The Syntax of Surprise:
Unexpected event readings in complex predication[*]

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Abstract

In many languages, the 'light' verbs *take* and *go* combine with another predicate to yield a reading where the initiation of the event denoted by the main predicate is in some sense focalized (inceptive). Some of these cases involve a touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness to the event denoted. Looking at data mainly from Swedish but also from English, Yiddish, and Salish, this paper seeks to identify the components that are responsible for this *surprise* reading. It is claimed that surprise in the construction investigated is dependent on three factors: the particular event structure(s) associated with the predicates involved, choice of lexicalization of this structure, and pragmatic inferences about the particular event involved. It is shown that the inceptive reading in combination with punctuality is crucial to the emergence of surprise in these constructions. Two different ways of deriving inceptive surprise readings are identified that depend on whether punctuality is brought by the light verb or by the embedded verb.

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:[1]

(1)   Peter **gick**   och läste   en bok.   (Swedish)
    *Peter go.*PAST *&*   *read.*PAST *a book*
    'Peter went and read a book.'

[1] 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 = redirective (relational) transitivizer, SG = singular, SUP = supine, PERF = perfective, SUBJECT = (indicative) subject.

(2)   John **tog**   och läste   en bok.   (Swedish)
          *John take.*PAST *&* *read.*PAST *a* *book*
          '(%)John 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).

(3)   Vaju   a pigghiu   u   pani.   (Marsalese)
          *go.1*SG *to fetch.1*SG *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 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   xɑt   lɪkʰ 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.[2] Sometimes there is also a touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness in the reading produced. To my knowledge, no systematic

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[2](1) is ambiguous between this reading and a reading of the embedded event as being in progress. The progressive reading is irrelevant here, see Wiklund (2007) for discussion.

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 but also from English and Yiddish. (1) will be labelled *go-V* and (2) will be referred to as *take-V* when they need to be distinguished. The *inceptive construction* will be used as a cover name 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. It is argued that surprise is dependent on three factors: the particular event structure(s) associated with the predicates involved, choice of lexicalization of this structure, and pragmatic inferences about the particular event involved. It is shown that an inceptive reading in combination with a punctuality is crucial to the emergence of surprise. Using the framework of Ramchand (2008), the inceptive reading required can be stated as a requirement that a light verb identifies the initiation component of the embedded event and introduces the event variable that is relevant to tense anchoring. The punctuality condition, in turn, can be stated as a requirement that the process component and the result state are simultaneously identified by one predicate. Depending on whether punctuality is brought by the light verb or by the embedded verb, surprise is derived in two different ways, both of which are dependent on syntactic structure.

2 Background

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

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

b. John tog   och läste   en bok.
*John 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'. 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 and not with coordination structures in that the first verb does not bear phrasal stress.[3] The doubling of inflection can be shown to be top-down, subject to locality, and to involve 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.

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[3]Both verbs belongs to the same intonational phrase and phrasal stress is on the final phonological word before a phrase boundary. On the relevant single event reading of (5a) above, *Peter* and *bok* carry phrasal stress, see (6a). The (irrelevant) independent event reading that arises from a coordination structure has the prosodic bracketing in (6b). On this reading, *gick* and *bok* carry phrasal stress and argument and adjunct extraction is impossible (unless Across-The-Board).

(6)   a.   [Peter [gick   och läste   en bok]].
               *Peter go.*PAST *&*   *read.*PAST *a*   *book*
        b.   [Peter gick   [och läste   en bok]].
               *Peter go.*PAST *&*   *read.*PAST *a*   *book*

3 Surprise, inception, distance, and (in)voluntariness

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. On top of this reading, (5b) also has a touch of surprise, suddenness, or unexpectedness to it:

(7) John tog   och läste   en bok.   (Swedish)
     *John take.*PAST *&   read.*PAST *a   book*
     '≈{Surprisingly, unexpectedly, suddenly} John read a book.'

Curiously, this reading is not present in (5a), despite the fact that (5a) seems to share the crucial syntactic and semantic characteristics of (5b)/(7). Importantly, the prosodic properties of the two are also 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)/(7) for the sentence to yield a surprise reading.[4] Obviously, finding out why the surprise is absent in (5a) and present in (5b) 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 that 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. It is not even clear that the three cannot be subsumed under the same reading, granted that a *surprise* is a *sudden* and therefore to some degree *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

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[4]The difference is subtle but is identifiable when the examples are seen as possible replies to the question: What did they do then?

the touch of suprise/unexpectedness/suddenness that is under investigation here. I thus take differences between these to follow from pragmatic inferences. In the examples that follow, the relevant reading(s) will be marked as [SURPRISE]. I will briefly touch upon potential cognate readings below. Finally, surprise readings are most evident in and sometimes restricted to past reference. All examples that follow will therefore be in the past tense. A discussion of this restriction is deferred until §6.2 below.

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):

(8) a. Han började   att springa.
         he   start.PAST *to run*.INF

     b. Han tog   och sprang
         he   take.PAST *& run*.PAST

Whereas a denial of the completion of a telic event selected by *börja* is impeccable, see (9a), however, such a denial is not possible with *ta*, cf. (9b) (cf. Ekberg 1993).

