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A CROSS-LINGUISTIC COMPARISON OF THE EVENT-STRUCTURE OF FETCH:
POSSIBLE CODING ALTERNATIVES AND THEIR REALIZATIONS**

Abstract

This paper presents the possible coding alternatives and the factual realizations of a complex event concept. We assume that any concept is built on a perceptual and functional basis and ask in what ways different languages encode such a concept, i.e., how the surface realizations of such a concept differ from one another. The concept under consideration in this paper, henceforth termed FETCH, is the concept realized in British English 'fetch' and Croatian 'dobavit'. After characterizing the event structure of FETCH at its beginning, a discussion of potential coding alternatives in terms of conceptual vs. lexical chunking follows. We then compare the cross-linguistic encoding of FETCH in a sample of 29 languages and show how the different surface realizations demonstrate different instantiations of potential conceptual and lexical chunking. Moreover, we discuss whether the event concept FETCH itself is universal. Finally, we test current theories on event structures, with a focus on the often assumed binary construction scheme.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we compare how one particular complex event concept - the notion of FETCH (as realized by British English fetch, Croatian dobavit, or German holen) - is encoded in different natural languages. The starting point of our investigation is the assumption that complex event concepts can be perceived by the human mind as single entities and that these entities are built on a perceptual and functional basis. Following Avramidi and Kareev's cut hypothesis (which they support by convincing experiments), a "sub-sequence of stimuli is cut out of a sequence to become a cognitive entity for someone, if it has been experienced many times, with different sub-sequences preceding and following it on the various occasions" (Avramidi / Kareev 1994: 245). In this sense, FETCH is surely a candidate for being such a cognitive entity. More precisely, we understand complex event concepts as entities that are composed of conceptual components and have an internal structure (cf. Talmy 2000: 215; Pustejovsky 1991: 48). This structure has to be identified for FETCH in order to be able to judge the degree of transparency the realizations of the FETCH-event exhibit. We consider the prototypical FETCH-concept to consist of three sequential subevents - termed GO, TAKE, and COME. Both GO and COME are understood as directed movements of the actor. GO is a movement from the initial location of the actor to the initial location of the undergoer of FETCH (note that the actor's and undergoer's initial locations differ from one another). TAKE denotes the beginning of the actor's control over the undergoer by - prototypically - grabbing and then holding it. COME, the third and last subevent, is a movement from the undergoer's initial location to a point of reference (PoR). The existence of a PoR as final goal location is part of the conceptualization of FETCH, although the PoR does not necessarily have to be specified in an instantiation of FETCH in discourse, compare fetch some books vs. fetch me some books - it might be clear from the context. Also, the PoR might but need not be the actor's initial location (imagine A being at home and telling B that she will go to her office now and "On my way, I will fetch some books from the library" - B will most probably assume that A is taking the books to her office). Note that the actor's movement in COME is considered as being accompanied by the actor's ongoing control of the undergoer, thus necessarily entailing a transfer of the undergoer to the PoR as well (to indicate this, COME has been selected instead of COME).

The aims of this paper can be described as follows: First of all, we compare the different realizations of FETCH in the language sample and show how they demonstrate different instantiations of potential conceptual and lexical chunking. Moreover, we discuss whether the event concept FETCH itself is indeed universal (as assumed), i.e. whether universally all three subevents and only these subevents are conceptualized. This is primarily based on native speakers' intuitions, where native speakers have been interviewed about their conceptualizations. Additionally, in languages which encode FETCH transparency (and not as compactly as e.g. English and Croatian), the encoding might also tell us something about the conceptualization of FETCH. Finally, the conception that FETCH consists of three subevents gives us the possibility to test current theories on event structures, with a focus on the often assumed binary construction scheme of event structures as can, for example, be found in the work of Pustejovsky (1991).

The outline of the paper is the following: In Section 2, potential ways of lexicalizing event concepts, that is, the chunking of conceptual or lexical components and the encoding of chunks are discussed. In Section 3, the cross-linguistic realizations of FETCH are presented, with the data being ordered according to their degree of compactness and, respectively, transparency. An evaluation in terms of the overall conceptualization behind the presented realization - i.e., do all realizations encode exactly the same event concept? - and in terms of the chunking possibilities as listed in Section 2 follows in Section 4. Section 5 focuses on the internal event structure of FETCH. Finally, we sum up our results in the conclusion in Section 6.

1 To represent event concepts, English verb nouns in capital letters are used in this paper. The semantics of the verb nouns do not necessarily correspond to the event concepts the verbs represent. In order to distinguish event concepts from meanings as imposed by the verbs, event concepts are defined. The verb nouns employed to represent concepts should be considered just given names to enable reference to the represented event concepts.

