; [init, proc, res]. Leaving the questions that need to be posed regarding underassociation aside for a brief moment, we have added substance to our hunch that punctuality is relevant to surprise.

When the light verb brings [res], as in *take-V*, the event type of the embedded predicate is not restricted. Surprise readings will arise regardless of embedded predicate. When the light verb does not bring this ingredient, as in *go-V*, the embedded verb has to bring [res] in order for surprise to arise. That the whole complex (macro-)event in the *take-V* construction has a momentaneous (punctual) interpretation has already been claimed by Ekberg (1993). The complicating factor here is of course that *ta* is punctual on its lexical use, where the verb itself identifies all three subevental components. We need to examine how the [res] feature can be responsible for punctuality also in cases where *ta* underassociates (light verb function), leaving [res] (and [proc]) unassociated to syntactic structure. As will become clear shortly, once we take constraints on underassociation into consideration, the picture will be clarified. Before we investigate how the analysis proposed in §4 can be modified to fit the facts, I wish to summarize the situation.

### 5.5. Summary

Surprise readings in the constructions that we are concerned with require the following ingredients in order to be available:<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup>As mentioned earlier, past tense is a relevant factor for surprise readings, which I have abstracted away from in this paper. Plausibly, this factor can be tied to the punctuality requirement.

1. **Inceptive reading:** emphasis on the onset of the embedded event
2. **Punctual reading:** a punctual verb

In terms of event structure syntax, (1.) is a requirement that a light verb identifies the causation/initiation component, by associating to event structure syntax via its [init] feature alone. (2.) in turn is a requirement that the process and result state of the event are simultaneously identified by one lexical verb, following Ramchand (2008). In essence, the present investigation suggests that (1) and (2) above in combination with pragmatic inferences about the nature of events with no duration is what yields the surprise reading.<sup>16</sup> A punctual event is not readily compatible with an emphasis on its onset; it hardly begins before it ends so to speak. A parallel fact indicating the correctness of the latter hypothesis is that aspectual verbs like *begin* and *stop* cannot embed punctual verbs unless special readings are available, e.g. an iterative reading, as in: *He began to win (local contests)*.

## 6. The syntax of surprise

The remaining complications appear numerous at first sight: (A) the [res] feature of *ta* remains unassociated to syntactic structure in *take-V*, yet the macro-event seems to be punctual also in the absence of an embedded punctual predicate. This punctuality is partially responsible for the surprise reading; (B) the aktionsart of the embedded predicate does not change, yet (at least) *take-V* seems to yield a punctual interpretation; (C) a subordinating conjunction separates the verbs involved; (D) there is agreement between the verbs involved. Below, I show that these problems resolve when we take constraints on underassociation into consideration and assume a bi-clausal structure (restructured). The analysis that I propose is a modified version of that proposed in Wiklund (2007) for the inceptive construction.<sup>17</sup>

### 6.1. Constraints on underassociation

Ramchand (2008:98) proposes that underassociation is possible only if the following conditions are satisfied:

- (41) Underassociation:  
 If a lexical item contains an underassociated category feature,  
 (i) that feature must be independently identified within the phase and  
 linked to the underassociated feature by Agree;

<sup>16</sup>A *punctual event* here refers to an event that can be linguistically represented as having no duration. As far as I can see, nothing hinges on this particular assumption. For an alternative view, see Engelberg (1999), who proposes that punctual events are events that do not last longer than two to three seconds, an interval that he labels a ‘cognitive moment’ because it seems to play a crucial role for perception, behaviour, and speech production. Durative events are in this sense events that exceed the three-second interval.

<sup>17</sup>Constraints on underassociation are not considered in Wiklund (2007) and a satisfactory account for surprise readings is missing.

- (ii) the two category features so linked must unify their lexical-encyclopedic content.