(9) a. Han började   att springa 20 km (men stannade   efter halva
         he   start.PAST *to run*.INF *20 km   but   stop*.PAST *after half*
         vägen).
         way

     b. Han tog   och sprang   20 km (*men stannade   efter halva
         he   take.PAST *& run*.PAST *20 km   but   stop*.PAST *after half*
         vägen).
         way

Likewise, only *take-V* can be modified with respect to the final temporal bound, cf. (11a) vs. (11b).[5]

(11)   a.   Han började   att springa 20 km (*på 2 timmar).
            *he   start.*PAST *to run.*INF *20 km in   2 hours*

        b.   Han tog   och sprang   20 km (på 2 timmar).
            *He take.*PAST *&   run.*PAST *20 km in 2 hours)*

In this sense, *take-V* is similar to its counterpart without *ta* (henceforth *plain-V*):

(12)   Han sprang   20 km (*men stannade efter halva vägen).
         *he   run.*PAST *20 km   but stop.*PAST *after half way*

(13)   Han sprang   20 km (på 2 timmar).
         *He   run.*PAST *20 km in 2 hours)*

The same results obtain with *gå-V*:

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

(15)   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 include a final temporal bound or 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

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[5](11a) is marginally possible on the (irrelevant) iterative reading where the subject referent started the habit of running 20 km on 2 hours, e.g every day:

(10)   Han började   att springa 20 km på 2 timmar varje dag.
         *he   start.*PAST *to run.*INF *20 km on 2 hours   every day*

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 seen in *take-V* and *go-V*. In many varieties of Swedish, also the verb *börja* can combine with an inflected verb and still keep the semantics of the infinitival counterpart, not to be confused with the irrelevant coordination reading involving ellipsis. Replacing the infinitival form *springa* in the examples involving *börja* by an agreeing past form *sprang* does not change the acceptability of (9a), cf. (16), nor the unacceptability of (11a), cf. (17).[6]

(16) Han började   och sprang   20 km (men stannade efter halva
      *he   start.*PAST *& run.*PAST *20 km but stop.*PAST *after half*
      vägen).
      way

(17) Han började   och sprang   20 km (*på 2 timmar).
      *he   start.*PAST *& run.*PAST *20 km in   2 hours*

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 (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 (18a). Also in this sense, *take-V* is similar to *plain-V*, cf. (18b).

(18) a. Hon tog   och dansade   i flera   timmar.
          *she take.*PAST *& dance.*PAST *in several hours*
          '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced for several hours.'

      b. Hon dansade   i flera   timmar.
          *she dance.*PAST *in several hours*
          'She danced for several hours.'

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[6]The irrelevant coordination reading of the sentences corresponds to: *He started [something] and ran 20 km...*

To the extent that (20a) below is possible, *på två minuter* measures the time up to the initiation of the event of dancing, cf. (20b).[7]

(20) 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 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:

(21) a. Hon tog   och dansade   klockan elva.
          *she take.*PAST *&   dance.*PAST *clock.*DEF *eleven*

     b. Hon dansade   klockan   klockan elva.
          *she dance.*PAST *clock.*DEF *eleven*

Whereas (21a) implies that the subject referent did not dance before eleven, (21b) does not say anything about when the dancing started, only that there was an event of dancing taking place at eleven.[8] This is a property that the inceptive construction shares with the ingressive construction. Like (21a), the sentence in (22) below implies that the subject referent did not dance before eleven.

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[7]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 två minuter* (after two minutes), cf. (Piñon 1997):

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

[8]Swedish present and past tense is vague between the progressive and the habitual (generic) reading.

(22) Hon började att dansa klockan elva.
      *she start.*PAST *to dance.*INF *clock.*DEF *eleven*

The above facts – taken together – seem to suggest that the inceptive construction (*take-V* and *go-V*) is a case where two partially separate event structures still contribute to form one single albeit complex event. From the fact that the inceptive construction but neither the ingressive nor the *plain-V* construction involves an element of surprise, (23a) vs. (23b) and (23c), we may conclude that whatever it is that yields the inceptive reading must be partly responsible for the surprise reading.

(23) a. Han tog   och sprang.
          *He take.*PAST *& run.*PAST
          '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he ran.'

      b. Han sprang.
          *he run.*PAST
          'He ran.'/'He was running.'

      c. Han började   och sprang.
          *he start.*PAST *& run.*PAST
          'He started running.'

The inceptive component can only be partly responsible, however, given that *ta* but not *gå* in the relevant contexts gives rise to an element of surprise (in the absence of prosodic cues), (24a) vs. (24b).

(24) a. Han tog   och simmade 100 meter bröstsim.
          *He take.*PAST *& swim.*PAST *100 meter breaststroke*
          '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he swam 100 meter breaststroke.'

      b. Han gick   och simmade 100 meter bröstsim.
          *he go.*PAST *& swim.*PAST *100 meter breaststroke*
          '≈[INCEPT] he swam 100 meter breaststroke.'

The readings yielded by (24a) and (24b) seem comparable to those produced by the English sentences in (25a) and (25b), respectively. The only reading available for (25a) is one that involves a touch of surprise, sudden-

ness, or unexpectedness (see also §7.6 below). (25b), on the other hand, can also be felicitously uttered in contexts that do not imply that the event is surprising in any way.

(25) a. He up and swam 100 meter breaststroke.

   b. He went and swam 100 meter breaststroke.

Summing up, the surprise reading seems to be a special type of inceptive reading but the inceptive component alone is not enough to yield suprise readings or, alternatively, there must be factors that override the suprise reading in examples like (24b) and (25b). 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 that (24b) differs from (24a) in that the subject referent actually has to walk away from the reference location for the truth conditions of the sentence to be met.[9] This reading seems related to the *distantive* (or *andative*) aspect referred to in Cinque (1999) and Cinque (2004). 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 assume that the distan-

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[9]Swedish *gå* is more restricted than English *go* in that it can only refer to a walking event when used with animates. Note that the feature encoding distinctness from the reference location must be divorced from the motion and path involved in the above examples because the first feature can also be present in stative contexts and thus without a path in Swedish, cf. (26). I abstract away from this here. (26) means that the subject referent was *away* swimming. The inceptive reading is absent in this context. See Ekberg (1983) for discussion.

(26)   Han var   och simmade.
       *he   be.*PAST *&   swim.*PAST
       '[DISTANT] He was swimming.'

tive reading derives from semantic features that we infer with *gå* in certain syntactico-semantic environments. This assumption is based on the more general hypothesis about the 'lightness' in these and similar verbs as being derived from their lexical-encyclopedic poverty (cf. Ramchand 2008), an issue to which we will return below. As we will see, the distantive reading of *gå* is in fact constrained also in the inceptive construction. When a distantive reading is available, this will be indicated by [DISTANT] in the translation. Thus, the reading of (24b) above is more appropriately rendered as in (27) below, including the distantive reading. The English counterpart is given in (28). It also involves a distantive reading.