2 There are two main participants in a FETCH event. These will be addressed employing Van Valin and LaPolla's socalled macroroles terminology at actor and undergoer (cf. Van Valin / LaPolla 1997: 1-13). The actor is the agentive fetching entity, whereas the undergoer is the entity being fetched.
2. POSSIBLE CODING ALTERNATIVES: CHUNKING OF CONCEPTUAL AND LEXICAL COMPONENTS

Before moving on to compare and in order to be able to judge the coding alternatives of FETCH in the sample languages, we have to discuss what are potential coding alternatives. In other words, how the components of the internal structure of an event concept might be combined in general. Bierwisch and Schreuder (1992: 56) describe the so-called 'chunking problem' as 'the necessity to identify those conceptual configurations that are available for lexicalization'. Available configurations for lexicalization differ in different languages. A particular language might not supply means to lexicalize a particular conceptual chunk in a single lexical unit. Thus, although in some language a complex event concept might be encoded as a simplex, in other languages it might be necessary to split up the given complex event concept into several smaller conceptual chunks, each of which corresponds to one simple lexical realization. These lexical realizations of the chunks are fused together to form an overall realization of the complex event concept, with the resulting surface structure being one lexical item (i.e., a fixed combination that is learned by language users), or in some cases even a phrase which is not part of the lexicon, but generated online whenever needed.

As indicated above, there are two levels on which elements can be combined - namely on the conceptual level or on the surface level of language^3^, leaving us with three possible ways of arriving at the representation of a complex event concept. The first possibility is that a chunk is exclusively built on the conceptual level, thereby forming one conceptual chunk that has a lexicalization with a simple shape, resulting in a compact encoding of the event. The second possibility is that all conceptual components are first lexicalized and the resulting simple lexical elements are then combined on the surface structure to form a lexical chunk which has a very high degree of transparency and typically iconicity. The third possibility combines the first two, that is, chunks are partly built on the conceptual and also partly on the surface level: First, some conceptual components of a complex event are chunked into one or more complex subconcepts, each of which is mapped onto a simple lexical element. Some conceptual components might directly be lexicalized (without any chunking on the conceptual level). Secondly, the originating lexical elements undergo a combination with each other, thereby forming the final representation. Of course, this 'mixed' chunking compiles different results of transparency, as different degrees arise concerning how prominent the two chunking procedures are.

One of the issues that is examined in the next section is whether all of the conceptual elements and chunks of a complex event concept necessarily have to be expressed on the surface level in order for native speakers to understand the resulting combination as a representation of the whole complex event concept. If that is not the case, languages may highlight selected subevents of a complex event concept and leave other conceptual chunks implicit. It would be interesting to explain such cases, an explanation of which could surely enough be found in general efficiency considerations. However, exposing these would go beyond the scope of this paper (for a partial treatment, see Schalley 2003).

3. DIFFERENT REALIZATIONS OF THE FETCH-EVENT: CROSS-LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE

In the following, the data will be presented and compared (a collection of the data, ordered by language names, can be found in the appendix). The encoding of FETCH has been compiled for 29 languages. If possible, native speakers were consulted, though in some cases only experts working on the particular language could be interviewed. In two cases, Kalam and Walmajarri, the information was taken from the literature. The sample comprises languages from all continents, and it is not only adequate concerning the geographical distribution of the languages but also concerning the distribution of language families (cf. the appendix). Thus, the sample may be considered to reasonably

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^3^ A division into the conceptual level and the surface level of a language is assumed here. Thus, at this point of the discussion, a distinction is not made between surface combinations in terms of word formation (concretion, compounding) and in terms of syntax (leading to parallel expressions which might in some cases be idiosyncratic).
suffice as the basis of a cross-linguistic study that allows for statements on the conceptualization of FETCH, though, of course, additional languages would make the picture more complete.

In our comparison of the cross-linguistic encoding of FETCH we start from compact realizations, moving on to more transparent ones. The most compact coding alternative is the one in which all three subevents are chunked conceptually and the whole event concept is mapped into one lexeme. British English *fetch*, Croatian *dobvećiti*, Dagurian *ong*, Hungarian *bokna*, Romanian *aduce*⁵ and one of the alternative encodings in Spanish (*traer*) exhibit this approach. Moreover, there exists such a realization in informal-colloquial Brazilian Portuguese *regater*, which has to be considered a most unusual case because *regater* is a form of approximately ten years currency, literally meaning *ransom* in Portuguese (a meaning that has nothing to do with the event structure of FETCH), and it shows a semantic restriction in that it is not normally applied to a person or object not previously present at the place of speaking.⁶