Starting with *go-V*, the verb *gå* must have the following lexical specification: [init, proc]. There is no encoding of [res], as we concluded in §5.4. This means that there is one feature unassociated to syntax when *gå* links to structure in the inceptive construction via [init], namely [proc]. In the simplified analysis of the construction proposed in §4, condition (i) above is satisfied by the embedded predicate. The embedded verb associates to *Proc* and via Agree between the light verb in *Init* and the embedded verb in *Proc*, the unassociated [proc] feature of the light verb is identified by the corresponding feature on the embedded verb, see (42). Unless the embedded verb brings a [res] feature via which it associates to syntactic structure – a scenario that I will return to below – a punctual reading cannot arise in *go-V* and consequently no surprise reading.

$$(42) \quad [\text{InitP } g\acute{a}_i \text{ } [\text{ProcP } \text{verb2}_i]] \quad (\textit{go-V})$$

Ignoring condition (ii) for the moment, the (punctual) verb *ta*, in turn, has the following lexical specification: [init, proc, res]. In *take-V*, where *ta* associates to syntactic structure via [init] alone, the verb has two unassociated features: [proc] and [res]. Again, condition (i) above is satisfied by the embedded predicate, which associates to *Proc* and *Res*, thereby identifying both of these subevents simultaneously, see (43). The two unassociated features of *ta*, [proc, res], are identified via Agree between the light verb in *Init* and the embedded verb in *Proc* and *Res*.

$$(43) \quad [\text{InitP } ta_i \text{ } [\text{ProcP } \text{verb2}_i \text{ } [\text{ResP } \text{verb2}_i \text{ } ]]] \quad (\textit{take-V})$$

Given Ramchand's constraints on underassociation and assumptions about how punctual readings arise, the analysis captures the fact the macro-event in *take-V* will always have a momentaneous/punctual interpretation. Recall that a punctual reading was said to arise iff one single lexical verb identifies both [proc] and [res]. This is precisely what we have in (43) above: the embedded verb identifies both the process and the result state simultaneously. Yet it is the light verb that is responsible for this punctuality. Because the light verb associates to *Init* alone, the *Proc* and *Res* subevents (required by the lexical specification of *ta*) have to be identified by the embedded predicate.

Turning to condition (ii) in (41), it is met in both cases in the sense that one of the verbs involved (the light verb) has a fairly general meaning compared to other verbs within the same semantic domain and is thus capable of unifying its lexical-encyclopedic content with the more contentful verb in its complement. The fact that manner of motion and the concomitant distantive reading survives in the presence of an extended process in the complement of *gå* can now be taken to be due to Agree between the unassociated [proc] feature on the light verb and an embedded durative verb in *Proc*.

Summing up, the brief answer to the question why *take-V* always involves a touch of surprise is that two features [proc, res] of *ta* are left unassociated to

syntactic structure and will both have to be identified by the embedded predicate in this construction; yielding punctuality. In combination with the inceptive reading, this punctuality will produce a surprise reading. Again, the way the event structure is lexicalized is crucial to surprise. There is one complicating factor. On the face of it, condition (i) in (41) does not seem to be met in cases where *take-V* involves an embedded verb without [res] in its lexical specification. The question is how an embedded verb that lacks [res] is capable of identifying the ResP that *ta* requires. I return to this issue below.

## 6.2. Bi-clausal complex predication

The fact that the aktionsart of the embedded predicate does not change in the inceptive construction (§3.2) forces a bi-clausal structure, or minimally a (partially) separate event structure that the embedded verb can associate to. Therefore, the analysis proposed in (42) and (43) above will have to be more elaborate. As a consequence, identification of unassociated features of the light verb will have to be more indirect than I have assumed in the above simplified structures. A bi-clausal structure for the inceptive construction and related constructions has been argued for in Wiklund (2007) for independent reasons. I shall assume that the embedded predicate is actually a full clausal CP-structure merged as a complement (rheme) of *Proc* in the case of *go-V* and as a complement (rheme) of *Res* in the case of *take-V*. A rheme consists of material that further describes a state or a subevent (relevantly process or result), see Ramchand (2008).<sup>18</sup> The conjunction element is a complementizer (that spells out a restructured C):<sup>19</sup>

(44) ... [InitP *gā* [ProcP Proc [CP & ... verb2 ]]] (*go-V*)

(45) ... [InitP *ta* [ProcP Proc [ResP Res [CP & ... verb2 ]]]] (*take-V*)

The nature of this restructuring lies beyond the scope of this paper. In essence, I propose that functional heads of the embedded clause unify (via Agree) with the corresponding heads in the matrix. That proposal captures the agreement between the verbs involved, which appears to be proportional to amount of structure. I refer the reader to Wiklund (2007) for a more detailed discussion of restructuring and agreement in the relevant construction.