(27) Han gick   och simmade   100 meter bröstsim.
      *he   go.*PAST *&   swim.*PAST *100 meter breaststroke*
      '[DISTANT][INCEPT] he swam 100 meter breaststroke.'

(28) He went and swam 100 meter breaststroke.

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 of the Swedish *take-V* construction in contexts like (29) and (30) below (from Davis 2006, cited in Davis et al. 2007), the latter involving an 'accidental flavour' of surprise.[10]

(29) qwaqwx-mín=lhkan   ta=scwelálhp=a,
      *nightmare-*RED=*1*SG.SUBJ DET=*ghost*=EXIS
      ka-cwák=kan-**a**   aylh.   (St'át'imcets)
      CIRC-*wake*=*1*SG.SUBJ-CIRC *then*
      'I had a nightmare about a ghost, then I woke up suddenly.'

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[10]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 this language.

(30) **ka**-sék'w-s-as-**a**   ta=nk'wanústen'=a   ta=twéww'et=a.
      CIRC-*break*-CAUS-*3*ERG-CIRC DET=*window*=EXIS DET=*boy*=EXIS
      'The boy broke the window accidentally.'

However, no inceptive reading is reported with *ka-...-a*; 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. (31) below, enables us to distinguish this *inceptive* surprise reading from the *out-of-control* surprise readings attested in Salish.

(31) Peter tog   och läste   en bok.
      Peter take.PAST *& read*.PAST *a book*
      '[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] Peter read a book.'

In (31), 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 (30) above makes the picture even clearer; it does not have an accidental reading, only a reading where the boy broke the window deliberately and suddenly (or unexpectedly/surprisingly):

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

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 surpringly,

Swedish uses the modal *råka* in order to yield an unambiguous reading of the even as accidental (involuntary), cf. (33).

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

The modal construction in (33) has no inceptive reading but admittedly there is a touch of surprise to it. The potential surprise involved in (33), 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 alone, at least not as transparently. There is no immediate way to derive the surprise or suddenness of an event taking place from the mere emphasis on (or reference to) its onset, cf. the discussion of *börja* (start) and *ta* (take) in §3.2 above. As we have seen, the inceptive reading is not even enough for surprise to arise, cf. (24a) vs. (24b) 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 introduce my assumptions about how thematic properties and event types are derived.

4 Creating surprise; thematic properties and event types

I will assume that event structure is directly represented in syntax as argued in Ramchand (2008). Ramchand's proposal is that vP/VP is split in the same spirit that Pollock (1989) splits up IP and Rizzi (1997) splits up CP. In this spirit, event-structure syntax contains three subevental components, each represented as its own projection, hierarchically ordered as in

(34); a causing subevent (*InitP*), a process-denoting subevent (*ProcP*), and a subevent corresponding to a result state (*ResP*). These are linked by a rule of event composition; a generalized 'leads-to' or 'cause' relation, see Ramchand (2008) for details.

(34)   [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*). There are no thematic roles in this system. Specifiers are interpreted systematically by the semantic component as initiator, undergoer, and resultee and a single argument may be in more than one position simultaneously, yielding argument variability in a systematic and predictable form. The selectional burden is shared between the strict ordering of projections and category features on lexical items. Through the latter, lexical items associate with nodes in the syntactic structure. In the verbal domain, the category features are *[init]*, *[proc]*, and *[res]*, which associate to the corresponding heads of the projections in (34) above. One lexical item may thus 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, (35); *Accomplishments* correpond to verbs that are [init, proc] with an incremental theme or path object, (36); *Achievements* are [init, proc, res] or [proc, res], (37).

(35)   [$_{\text{InitP}}$ she ran [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ <she> <ran>]]

(36)   [$_{\text{InitP}}$ she baked [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ the cake <baked>]]

(37)   [$_{\text{InitP}}$ she arrived [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ <she> <arrived> [$_{\text{ResP}}$ <she> <arrived>]]]

Three additional assumptions are noteworthy for the discussion that follows. These concern causativization, telicity, and underassociation of syn-

tactic category features. Ramchand pursues a causativization approach to the causative-inchoative alternation. Unavailiability of causativization is used as a diagnostic of presence of [init] in the lexical specification of verbs in English. The [init] feature is absent when causativization is possible (as e.g. with the verb *break*); the transitive version contains a null causative suffix in the [init] head built on top of the event structure to which the verb associates. Turning to telicity, there is no feature [+telic]. Telicity, in this system, derives from several interacting factors. (36) is telic because the DP argument *cake* is a definite bounded path, which produces telicity entailments with creation (and consumption) verbs. (37) is telic because the presence of ResP gives rise to telicity. Telicity can also arise from result augmentation; the merging of a ResP with an [init, proc] or [proc] verb.[11] Finally under certain circumstances, a verb may leave features unassociated in syntax. Ramchand labels this *underassociation*. In the specific case where a verb is underspecified for conceptual content (light verb), the system allows this verb to identify unassociated features of a second verb in a complex predication (light verb construction). This is what I will assume for the inceptive construction. The details of my analysis will be added as we proceed. For now, it is enough to say that in the inceptive construction, the light verbs (*take* or *go*) identify the unassociated [init] feature of the embedded predicate.[12] Leaving the subordinating conjunction element and the potentially bi-clausal nature of the construction aside for the moment, the simplified structure that I will assume for the inceptive construction is given in (39) below.

(39)   [$_{InitP}$ subject *light verb* [$_{ProcP}$ verb2 [$_{ResP}$ <verb2>]]]   (Inceptive)

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[11] The resultative secondary predication below involves result augmentation in this sense:

(38)   [$_{InitP}$ she painted [$_{ProcP}$ the wall <painted> [$_{ResP}$ <the wall> red]]]

[12] If the embedded predicate has no [init] in its lexical specification, the inceptive construction will essentially have a causative structure.