Furthermore, Dutch *halen* and German *holen* provide simple lexemes to express FETCH. But in these two languages, the lexeme is often (in Dutch more often than in German) supported by additionally (and thus redundantly) stating the GO subevent on the surface level (cf. Dutch *gaan halen* *igo fetch*). This seems to put particular emphasis on the GO subevent, while overriding language economy principles. One could speculate that a reason for the language's possibility to repeat GO could be found in a binary event structure (for a more detailed account, cf. below). A construction similar to the Dutch one can be found in Croatian - *idi mi dones* *igo me fetch* 'go and fetch me' -, although it is interesting to note that many native speakers find this construction less correct than the one originating if *fetch* is substituted by *bring* as in *idi mi dones* *igo me bring* 'go and bring me'. Also, in American and Australian English *fetch* - if used at all - is supported by GO. Differently from British English, *fetch* alone is judged as stylistically marked in American and Australian English, regarded as archaic and refined, except for addressing dogs or in some dialectal usage. Note that the usage of fetch alone is nearly never considered appropriate.

Hence, American and Australian English exhibit a development from the use of a single lexeme towards a more transparent encoding of FETCH, an observation that is not only supported by the additional go, but also by the even more common way of expressing FETCH by *go (and) get* (both usages - with or without the connective and - occur). This way, the first subevent is split from the rest which contains the subevents TAKE and COME*⁷ (Note that the COME* subevent is not prominent in the realization get although it is present.) The same is true for Thai *pay ou* *igo get*, whereas in the other Thai encoding *pai lae nám-ma* *igo and bring* the nâm-ma realization is composed of nâm [direct, control and mao] (comel), thus overtly entailing the TAKE and COME* subevents. In classical Chinese we find a similar construction: *què què* *igo there take comel*. Estonian speakers also combine *minema* *igo and tooma (bring) to express FETCH, once again dividing between the first subevent and the rest, similar to the *go and bring* Croatian alternative indicated above. The same is done in Turkish, which encodes FETCH via *göy getirme* *igo bring back*. In Albanian and Turkish Arabic you might, as well, say *ruh fi iligo bringi* (AA), *barrë fi iligo bringi* (TA) respectively, although it is possible to leave the GO subevent implicit (see below).

Considering that in our example there are three subevents that constitute a complex event concept, there are accordingly three possibilities how two of these could be chunked on the conceptual level and then joined into one lexeme, with the third one (represented by another lexeme) being added on the surface level. We have just seen one of these logical possibilities: the first subevent, GO, is added to the realization of TAKE-COME*. The second possibility is the combination of the first and third subevent, namely GO and COME*, with TAKE being added overtly. None of the languages in the sample shows this approach. As general economy principles, in particular the claim that subevents are ordered according to their temporal sequencing (cf. Schaelly 2003), clearly contradict such a realization, it should come as no surprise that we do not find such an encoding of FETCH. This leaves us with the third possibility of combining GO and TAKE and overtly adding COME*, an alternative that is not exhibited by any language in the sample either. An explanation for this would obviously be a binary event structure, an issue that will be taken in Section 3.

The most transparent encodings are those which explicitly depict every subevent, each represented by a lexical element which is chunked with the other elements on the surface level. Such realizations are exhibited by serializing languages in the sample (though not every serializing language encodes FETCH...
transparency, cf. Dagiare). Example languages are Hmong, Kala, Korean and Yoruba (cf. Korean *na-so be-che o- go-and take/hold come). Note that in all languages except for Yoruba HOLD is also part of the TAKE reading, a fact that makes these languages indeed highly transparent with respect to their encoding of prototypical FETCH. Another fact that should be recorded is that the chunking in these cases is never one in terms of word formation (that is, compounding or derivation), but one that reaches into the domain of syntax, representing FETCH in plural expressions.

Chinese is another language that expresses the event concept FETCH with verbalized verbs. As in the other languages, this is done with a realization of the lexeme for GO, TAKE, and COME*.

Examples above - Algerian Arabic (AA) and Tunisian Arabic (TA). The same applies to Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and all codeFETCH in one lexeme: *fihi (AA, TA) or *huwi (MSA), both literally meaning 'bring' and thus entailing TAKE and COME* in the representation. The two most common encodings of FETCH in Japanese (to-te k- take-and come-go and mot-te k- hold/carry-and come-go) also exhibit this pattern.

In the sample there is no language in which the TAKE subevent is left implicit, while GO and COME* are realized. Thus, TAKE appears to be the central subevent which has to be part of the realization in one way or another. Moreover, it is not the case that only one of the subevents is realized and the other two are overshadowed (but still conceptualized); the highlighting of only one subevent seems to suffice to represent the whole complex event concept and to distinguish it from the subevent itself.