The question is how to preserve the predictions of (42) and (43), which seem correct, assuming a bi-clausal structure. What follows is a tentative proposal. In *go-V* matrix *Proc* is linked to embedded Proc via Agree, indicated by coindexation in (46).

(46) ... [InitP *gā<sub>j</sub>* [ProcP Proc<sub>j</sub> [CP & ... [ProcP verb2<sub>j</sub> ]]]]

<sup>18</sup>An alternative analysis, which is presently under investigation, takes the embedded predicate of *gā* to be a case of result augmentation (in the sense of Ramchand 2008); the embedded clause is a secondary predicate in the complement of a null *Res* head.

<sup>19</sup>Similar proposals have been made for English *and* in related constructions (Faraci 1970, Aboh 2004).

The light verb, in turn, is linked to the *Proc* subevent required by its lexical specification, also via Agree. This way, the light verb *gå* has its unassociated [proc] feature identified, satisfying condition (i) of (41). When the embedded verb brings a [res] feature, it will simultaneously identify embedded *Res* and embedded *Proc* (in the rhematic CP), yielding punctuality. Since embedded *Proc* is unified with matrix *Proc* (via Agree), such cases produce a concomitant surprise reading due to the presence of a light verb in (matrix) *Init* (yielding the inceptive reading) and the punctual predication in the complement of *Init*, see (47).

(47) ... [InitP *gå*<sub>j</sub> [ProcP **Proc**<sub>j</sub> [CP & ... [ProcP verb2<sub>j</sub> [ResP verb2<sub>j</sub> ]]]]]

In *take-V*, the structure will be essentially the same except that the embedded clause is a rheme of result instead of a rheme of process. Since the embedded predicate will identify the process and result component of the light verb, regardless of event type, *take-V* will always yield a touch of surprise.

(48) ... [InitP *ta*<sub>j</sub> [ProcP **Proc**<sub>j</sub> [ResP **Res**<sub>j</sub> [CP & ... verb2<sub>j</sub>]]]]

Returning to cases where the embedded verb is not punctual, i.e. cases where the rhematic complement clause does not itself contain a [res] feature with which matrix *Res* and the light verb in turn can Agree to have the unassociated [res] feature of *ta* identified, I need to assume that matrix ResP can be identified by the mere presence of the CP (rheme of result) in the complement of *Res*. Identification of the unassociated [proc] feature of the light verb seems straightforward; it is identified via Agree between the light verb and embedded *Proc*, via matrix *Proc*. An alternative may be to assume that the rhematic CP moves to Spec-ResP and subsequently to Spec-ProcP (thereby also satisfying the thematic requirements of *ta*). In all of the above structures, the embedded verb has one feature unassociated to syntactic structure, namely [init], which is identified by the superordinate light verb with which it is linked via Agree. In this sense, the matrix verb and the embedded verb are dependent on one another for satisfaction of selectional requirements.

### 6.3. Revisiting complications

The constraints on underassociation as formulated in Ramchand (2008), cf. Ramchand (this volume), predict interesting syntactico-semantic reflexes. I hope to have shown that the surprise reading that we find in the inceptive construction is one of those. The answer to the question why *take-V* always involves a touch of surprise will in the bi-clausal analysis proposed above be essentially the same as the one given in connection to the simplified structure. The two features [proc, res] of *ta* that are left unassociated to syntactic structure will both have to be identified by the embedded predicate in the *take-V* construction, which is what yields punctuality and the concomitant surprise reading (in combination with the inceptive reading). The difference between the simplified structures in §6.1 and the more complex predications in §6.2 is that the bi-clausal structures of the latter force the identification of underassociated features to be more indirect so to

speak. The same holds for the identification of punctuality. To the extent that the present analysis proves successful, the data presented here offer support for Ramchand's (2008) constraints on underassociation as formulated in (41) above. Only, in bi-clausal complex predications such as the ones investigated here, identification of an unassociated feature within the phase may involve identification via rhematic material.<sup>20</sup> Turning to Ramchand's (2008) assumption about how a punctual reading arises, it requires a but minimal relaxation to capture the facts of bi-clausal complex predications. Recall that a punctual reading was said to arise iff one single lexical verb identifies both [proc] and [res]. To the extent that the present analysis is correct, it suggests that the important factor is identification of these features by non-distinct material; a single lexical verb (in mono-clausal structures) or a single rhematic XP (in bi-clausal structures).