The inceptive reading arises (partly) from the fact that the light verb identifies the initiation component of the embedded predicate. In what follows, we seek to identify the additional syntactic ingredients that are responsible for the surprise reading. Recall that the inceptive reading alone is not enough to create surprise. In particular, we will investigate hypotheses based on the thematic properties of the verbs involved and the event types that are constructed when the verbs associate to syntactic structure.

4.1 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 matrix (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 in this particular construction, whereas the former allows inanimate subjects in some varieties.[13] Examples like (41a) and (41b) 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:

(41)   a. Han gick   och vann   två miljoner dollar.
          he go.PAST *& win*.PAST *two millon   dollar*
          '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] he won two million dollar .'

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[13]Weather predicates can participate in the inceptive construction in some variants:

(40)   %Det tog   och regnade.
         it   take.PAST *& rain*.PAST
         [SURPRISE][INCEPT] it rained.'

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*. The same is true for the English counterparts:

(42)   a.   He went and won two million dollar.
        b.   He went and died.

One way in which (41a) and (41b) differ from e.g. (27) above, is that the subject referent in the former two cannot be said to cause or (perhaps rather) have control over the events of winning and dying the way he causes the event of swimming in the latter example, repeated in (43) below. The English counterpart is given in (44).

(43)   Han gick   och simmade   100 meter bröstsim.
        *he go.*PAST *& swim.*PAST *100 meter breaststroke*
        '[DISTANT][INCEPT] he swam 100 meter breaststroke.'

(44)   He went and swam 100 meter breaststroke.

Suppose therefore that the surprise readings in (41) and (42) arise from the clash between the initiator and the eventuality of the embedded predicate; e.g. from having the initiator be identical to the undergoer in the context of a verb that does not have an [init] feature in its lexical specification but with which a causativization would for some reason yield a funny result. Swedish *win* and *die* are like their English counterparts in that they do not causativize. Recall, however, that according to Ramchand's diagnostics they must therefore *have* an [init] feature in their lexical specification. If I am correct, this [init] feature is unassociated in the inceptive construction, identified by the matrix light verb. A closer look at the interpretation

yielded reveals that this analysis is on the right track. The reading yielded in (41a) and (41b) 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, (41a) 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 (41b) does not refer to a suicide, which we would expect if the structure would be one involving causativization. Moreover, the surprise reading of (31) above, repeated in (45a) below, remains unaccounted for on the quirky causativization hypothesis.

(45) a. John tog   och läste   en bok.
          John take.PAST *& read*.PAST *a book*
          '[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] John read a book.'

      b. John läste   en bok.
          John read.PAST *a book*
          'John read a book.'

In (45a), 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. (45b), yet there is an element of surprise in (45a). In fact, surprise readings with *gå* do not seem to be different from those with *take* in this respect, as shown by examples like (46a) below.

(46) 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 (46a) 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 con-

trary, 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 (46b). Nevertheless, (46a) has a touch of surprise to it. Again, the same is true of the English counterpart given in (47).

(47)   He went and married her.

The above facts enable us to conclude that the surprise reading itself cannot be derived from some kind of unexpected causativization or clash between the existence of a controlling initiator and an event over which one cannot have control.[14] Note finally that focalizing the onset of the event of reading in (45a) above is not 'unexpected' in any sense. Therefore, the surprise reading cannot be derived from the mere expression of the initiation of an event (by the light verb). Crucially, the inceptive reading does not always give rise to surprise, as we have learned from examples like (43).

4.2 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 (41a), (41b), and (46a) and that makes these different from examples like (43). 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 (41a), (41b), and (46a) above differ from (43). The embedded predicates of the former are *Achievements* in Vendler's (1967) terminology, whereas the embedded predicate of the latter denotes a bounded *Activity*.

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[14]The surprise readings of (41a) and (41b) seem slightly stronger than that yielded by (46a) and examples given earlier. This 'extra' surprise, I do take to be due to the clash between *take* and *go* on the one hand, which are events of which we normally infer control on the part of the subject referent, and *win* and *die* on the other, which are events of which we infer non-control on the part of the subject referent. Although there seem to be degrees of surprise readings, this is a topic that I need to leave for future research.

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 (41b), repeated below:

(48) 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 more than a couple of seconds, see (49). Yet there is an element of surprise.

(49) John tog   och läste   en bok.
      John take.PAST *&   read*.PAST *a   book*
      '[SURPRISE] [INCEPT] John 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 *ta* 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 Activity in (49) would only be illusory. However, the fact that the 'aktionsart' of the embedded predicate does not change with the addition of the relevant light verbs, 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:[15]

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[15]There is variation regarding what kind of event *ta* can combine with. In some varieties, all kinds of eventive predicates are possible, also certain 'stage-level' stative predicates (given the right

(51)   Hon tog   och dansade   i flera   timmar.
       *she take.*PAST *&   dance.*PAST *in several hours*
       '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced several hours.'

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 one more difference between *take* and *gå* that will lead us further.

4.3 The survival of the distantive killing the surprise

The attentive reader may have noticed that (41a), (41b), and (46a) above differ from (43) 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. (52) involving *die* vs. (53) involving *swim* below. The English counterparts are given in (54) and (55), respectively.

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

(53)   Han gick   och simmade   100 meter bröstsim.
       *he   go.*PAST *&   swim.*PAST *100 meter breaststroke*
       '**[DISTANT]**[INCEPT] he swam 100 meter breaststroke.'

(54)   He went and died.

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context), see (50).

(50)   %Hon tog   och var   sur.
        *she   take.*PAST *&   be.*PAST *grumpy*
        '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she was grumpy.'

(55)   He went and swam 100 meter breaststroke.

The sentences in (52) and (54) above do not make reference to walking events (or other events of motion); the subject referent does not have to walk away from the reference location before he dies for the truth conditions of the sentences to be met. In contrast, the only reading available for (53) and (55) is one where the subject referent went 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 will become clear, the latter hypothesis seems to yield the correct predictions.

I take the distantive reading that survives in (53) 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 Swedish *gå* (walk) and the concomitant distantive reading are inferred. This is why the distantive reading is absent in (52) and other 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:

(56)   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 (57a), the reading produced approaches that yielded by *take-V*, cf. (57b).