There are languages which encode further information in the representations of FETCH. One example in the sample (besides Chinese, see above) is Kusam, which obtains a distinction by including the manner of the motion. If the motion is characterized as 'walking', *pa-rasti is the right choice for expressing FETCH, if it can, opposed to that, be described as 'no walking', *parasti has been used. Note that the imperfective counterparts of the here mentioned perfective verbs are *nesti 'carry' (entailing HOLD) and *vesti 'bring' (while e.g. going by car), which thus already show the semantic limitation that is present in

\[ \text{Spanish (ir a coger [go to take]), Italian andare a prendere [go to take], and Wolof } \text{fli-lake-i, where } -\text{i is a verbal suffix indicating a direction away from the speaker (implying 'go to do in the sense of moving somewhere to do sth. there). Note that } \text{Wolof is the first example language into which word formation comes in, in that GO is explicitly represented by a verbal suffix on the surface level, this way still being represented as such and not as a subevent of a joined realization of GO and TAKE.} \]

Examples for representations that overshadow GO are - as has been mentioned above - Algerian Arabic (AA) and Tunisian Arabic (TA).
the perfectives as well. As we are focusing on the prototypical case of FETCH, this restricts us to *prinstit*, which exhibits the entailment of HOLD. This is similar to the cases of some verb semantic languages we have seen above.

Up to now all examples of the cross-linguistic encoding of FETCH can be subsumed under the following: each representational element reflects either a single subevent of the whole event concept or a conceptual chunk of these subevents (entailing two or three subevents). The representational elements can be considered iconic, in that the encoding of a subevent is in nearly all cases the lexeme the particular language supplies for encoding the subevent itself (apart from the suffix -used for GO in Wolof and, if applicable, the prefix br- in Russian, also used for GO). And the encoding of chunks uses the representational elements that correspond to the single representation of the chunk itself (i.e. the chunk TAKE-COME is represented by the corresponding representation for *bring*). If not all subevents are overtly encoded, the remaining ones are still semantically represented.

There are exceptions to this quite general rule: French aller chercher (go look for), Portuguese ir buscar (go look for), Spanish *ir a buscar* (go to look for), and Tunisian Arabic *barni laawal* (go look for). All these languages are either descendants of Latin (i.e., French, Portuguese, and Spanish) or have been involved in deep contact with French (Tunisian Arabic). Note that the Spanish encoding is considered marked by native speakers - it can only be applied if the object that represents the undergoer is marked indefinite or if the undergoer actually got lost before. This implies that there really has to be a kind of 'looking for the undergoer' (which is either unknown to the actor or has to be found again). Spanish *ir a buscar* thus leaves us with a further semantic specification, a fact that explains why it is not regarded as the general encoding of the prototypical FETCH event concept, as *in a case* (see above) is. However, in the *go look for*-realizations, there obviously is a representation of the first subevent (as the realizations compare the lexeme for GO), but the other subevents of the FETCH conceptualization that have proven to generally be entailed in representations - TAKE and COME - are missing (though conceptualized). Instead, the representation of another event concept, namely LOOK-FOR, is included in the encoding. Accordingly, native speakers of French and Tunisian Arabic tend to insert this event concept as an additional subevent into the FETCH conceptualization.

Finally, it has to be admitted that there are two languages which can, because of the poverty of the data, not be treated sufficiently in this study. These are Wolof and Omata-Ponca. At first glance Wolof encodes FETCH compactly in one lexeme, *purpunta*, transcribed as 'go and fetch' by Hudson (1978: 107). But as Wolof verbs - except for about 35 simple stems - to which *purpunta* does not belong - consist of two constituent elements, namely a specifier and a semantic core element (cf. Hudson 1978, Schalley 2003), there probably is some transparency in the encoding. It could be hypothesized that *yanin(la)*gor is the core element of *purpunta* (though it cannot be proved with the available material, this is a sensible hypothesis, taking into account phonological progressive change that is common in Wolof). Omata-Ponca *a-gi MV ton(to)-come home come back motion verbal in includes a 'fetchive' element according to the informant. Whatever this 'fetchive' element may conceptually include, it is followed by a representation of the COME subevent -gi and then a verb of motion (abbreviated MV) which might be 'walk' or 'go', e.g. We will refrain from carrying further the discussion of the two languages. This covers in particular the question, whether the 'fetchive' element in Omata-Ponca could include the GO and TAKE subevents, whether it only entails TAKE - with GO being expressed by the motion verb - or whether none of these hypotheses applies, because there is no material to provide any support for any statement.

Overviewing the collected data, it should be noted that the encoding of FETCH is not dependent on the language families or areal distribution of the languages. There are, of course, languages in which geographic proximity, language contact, or membership in the same language family explain similar encodings, but we also find counterexamples in the sample. To illustrate this,
take into account that Estonian does not use a single lexeme for the representation of FETCH as Hungarian does, neither does Dагарте – as a verb realizing language realizes FETCH via verbal verbs as Youku does. British and American/Australian English differ in their encoding of FETCH, as Romanian and the other Romance languages do. On the other hand, the same strategy of encoding is applied throughout the world and language families. For example, recall that a compact representation of FETCH can be found in British English, Croatian, Dагарте, Hungarian, Romanian, and in Spanish treser; whereas a combination of the representation of GO with the one of TAKE-COME* can be found in American and Australian English, Classical Chinese, Estonian, Arabic, Thai, and Turkish. Moreover, note that in some languages encodings with different degrees of transparency exist in parallel (cf. Spanish and eventually Croatian).