Note that a bi-clausal structure is plausibly not a necessary ingredient for surprise readings to be available but simply a language specific option for the relevant construction type. The aktionsart of the embedded predicate is preserved in the inceptive construction in Swedish. This is captured in the bi-clausal structure presented here. Although the event structures of the two verbs are partially independent, they are also parasitic on one another. Constraints on underassociation determine this interdependency.

In the structure proposed here for the inceptive construction, the subordinating conjunction is a complementizer introducing the restructured embedded clause. This restructuring is also responsible for the agreement between the verbs involved. What we end up with is a structure where the embedded clause is parasitic on the functional structure of the matrix, whereas the matrix clause is parasitic on the event structure of the embedded clause. Optimally, the two types of parasitisms should be reducible to one and the same; underassociation of functional features.

As a final note, one of the more important questions that the present analysis begs is whether it is possible to do away with some of the structure. More specifically, we want to know whether the (rhematic) CP can merge with *Init* directly and still be identified as rhematic material of the process and the result component, respectively, of the two light verbs examined here. I need to leave the consequences of that option for future investigation.<sup>21</sup> Before I proceed to conclude the present paper, I wish to make a brief note on surprise readings in English.

<sup>20</sup>This material need not necessarily involve the very feature that remains unassociated in the light verb, still apparently is capable of identifying that subevent.

<sup>21</sup>It is noteworthy that the agreement reflexes of the restructuring infinitivals (including the inceptive construction) examined in Wiklund (2007) look suspiciously similar to reflexes of underassociation. My analysis of those begs the same question as the present analysis of bi-clausal complex predications; i.e. whether it is possible to do away with some of the structure while still preserving the role played by the selected features. In brief, infinitival selecting verbs differ in the size of the infinitival selected (CP or AspP). In cases of restructuring, these infinitivals seem structurally defective; they behave as bare VPs. Still the selected features are reflected in the inflectional morphology of the infinitival making it appear as if it is full size. In other words, it seems as if the relevant features remain unassociated to syntactic structure, yet surface in the inflectional morphology of the embedded verb.

#### 6.4. Surprise in English

Alongside with the *go-V* construction, which yields surprise readings also in English (under circumstances that I have not identified yet), there is another construction that appears to be parallel to those investigated here except that a particle (*up*) is used instead of a light verb (see Quirk et al. 1985); the *up-V* construction, see (49).

(49) She up and left him.

It yields what appears to be an inceptive reading and resembles *take-V* in that it produces a surprise reading regardless of embedded predicate.<sup>22</sup> I propose that the particle does the job of the light verb and thus underassociates in the same fashion that *take* underassociates in *take-V*; to *Init* in the event structure. Abstracting away from potential bi-clausality, we have:<sup>23</sup>

(50) [<sub>InitP</sub> up [<sub>ProcP</sub> left [<sub>ResP</sub> <left> ]]

In fact, the particle may take on verbal inflectional morphology for some speakers, supporting the present analysis, cf. (51) from Quirk et al. (1985:979).

(51) She upped and left him.

#### 7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness that is produced in inceptive constructions involving *go* and *take* can be derived from a combination of three factors. First, the inceptive reading itself is a necessary ingredient; a reading where the onset of the event denoted by the embedded predicate is in some sense focalized. Second, a punctual verb is required. This punctuality can be derived from the light verb (as in *take-V*), in which case surprise arises regardless of embedded predicate, or from the embedded verb alone (as in *go-V*), in which case surprise is absent with durative verbs in the complement of the light verb. Third, pragmatic inferences about the particular event encoded in the syntactic structure (yielding an inceptive-punctual reading) seems to be what produces the touch of surprise. An emphasis on the onset of an event with no internal duration yields a quirky twist to the event, as it were. The generalizations presented in this paper were shown to offer support for Ramchand's 2008 proposal concerning the decomposition of verbal meaning; event structure is directly represented in syntax. In particular, the data presented here supports her treatment of light verbs in terms of underassociation of lexical category features. From the more theoretical perspective, surprise readings were thus claimed to be dependent on the particular event structure(s) associated with the predicates involved as well as choice of lexicalization of this structure.

<sup>22</sup>There seems to be speaker variation regarding event types allowed in the complement.

<sup>23</sup>I remain agnostic about which feature of *up* is capable of lexicalizing *Init*.

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