(57)   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.'

The distantive reading fades away and a surprise reading is available. Again, punctuality seems relevant to surprise.[16]

5 Punctuality

We are looking for an explanation for the fact that surprise readings with *go-V* are more restricted than surprise readings with *take-V*. 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 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 in the lexical specification of the light verb.

5.1 The presence of [res]

Using the [res] 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 (59a) and (59b) show that both Place PPs and Path PPs can describe the final location with *ta*.[17]

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[16](57a) also has an irrelevant locative reading similar to (56). On that interpretation, the distantive reading survives and the jumping takes place iteratively.

[17]An additional example of a Place PP describing the final location with *ta*:

(59) 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; (60a) below only has a locative reading. In order for a resultative interpretation to be available, a Path particle is required, cf. (60b).

(60) 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 Swedish *ta* but not *gå* has a feature encoding the result state of the event in its lexical specification: [res]. The semantics of the res head will enable a goal reading of a locative PP in (59a):

(61) ...[InitP han tog [ProcP <tog> [ResP <tog> [PP henne i sin famn]]]]

The hypothesis that [res] has to be present on either of the verbs in the inceptive construction in order to yield surprise seems to be the one that yields the correct predictions regarding the distribution of surprise readings.

(62) a. *ta*: [init, proc, res]
      b. *gå*: [init, proc]

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(58) Ta   saltet   [i vattnet] och rör   om.   (PP = goal)
      *take.*IMP *salt.*DEF *in water.*DEF *and stir.*IMP *about*
      'Put the salt in the water and stir.'

Take-V will always yield surprise readings, since the light verb *ta* has a feature [res] in its lexical specification. In Swedish, *ta* 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.[18] We have seen that with *gå*, which does not encode a result state, an embedded punctual verb like *win*, *die*, or *marry* is required to yield a surprise reading. These verbs have [res] in their lexical specification. They are independently able to identify the result state of a process. As will become clear below, it is in this sense that these verbs are punctual, along with the verb *take*. Before we proceed, a note on English *go* is warranted. To the extent that a PlacePP is capable of describing the final location with English *go*, in examples like (63a), I assume that there is a null Path head in (63a) and that *go* does not have a [res] feature in its lexical specification.

(63)   a.   He went in the room.

         b.   He went into the room.

         c.   He went in to the room.

Thus, English *go* is like Swedish *gå* in lacking [res] in its lexical specification (see discussion in Tungseth 2006) but differs from the latter in licensing a null Path head (corresponding to the preposition *to*) in environments like (63a).[19]

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[18]This is provided that these verbs are conceptually poor enough to be used in a complex predication where their [init] feature can identify an unassociated [init] feature of the embedded predicate (see below for details).

[19]The structure is roughly as given below:

(64)   ...[InitP he went [procP <went> [PathP TO [PlaceP in the room]]]]

The locative element *in* moves to the Path head, as seen in (63b), which I take to be structurally identical to (63a), albeit with an overt *to*.

5.2 Revisiting punctuality

We are now in a position to revisit the hypothesis that punctuality counts for surprise readings in the inceptive construction. One prerequisite for a punctual reading to arise is the presence of [res] in the lexical specification of the verb associating to event structure. I adopt the proposal put forth in Ramchand (2008) that an achievement (punctual) interpretation is yielded when a lexical verb simultaneously identifies both process and result. Duration, in this sense, requires a verb which does not simultaneously identify both process and result. In this sense, *ta* is a punctual verb, whereas *gå* is not (the latter has no [res] in its lexical specification), cf. (62) above.

If I am correct in taking punctuality to be a crucial ingredient in the creation of surprise, result augmentation should not be sufficient; i.e. the mere presence of a result state in the sentence should not yield a surprise reading. The feature [res] has to be present in the lexical specification on either of the two verbs for there to be punctuality. This prediction is borne out and can be demonstrated by the addition of a resultative particle to an accomplishment predicate under *gå*. An accomplishment verb does not itself encode a result state (Ramchand 2008). In (65) below, the particle *upp* is doing this job. As expected, the surprise reading is missing in this case; the distantive reading is the only one available.

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

Since the verb *eat* does not simultaneously identify both process and result ([res] is identified by the particle), 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 (65) follows.[20] We have added substance to our hunch that punctuality is relevant to surprise. When the light verb brings punctuality, 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 punctuality in order for surprise to arise. Below, I present facts from Yiddish that seem to support the hypothesis that punctuality in combination with an inceptive reading is crucial to the surprise reading under investigation.

5.3 Surprise in Yiddish

In Yiddish, a light verb corresponding to English *do* may combine with another verbal element to produce certain aspectual meanings. The construction is referred to as the *shtam-konstruktsie* (the stem construction), see Diesing (2000) and references cited there:

(66)   Maks hot a gey geton af foroys.   (Yiddish)
        Max has a go done   forward
        'Max marched forward.'

Prima facie, the Yiddish stem construction resembles the English light verb construction of the form *Peter did a dance*. However, it can be shown to allow a wider range of complements. In addition, the "stem" appears to be verbal rather than nominal (despite the presence of what looks like the indefinite article).[21] The meaning of the stem construction is reported to vary with the type of event denoted by the stem (main predicate) (Diesing 2000). With activities, the stem construction has the effect of either reducing the event denoted to a singular action (in the case of serial actions) or to an event with a diminutivized interpretation (non-iterative actions). Telic

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[20]On result augmentation with the light verb, see §7.5 below.

[21]The stem can be modified by adverbs but not adjectives. It can neither be pluralized, nor relativized, see Diesing (2000) for details.

events receive a "sped up" interpretation. The term *semelfactive* is recurrent in descriptions of the aspectual interpretation of the construction, see Aronson (1985) and Taube (1987). In essence, these descriptions appear to mean that the stem construction yields a punctual interpretation. Interestingly, an inceptive reading is also available, a fact which enables us to test our hypothesis that the inceptive reading in combination with punctuality is what yields surprise in the relevant construction type. Whenever the inceptive reading is available in the Yiddish stem construction, there should be an element of surprise, assuming the stem construction to involve the relevant kind of complex predication. Looking at the data presented in Diesing (2000), the prediction seems borne out. (67) and (68) below both have an inceptive reading and both are reported to involve a touch of suddenness or unexpectedness; in other words what is here referred to as *surprise*.