4. CONCEPTUALIZATION AND CHUNKING

What proves to be universal in the data collected for this study is the conceptualization of FETCH. Though some languages only highlight two of the three subevents of FETCH (and leave one subevent implicit in the concept's representation), native speakers agree that FETCH includes all three subevents GO, TAKE, and COME*. Many informants mentioned that GO and/or COME* are minor subevents and that TAKE is the prominent subevent. This intuition is reflected by the cross-linguistic data in that the representation of TAKE is the central element in the event concept, because it gives the purpose of the movements – is never missing in the encoding of FETCH.

Furthermore, if there is some transparency, the encoding seems to be iconic in most cases – regarding the realization of single subevents as well as their sequential ordering. Some languages, though, like French and Tunisian Arabic, exhibit in their realization the encoding of another subevent, namely LOOK-FOR. Although it was not possible to give a concise explanation, there is some evidence that can at least lead to a sensible hypothesis. First of all, because Tunisian Arabic offers different alternatives for encoding FETCH (as Spanish does), it seems to be not too far-fetched to assume that the FTA encoding bara nwej (go look for) is similar to the Spanish ir a buscar and this includes the meaning of 'looking for'. In this particular encoding. The intuition that LOOK-FOR can furthermore, but need not, be part of the alternative realization bara jib (go bring), might a reflex of the influence that the French language has had (and still has) in Tunisia. This leaves us, secondly, with a consideration of the French data. Chercher does not only have the meaning of 'look for, search', but also of 'get hold of, which hints towards the TAKE subevent. It could thus be hypothesized that originally the event conceptualization was GO-TAKE-COME* as well, with GO and TAKE being highlighted in the representation (as in other Romance languages such as Italian). As the look-for-reading of chercher became more and more prominent (and chercher replaced quérir / looke.FOR (cf. Bloch / Warburg 1968: 525), which nowadays is only used in the infinitive), speakers might have started to include the LOOK-FOR subevent in the conceptualization, because before one can take something one has to 'find' it in the sense of finding its position (and possibly identifying it). This might also entail LOOK.FOR as a subevent preceding FIND. But surprisingly, FIND is not mentioned by native speakers as a subevent of FETCH, such that it can be concluded that FIND is nonexistent in the conceptualization. Also, speakers are not sure about the prominence of LOOK-FOR, though all agree that GO, TAKE, and COME* are definite subevents. Therefore, it is possible that some informants might have been misled by the surface realization of FETCH when asked about their intuitions about its conceptualization, and that LOOK.FOR does not constitute a peer subevent in FETCH.

Summing up the results in Section 3, we can conclude that all three types of chunking that were discussed in Section 2 can be found in the data. These are languages that encode FETCH compactly, chunking the subevents on the conceptual level and then realizing the chunk in one lexeme (e.g. British English fetch, Croatian dohvatiti). The mixed chunking strategy is applied as well, that is, the TAKE and COME* subevents are conceptually chunked, the chunk being represented by a lexeme and then combined with the lexeme for GO that is preceding (e.g. Estonian, Turkish). Finally, languages that exclusively use chunking on the surface level are e.g. Fijian and Korean, as they combine the lexical representations of the single subevents and thus encode FETCH transparently.

13 Note that there is no example where GO and TAKE are conceptually chunked, with the surface realization of the chunk being followed by the encoding of COME*. Even Wolof (that overall follows COME*) differentiates the representation of GO and TAKE in representing the central semantic element TAKE by a simplex, whereas GO is realized by a verb suffix attached to the simplex (note also that Wolof is the only example in which the conceptual ordering of the subevents is not reflected by the sequential ordering of the encodings of the subevents).
5. The Event Structure of FETCH