(67)   Zi hot an efn   geton di oygn.   (Yiddish)
        she has an open done the eyes
        'She (suddenly) opened her eyes.'

(68)   Es   hot a doner   geton.   (Yiddish)
        there has a thunder done
        '(Suddenly), there was a thunderclap.'

In support of our hypothesis then, punctuality in combination with an inceptive reading yields a touch of surprise, unexpectedness, or suddenness to the event denoted.

6 Deriving surprise

Before we investigate how the simplified analysis proposed in §4 can be modified to capture the more fine-grained facts, I wish to summarize the situation and make a brief note on the tense restrictions observed.

6.1 Surprise ingredients

The present investigation suggests that surprise readings in the constructions that we are concerned with require the following ingredients in order to be available:

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 of the embedded predicate; the feature [init], which remains unassociated to syntax on the embedded verb. (2.) in turn is a requirement that one of the verbs involved identifies both [proc] and [res].[22] A natural question to ask at this point is where the surprise comes from given these facts. Recall that *ta* is punctual, whereas *gå* is not. This means that we can take the surprise reading yielded by *take-V* to derive directly from the punctuality of the light verb. Since the light verb expresses the onset of the event denoted by the embedded predicate and since it is punctual, the onset will be interpreted as *sudden* and in this sense also *unexpected*, yielding what I refer to as *surprise*. With *go-V*, surprise must be derived in a slightly different fashion, where punctuality plays a more indirect role. This is so because *gå* is not a punctual verb. Instead, punctuality needs to be brought by the embedded verb in this construction. I propose that pragmatic inferences about the nature of events with no duration is a third ingredient in these cases. The idea I wish to pursue is that the surprise perceived with *go-V* is inferred from the fact that a punctual event is not readily compatible with an 'emphasis' on its

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[22]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.

onset; it hardly begins before it ends so to speak. A parallel fact indicating this incompatibility is that aspectual verbs like *begin* and *stop* cannot embed punctual verbs unless special readings are available, e.g. an iterative reading, as in (69).[23]

(69)   He began to win (local contests).

Summing up, in both *take-V* and *go-V*, the combination of the inceptive reading and punctuality is responsible for the production of surprise. In the former, this combination yields a sudden (punctual) onset reading (inceptive) of the event denoted by the embedded predicate. In the latter, this combination yields an onset reading (inceptive) of an event with no internal duration (punctual), which is funny from a pragmatic perspective, yielding surprise.[24] In the absence of an embedded punctual event, as we have seen, *go-V* does not yield surprise.

(70)   *Surprise readings:*

    a.   S1: Sudden onset reading   (*take-V*)

    b.   S2: Onset reading of an event with no internal duration (*go-V*)

A third way of deriving surprise was attested in Salish (§3.4), contrasting with the inceptive constructions under investigation here in that it seemed totally independent from event structure syntax, being derived solely from pragmatic inferences about events over which one cannot have control.

6.2 A note on tense/mood restrictions

As mentioned earlier, past tense seems to be a relevant factor for surprise readings. Although a detailed investigation of this factor will have to be

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[23]The fact that there is no surprise reading available for (69) in the absence of *local contests* is expected on the present analysis, given that ingredient (1.) is missing. That is, *begin* does not identify the [init] feature of *win* (inceptive reading) but rather restricts reference to the onset of the event (ingressive reading), cf. §3.2 above. The latter, I take to be a case of external aspect.

[24]This reading is also available in *take-V* when the embedded verb denotes a punctual event.

left for the future, I wish to present some facts from Swedish. Consider *take-V* first:

(71) a. Han tog   och läste   en bok.
          *he   take.*PEST *and read.*PAST *a   book*

    b. Han hade tagit   och läst   en bok.
          *he   had   take.*SUP *and read.*SUP *a   book*

    c. Han tar   och läser   en bok.
          *he   take.*PRES *and read.*PRES *a   book*

    d. Ta   och läs   en bok!
          *take.*IMP *and read.*IMP *a   book*

In the past tense and in the perfect, as in (71a) and (71b), the interpretation yielded is one involving a sudden onset of a reading event (S1 above). The sentence is felicitously uttered in a situation where the subject referent suddenly started reading a book or e.g. when we have the background knowledge that the subject referent dislikes reading and the onset of a reading event is therefore unexpected. (71c), in turn, involves present tense and seems to have two readings. On one reading, the speaker is either using present tense in the report of a past (real or putative) event or is reporting on 'hot news'.[25] A surprise component seems to be present in this case. On the second reading, the subject referent is going to read a book in the immediate future. If a surprise component is present at all, it is far more subtle than in (71a). Finally, (71d) involves the imperative, and is a call for the onset of a reading event to be brought about. There is no surprise involved in this example. Consider, *go-V* in turn:

(72) a. Han gick   och gifte   sig.
          *he   go.*PAST *and married.*PAST REFL

    b. Han hade gått   och gift   sig.
          *he   had   go.*SUP *and marry.*SUP REFL

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[25]These readings are variously referred to as *historical-*, *hot news-*, *dramatic-*, *reportive-*, and *voyeur present*.

    c. Han går   och gifter   sig.
        I   *go*.PRES *and marry*.PRES REFL

    d. Gå   och gift   dig!
        go.IMP *and marry*.IMP REFL

In the past tense and in the perfect, (72a) and (72b), the interpretation yielded is one involving an unexpected event of marrying; the initiation is perceived as emphasized (S2 above). There are at least two readings available for (72c) involving present tense. The first reading is one where the so-called historic or 'hot news' present is used, which involves a surprise component. The second reading is the immediate future reading mentioned above, where surprise appears to be absent or at least less available than in (72a).[26] Finally, (72d) involves the imperative and is a call for the onset of a marrying event to be brought about. It involves no surprise component. To the extent that these descriptions of its distribution is correct, the surprise reading seems unavailable in irrealis environments. This may be due to some pragmatic incompatibility between irrealis and surprise and/or the behaviour of punctual verbs in irrealis environments. I need to leave this restriction for future research.