In the discussion of the types of chunking we left aside the fact that
languages highlight and overshadow subevents of the overall complex event
concept. That is, in the case of FETCH, not all subevents are represented on
the surface level but one subevent (namely GO or COME*) is left implicit in
the encoding of FETCH in several languages (e.g., Chinese, Modern Standard
Arabic). There is no general method on the basis of which we would be enabled to
subsume these encodings under one of the three types discussed in Section 2. It
cannot generally be decided whether a 'go take' encoding misses to encode a
third peer subevent, or whether in such an encoding the TAKE-COME chunk of
an hierarchical, binary event structure is expressed by 'take' alone, thus leaving
out an encoding of COME*, i.e., whether the encoding is the outcome of plain
textual chunking or of mixed chunking. This includes the question whether a
binary event structure is to be assumed - as Putievsky does16 - or whether all
three subevents have to be considered peers. As the data in the sample gives no
example for a conceptual chunking of GO and TAKE (with or without separately
realizing COME*), but entails examples of the conceptual chunking of 'TAKE and
COME*' into 'bring' (e.g., Amharic, Estonian), it can be supposed that a hierarchical
event structure, expressible by a binary tree, exists in the case of FETCH. Also,
a native speaker of Italian confirmed that the TAKE and COME* subevents build a
unity and thus conceptual chunk within FETCH (though Italian is one of the
languages which transparently encode GO and TAKE and leave COME* implicit).
This supports the assumption of a binary internal event structure. Further support
can be found in the fact that in verb serializing languages intervening material is
included between the GO and the TAKE-COME* realization, cf. the an-
connective in Korean and the following Kalam example, where another phrase is
 intervening in the FETCH serialization:

(1) W９i 8P 9Q 9R 9S 9T 9U 9V 9W 9X 9Y 9Z
man who go wood hit-break get/hold come-put-SGB-PAST.
'The man fetched same firewood.' (Pawley 1993:95.)

This indicates that the bond between the subevents TAKE and COME* is
much stronger than the one between GO and TAKE, such that the FETCH serial
verb construction (SVC) in Kalam might be understood as a multi-phrase SVC,
being construeted of two phrasal constituents, namely 'go' and 'bring'17. Moreover,
languages that encode FETCH compactly often supply a lexeme for TAKE-COME* as
well, cf. British English: fetch and bring, or German bieten (fetch) and bringen
(bring). Thus, it seems to be justified to describe the event structure for the complex
event concept FETCH as follows, (i.e; e21 → e21 (e22 e23)) → (GO (TAKE COME*)).

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we discussed data concerning the cross-linguistic encoding of
the complex event concept FETCH. The respective realizations were compared,
focusing on their differences concerning conceptual and lexical chunking. The
question of the universality of the conceptualization of FETCH was answered
positively. Moreover, it turned out that the different encodings can be considered
iconic in the ordering and representation of the subevents of FETCH, though not
tall subevents have to be represented on the surface level. Different languages tend
to highlight or overshadow particular subevents; overshadowed and thus implicit
subevents are nevertheless conceptualized by native speakers. Finally, we
analyzed the event structure of FETCH, finding strong evidence for the assumption
of a binary tree structure for event structures - at least in the case of FETCH.

7. Appendix: Cross-linguistic Encoding of FETCH: The Data

Languages are ordered alphabetically. The language family is given in
brackets. The particular realization - or, if there are several, the alternatives - of
FETCH are listed, together with the conceptualization in terms of conceptual
chunking in square brackets (represented by naming the components which are
separated by dashes if part of the same realizing element), as far as information
of native speakers was available. Parenthetical elements in round brackets
indicate that the element might, but need not be present. If possible, the
realization is embedded within an example sentence.

16 Following Putievsky, a complex event type e, in the event structure denoted as e1 → e2, is
interpreted as an event with two subevents, where the first is temporally preceding the second.
(Putievsky 1993:56, for a discussion of the 'generated event structure', representing
the relation between an event and its proper subevents, see Putievsky 1993:62) As the
subevents of an event need not to be passive themselves, Putievsky introduces a binary tree
structure to represent events. (Fenny/ Putievsky 2000:11; Putievsky 2000:455)

American English
(Indo-European (Germanic))
1. go (and)fetch IGO GO-TAKE-COME*1
   (cf. Go fetch me a beer from the fridge, please.)
2. go (and) get IGO GO-TAKE-COME*1
   (cf. I'll go and get it and Go get the book on the top shelf, please.)
(fetch includes all three subcomponents, but in most cases an overt expression of
GO is included. fetch alone is judged as stylistically marked, regarded as arcane
and refined (except for addressing dogs or in some dialectal usage).)

• Australian English
   see American English

• Algerian Arabic
   (Afro-Asiatic (-Semitic))
   (rauH)b3ib
   (go) bring
   'fetch'

• British English
   (Indo-European (Germanic))
   Fetch me that book.
   He fetched his children from the nursery. IGO-TAKE-COME*1

• Chinese
   (Sino-Tibetan (Chinese))
   1. qu3 qu1
      go, there take, come
      'fetch' (classical Chinese) IGO TAKE-COME*1
   2. qu4 na2 (lai2)
      go, there take (come)
      'fetch (to where the speaker is)' IGO TAKE-COME*1
   3. qu4 na2 (bui2)
      go, there take (come, back)
      'fetch (not to the speaker's location)' IGO TAKE-COME*1
      (This alternative is used when the speaker's location is not the goal
      location of the fetching, cf.