7 The syntax of surprise

7.1 Restructuring at the event structure level

The fact that the aktionsart of the embedded predicate does not change in the inceptive construction forces a bi-clausal structure or minimally partially separate event structures that the verbs involved can associate to. Recall that an activity predicate embedded under *ta* is still compatible with durative adverbials (§3.2):

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[26]On progressive readings with *go-V*, see Wiklund (2007) and references cited there.

(73) Hon tog   och dansade   i flera   timmar.
      *she take.*PAST *& dance.*PAST *in several hours*
      '[SURPRISE][INCEPT] she danced for several hours.'

Therefore, the analysis proposed in (39) will have to be more complex. A bi-clausal structure for the inceptive construction and related constructions has been argued for in Wiklund (2007) for independent reasons. Along with Wiklund (2007), I shall assume that the complement of the light verb in the inceptive construction is a restructured 'clause'. The nature of this restructuring lies beyond the scope of this paper and I therefore leave it open whether we are dealing with a full clausal CP where the restructured functional heads of the embedded clause unify (via Agree) with the corresponding heads in the matrix, as proposed in Wiklund (2007), or whether the complement reduces to event structure syntax (which we may refer to as VP). The former proposal captures the agreement between the verbs involved, which appears to be proportional to amount of structure in the non-restructured infinitival counterparts, where these exist. I refer the reader to Wiklund (2007) for a more detailed discussion of restructuring and agreement in the relevant construction. The latter approach is in line with the VP-analysis of restructuring proposed in Wurmbrand (2001).

For ease of exposition, the embedded predicate will be represented as reduced to event structure syntax here and I will leave the status of the subordinating conjunction aside, representing it as '*&*' below. In Wiklund (2007), this element is argued to be a complementizer that spells out a restructured C.[27] In essence, my proposal is that the embedded predicate is merged as a rheme of matrix *Proc* in the case of *go-V*, (74), and as a rheme of matrix *Res* in the case of *take-V*, (75); recall that *gå* is an [init, proc] verb, whereas *take* is an [init, proc, res] verb. A rheme consists of material that further describes a subevent or a state, relevantly process and result

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[27]Similar proposals have been made for English *and* in related constructions (Faraci 1970, Aboh 2004).

respectively (see Ramchand 2008). Since the [init] feature of the embedded predicate remains unassociated to syntactic structure in inceptive constructions, an issue that we will return to shortly, the size of the embedded predicate (labelled v2 in the structures below) will always be ProcP and never InitP. A ResP may but need not be present; it is included in the structures below. In effect, the inceptive construction instantiates restructuring at the event structure level; the initiation component of the embedded verb is restructured by virtue of being unassociated to syntactic structure.

(74)   ...[$_{InitP}$ *gå* [$_{ProcP}$ <*gå*> & [$_{ProcP}$ v2 [$_{ResP}$ <v2>]]]]
        go-V

(75)   ...[$_{InitP}$ *ta* [$_{ProcP}$ <*ta*> [$_{ResP}$ <*ta*> & [$_{ProcP}$ v2 [$_{ResP}$ <v2>]]]]]
        take-V

Below, we will see how constraints on underassociation restrict this restructuring.

7.2 Lightness and underassociation

In the context relevant to us, Swedish *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.[28] In the inceptive construction, as we have seen, the verbs seem to 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) in certain environments. In these cases a distantive reading is present, whereas the surprise reading in unavailable. Moreover, unlike modal verbs and the

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[28]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).

auxiliary *ha* 'have' used to form the perfect, *ta* and *gå* inflect for all forms in the inceptive construction, event though surprise is not present in all of these. 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 have taken *ta* and *gå* to be light verbs in a complex predication in the construction that we are concerned with here. In this sense, I follow Wiklund (2007). However, I do not assume that light verbs necessarily associate to syntactic structure in a different fashion on their 'functional' use than they do on their 'lexical' use. I have argued that these verbs lexicalize all category features (event components) in their lexical specification. I follow Ramchand (2008) by defining the *lightness* of these and similar verbs from a semantic viewpoint; the lexical-encyclopedic content that these verbs (qua lexical items) contribute is non-specific and abstract. This is not to say that this *lightness* has no syntactic repercussions. It indeed has, also in the inceptive construction. It is this property that enables underassociation to take place. Ramchand (2008: 98) proposes that underassociation is possible only if the following conditions are satified:

(76)   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;
        (ii) the two category features so linked must unify their lexical-encyclopedic content.

Given that it is the embedded verb and not the light verb that has a feature that remains unassociated to syntactic structure, condition (i) is met in the present analysis. The unassociated [init] feature of the embedded verb is

identified by the same feature of the light verb, via Agree. Condition (ii) in turn can only be met in cases where one of the two bearers of the relevant category feature has a fairly general meaning compared to other lexical items within the same semantic domain. This enables a unification of the lexical-encyclopedic content of the poorer item with the more contentful item. In the inceptive construction, the matrix verbs both qualify for this purpose. The verb *take* is poor compared to e.g. *steal*. The verb *go* is poor compared to e.g. *lumber*.

7.3 The inceptive reading revisited

The present proposal captures the difference noted above between (21a) and (21b), repeated below. Whereas (77a) implies that the subject referent did not dance before eleven, (77b) does not say anything about when the dancing started, only that there was an event of dancing taking place at eleven. The same fact holds for *go-V*.

(77)   a.   Hon tog   och dansade   klockan   elva.
             she   take.PAST *&   dance*.PAST *clock*.DEF *eleven*

       b.   Hon dansade   klockan   klockan elva.
             she   dance.PAST *clock*.DEF *eleven*

Because the two verbs involved in the inceptive construction have (partially) separate event structures, the event variable to which tense will be anchored is the one introduced by the light verb. A temporal adverbial will therefore modify the event expressed by the light verb. More specifically, since the [init] feature of the light verb identifies the unassociated (in this sense restructured) [init] feature of the embedded verb (via Agree), the temporal adverbial will be interpreted as specifying the time of the initiation of the event denoted by the embedded verb. These two factors, I argue, are crucial to the inceptive reading. The perception of an emphasis on the initiation of the event denoted by the embedded verb derives from identifi-

cation of embedded [init] by the light verb in combination with tense being anchored to the event variable introduced by the light verb.