• Croatian
   (Indo-European (Slavic))
   dobrovati 'fetch' IGO-TAKE-COME*1
   (Also compare
   1. Idi mi donesi
      go, me bring
      'Go and bring me'
      and
   2. Idi mi dobrovati
      go, me fetch
      'Go and fetch me',
      with native speakers finding 1. intuitively more correct than 2.)

• Dagaare
   (Niger-Congo (Gur, Oti-Volta))
   O 6ong la koo.
   3SG fetch FOC water
   S/he has fetched water.'

• Dutch
   (Indo-European (Germanic))
   balen 'fetch'
   (balen is very often supported by gaan 'go':
   Ik zal het gaan balen.
   I will it go get/fetch
   'I will go and get it.'

• Estonian
   (Uralic)
   Ilona täke tõi mõned raamatud.
   NAME went brought some books.
   'Ilona fetched some books.' IGO TAKE-COME*1
- **French**
  (Indo-European (Romance))
  aller chercher
  go look for
  'fetch' [IGO (LOOK.FOR)] TAKE.COME*1

- **German**
  (Indo-European (Germanic))
  Olaf boote Bücher
  NAME fetched books
  'Olaf fetched books.' [IGO-TAKE-COME*1]
  (Fthen can be supported by gehen 'go' (though this is not as common as
  in Dutch):
  lcb gebe es bóten.
  I go it get/fetch
  'I (will) go and get it'.)

- **Hmong**
  (Miao-Yao)
  mus nga ib kbob dag row los
  go take-hold one cup water go-come.back come.back
  'fetch a cup of water'

- **Hungarian**
  (Uralic)
  Olaf boxzót könyveket.
  NAME fetched books
  'Olaf fetched books.' [IGO-TAKE-COME*1]

- **Italian**
  (Indo-European (Romance))
  andare a prendere
  go to take
  'fetch' [IGO-TAKE-COME*1]

- **Japanese**
  (Isolate)
  1. bon(w)o mot-te k-uru
     book take-and come-will
     'fetch the book' [IGO TAKE COME*1]
  2. bon(w)o mot-te k-uru
     book hold/carry-and come-will
     'bring/fetch the book' [IGO TAKE COME*1]
  3. bon(w)o tori-1-mi iti
     book take-to go-will
     'go to get/go fetch the book' (with the intent to return but no actual return
     at the uttering time)

- **Kalam**
  (Papuan (Trans New Guinea Phylum))
  am a ap-
  go get/hold come
  'fetch' (Pawley 1993: 97)
  (Also compare
  B abl am mon p-wk a ap ayak.
  man that go wood hit-break get/hold come put
  'The man fetched some firewood.' (Pawley 1993: 95.))

- **Korean**
  (Isolate)
  ka-s kacye o-
  go-and take/hold come
  'fetch' [IGO TAKE COME*1]

- **Modern Standard Arabic**
  (Afro-Asiatic (Semitic))
  ?aat
  bring(-back)
  'fetch' [IGO TAKE-COME*1]
- **Omaha-Ponca**
(Siouk (Dhegiha))

  \( \alpha \)-2i
  on(to)-come.home/come.back MOTION.VERB
  'fetch'

  \( \alpha \)- is a locative prefix, here used as a comitative/"fetchitive". MV stands for a motion verb, and may be, e.g., \( ma\text{\textbar}lli\text{\textbar}Ni 'walk', \text{\textbar}lbi 'go' (motion farther), etc. The translation is usually 'go (etc.) for something'.

- **Portuguese**
(Indo-European (Romance))

  1. **ir** buscar
     go look for
     'fetch'

  2. **regatar** (exclusively in Brazilian Portuguese)
     ransom
     'Fetch' (informal-colloquial but widespread, understood by the urban populations).

     \( \text{regatar} \) is a form of approximately ten years currency. There is a further semantic restriction, as it is normally not applied to a person or object not previously present at the place of speaking (or writing.).

     (cf. the following examples:

     \( \text{Eu vou buscar o meu agasalho do bengaleiro}. \)
     \( \text{I go look for the your outer clothes from the cloakroom} \)
     'I will fetch your clothes from the cloakroom.'

     \( \text{vou regatar} \)
     \( \text{I go ransom} \)
     'I will fetch'

     \( \text{Tenho regatamento ao carro caiu bem}. \)
     \( \text{your act-of-fetching at-the car fell well} \)
     'You fetched the car at exactly the right moment.'

     (The use of an abstract noun is judged as regular usage.).