Note that the facts presented here cannot be accounted for by assuming the light verb to lexicalize [init] alone in a mono-VP structure, unless we postulate two versions of *go* and *take*, respectively. We would then have to say that these verbs do not possess any other feature apart from [init] on the light verb version. If we did not, we would incorrectly predict verbs that lack a [res] feature in their lexical specification to be banned from combining with *take* in the inceptive construction. This is so, because the [res] feature of *take*, which would have to remain unassociated to syntactic structure on that analysis, would be left unidentified in these cases:

(78)   ... [$_{InitP}$ *light verb* & [$_{ProcP}$ v2]]

In the approach pursued here, there is but one lexical item *go* and one lexical item *take*, the former an [init, proc] verb, the latter a [init, proc, res] verb. Because these verbs have a fairly general meaning, they enable restructuring at the event structure level in the embedded predicate. [29]

7.4 The surprise reading revisited

Regardless of the verb type in the complement, *take-V* will yield a sudden onset reading (surprise reading 1) because the light verb is punctual by virtue of lexicalizing both [proc] and [res] (in addition to [init]). An embedded punctual verb is therefore not necessary for surprise to arise:

(79)   ... [$_{InitP}$ *ta* [$_{ProcP}$ <ta> [$_{ResP}$ <ta> & [$_{ProcP}$ v2]]]]   (*take-V*)

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[29] As Christer Platzack (p.c.) points out, there is a punctual reading of *gå* in Swedish, corresponding to English *leave*: *Han gick (iväg).* (lit. He went away; 'He left.') The contrast in (60) and the difference between *ta* and *gå* with regard to surprise readings, however, makes an analysis of *gå* as a [init, proc, res] verb problematic. I therefore hypothesize that there is a null Path head present on the punctual reading of *gå*, which is unavailable in the inceptive construction. This analysis seems to me to make the correct predictions for the data presented here. It is of course possible that there is variation to be found.

In contrast, surprise readings with *go-V* are dependent on a punctual embedded verb because the light verb *go* does not have a [res] feature in its specification. When a punctual verb is present in the complement of the light verb, as in (74) above, the reading yielded is one where the initiation of the embedded event – which lacks internal duration – is emphasized, producing surprise (surprise reading 2). When v2 does not lexicalize both [proc] and [res], as in (80), punctuality is missing and a surprise reading is not available. The structure yields an inceptive-distantive reading (as in *Han gick och läste en bok* 'He went and read a book'):

(80)   ... [$_{\text{InitP}}$ *gå* [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ <*gå*> & [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ v2]]]   (*go-V*)

It remains to be shown how the surprise readings investigated here are related – if at all – to the so-called (ad)mirative mood that can be used to express surprise in the form of verbal inflection or particles in e.g. Albanian, Aromanian, and Western Apache, see e.g. Friedman (2005) and DeLancey (1997). Rather than expressing an unexpected event, however, this mood appears to express unexpected or surprising information (and also doubt and irony) along with information about available evidence (evidentiality). Interestingly, this mood also seems to display tense restrictions in that it cannot occur with non-past reference. This may be an indication of at least a pragmatic overlap with the inceptive surprise reading, perhaps an incompatibility between surprise/unexpectedness and irrealis as suggested above.

7.5 The distantive reading revisited

The fact that manner of motion (walk) is under certain circumstances perceived in the inceptive construction in Swedish, I have taken to derive from semantic inferences that are dependent on the syntactic environment to which *gå* is associated. In the case relevant to us, I have shown that manner of motion and motion away from a reference location are features that

seem dependent on internal duration in the embedded verb. Note that result augmentation with the light verb *gå* also prevents a surprise reading in favor of the distantive reading, see (81) below where the particle *ut* is combined with the light verb.

(81)   Han gick   ut och gifte   sig.
        he go.PAST *out & marry*.PAST *REFL*.DEF
        '[DISTANT] he went out and married.'

In fact, the inceptive reading also vanishes in the presence of the particle, which explains the lack of a surprise reading. I propose that this is a locality effect. An unassociated [init] feature of *marry* cannot be identified by *gå*, due to the intervening particle. The two events of *going* and *marrying* therefore remain separate, i.e. no restructuring can take place. The presence of the directional particle therefore forces a distantive reading under which manner of motion can be inferred.

7.6 Surprise in English

Alongside with the *go-V* construction, English has a construction that seems to be parallel to those investigated here except that the particle *up* is used instead of a light verb (see Quirk et al. 1985):

(82)   She *up* and left him.

The *up-V* construction yields what appears to be an inceptive reading and resembles *take-V* in that it produces a surprise reading regardless of embedded predicate.[30] I propose that the particle does the job of the light verb and is capable of identifying the [init] feature of the embedded verb. Abstracting away from potential bi-clausality, we have:[31]

(83)   [$_{\text{InitP}}$ up & [$_{\text{ProcP}}$ left [$_{\text{ResP}}$ <left>]]

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[30]There seems to be speaker variation regarding event types allowed in the complement.

[31]I remain agnostic about which feature of *up* is capable of lexicalizing *Init*.

In fact, some speakers allow the particle to take on verbal inflectional morphology, supporting the present analysis (example from Quirk et al. 1985: 979):

(84)   She upped and left him.

8 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 two 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. In the case of *take-V*, the surprise reading was argued to derive from the punctuality of the light verb expressing the initiation (sudden onset reading). In the case of *go-V* pragmatic inferences about the particular event encoded in the syntactic structure was argued 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 can be taken to offer support for Ramchand's 2008 proposal concerning the decomposition of verbal meaning; event structure is directly represented in syntax. 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.

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