- **Romanian**
(Indo-European (Romance))

  ada=ce
  fetch
  'Fetch' IGO-TAKE-COME*1

- **Russian**
(Indo-European (Slavic))

  1. **prinost**
     fetch, bring
     'fetch/bring' (with movement characterized as 'walking') IGO-TAKE-COME*1

  2. **prinost**
     fetch, going/bring, going
     'fetch/bring' (with movement characterized as 'no walking' (e.g., going by vehicle)) IGO-TAKE-COME*1

     (cf. Ia prinost podarki.
     I fetched, walking presents
     'I fetched presents (walking).'

     Ia prinost podarki.
     1 fetched, going presents
     'I fetched presents (going by vehicle etc.).'


- **Spanish**
(Indo-European (Romance))

  1. **ir a** coger
     go to take
     'fetch' IGO-TAKE-COME*1

  2. **ir a** coger
     bring
     'fetch' IGO-TAKE-COME*1

  3. **ir a** buscar
     go to look for
     'Fetch' (marked construction, only possible if the object has an indefinite article; cf. voy a buscar un médico. (I fetch a doctor.) vs.
     voy a buscar el periódico. (I fetch the newspaper.).


• Thai
(Tai)
1. *pat lea nam-mab*
   
go and bring
   
   ’fetch’
2. *pat ow*
   
go get
   
   ’fetch’

(Cf. *nām* ’lead’; direct, and *mab* ’come’ (Manich Jumsai 1977: 296, 447). For
’bring’ Manich Jumsai also gives *au mab*, where *au* means ’take’, and for ’pick up,
collect, fetch’ *pat au mab* (literally ’go take come’). (Manich Jumsai 1977: 805f.))

• Tunisian Arabic
(Afro-Asiatic (Semitic))
1. *jīb*
   
   bring
   
   ’bring/’fetch’ [GO (LOOK.FOR)] TAKE-COME]
2. *barrā jīb*
   
   go
   
   ’fetch’ [GO (LOOK.FOR)] TAKE-COME]
3. *barrā lauwaṭj*
   
   go
   
   ’fetch’ [GO (LOOK.FOR)] TAKE-COME]
4. *lauwaṭj*
   
   search
   
   ’bring/’fetch’ [GO (LOOK.FOR)] TAKE-COME]

• Turkish
(Altai (Turkic))
1. *gidip getirmek*
   
   go bring-back
   
   ’fetch’ [GO TAKE-COME]

• Walmajarri
(Australian (Pama-Nyungan))
1. *purpanta*
   
   go and fetch’ (Hudson 1978: 107)

(Walmajarri verbs - except for about 35 simple stems - consist of two
constituting elements, a specifier and a core element (with the core element being
a member of the union of the set of simple stems with the set of four bound
markers). Unfortunately, neither the specifier nor the core element can be
reconstructed for sure in this case. But as the set of possible core elements is
manageable, we might suggest a reasonable core element of purpanta, which
would be *yān* (a) ’go’.)

• Wolof
(Niger-Congo (Adamawa-Ubangi))
   
   jīl-
   
   take →
   
   ’fetch’
   
   (-ī is a verbal suffix indicating direction away from the speaker, according
to Gamble it implies ’go to do’ (Gamble 1991: 47) in the sense of moving
somewhere to do something there.)

• Yoruba
(Niger-Congo (Benue-Congo))
   
   ọ to si jīl-wè mì wè wà sì tè wà jīl mt.
   
   he go to school take book come to house come give me
   
   ’He fetched me home a book from school.’
   
   (The informant suspects that the second *wè* has to do with event structure,
making ’give me’ a separate subevent from the complex ’take book come to house’.)

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY


THE INTERRELATION OF TIME SCALES
IN A DESCRIPTION OF LANGUAGE

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to look at the linguistic symbolic system as a part of a broader, dynamical system. It is claimed that grasping conceptually the number and complexity of dynamical forces shaping and shaped by symbols of natural language requires taking into account several time scales, and specifying: 1) what kinds of changes occur at each time scale, 2) what is the interrelation between the events happening on different time scales. In the immense task of ordering such complexity we turn for help to a theoretical framework developed to account for the information in biological systems (by Howard Pattee) and to the theoretical concepts and experimental methods used in the analysis of complex dynamical systems.

INTRODUCTION

In many traditional linguistic theories language was considered to be a static system of symbols, and the phenomena of interest were “synchronic” (i.e., concerning relations among elements of a system at a given time) rather than “diachronic” (i.e., concerning the changes of the system and its elements in time). This legacy of structuralism in linguistics had consequences also for psycholinguistic theories, which despite attacks on structuralism retained the focus on forms (not meanings) and timeless rules in linguistic explanation (see e.g., Chomsky, 1955). Such a state of affairs, i.e., concentrating efforts on structural descriptions of language, resulted in neglecting the semantic and pragmatic aspects of it and the diachronic changes they undergo. It seems that theorists close