THE *GO-AND-VERB* CONSTRUCTION IN A CROSS-LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE: IMAGE-SCHEMA BLENDING AND THE CONSTRUAL OF EVENTS[*]

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1. INTRODUCTION.

This paper investigates a construction in English (and in some other languages, including the Scandinavian and the Ibero-Romance languages), which I will refer to as the *go-and-Verb* construction. Examples from English are *Look what you've GONE AND DONE!* or *Nobody believed she would climb Everest, but she WENT AND DID it.*

Most of the literature on this construction (referred to as 'pseudo-coordination' (e.g. Joseffson 1991), 'fake coordination' (e.g. Carden and Pesetzky 1979), or 'hendiadys' (e.g. Poutsma 1928)) deals almost exclusively with its formal properties. In contrast, my paper focuses on its semantics. Section 2 discusses the major uses of this construction in English and compares them to those in other languages. It will become clear that the semantics of the construction seem quite disparate at first glance: even in the two examples given above it is used to express such seemingly unrelated notions as 'disapproval' and 'unexpectedness.'

I then show that it is possible to offer a unified account of those differing uses. Section 3 argues that all uses of the *go-and-Verb* construction are motivated by a combination of the image schematic properties of the verb *go* and the more richly specified semantics of whichever second verb occurs in a particular expression. Section 4 discusses the precise nature of this mechanism: the image-schematic properties evoked by *go* are blended (or 'fused') with the event structure of the second verb to allow the speaker to construe the event denoted by the second verb in accordance with the image-schematic meaning of *go* (cf. Ekberg 1993 for a similar approach).

2. THE DATA.

In this section I will present and discuss the data, but before I do so, some terminological issues must be clarified.

First, the construction discussed in this paper is referred to as the '*go-and-Verb* construction,' regardless of the language under discussion at any particular point. This is not meant to suggest that we are dealing with one and the same construction across different languages (I will return to this point). Likewise, verbs corresponding to English

go are referred to as 'go.' When I refer to a verb from a specific language, this is indicated.

Second, the other verb in the *go-and-Verb* construction is referred to as the *main verb.* This term reflects the intuitive notion that the second verb in this construction carries most of the semantics, while *go* functions somewhat like an auxiliary; however, I will not argue this latter point, so the term 'main verb' may simply be regarded as a useful label.

The syntactic properties of the *go-and-Verb* construction will not be discussed in any detail in this paper, but there are two facts that will be relevant later. First, there is the fact that the construction involves two verbs which are coordinated by *and* (rather than by simple juxtaposition, as in *Go jump in a lake*). Second, syntactic evidence indicates that the two verbs are not simply coordinated, but that they form a single syntactic unit. For example, as first pointed out in Ross (1986 [1967]) the construction allows a violation of what generative grammarians have called the 'island constraint' (or more recently, 'subjacency'). For example, it is possible to say *Who shall we go and see on Sunday*, where the wh-pronoun has been 'moved out' of the coordinate structure *go and see who*, indicating the unitary syntactic status of *go and see*.

Let us now turn to the semantics of the construction. Consider examples (1) through (4), which show some typical examples from English:[1]

(1)   a.   Look what you've gone and done!
        b.   He's gone and lost his job.
        c.   It was going to be a surprise, but he went and told her.
(2)   Nobody thought he could climb Everest, but he went and did it!
(3)   We asked him not to call the police, but he went (ahead) and did it anyway.
(4)   a.   I think we should all go and see Valerie on Sunday.
        b.   I'll go and get the rest of your stuff.

These examples show that the *go-and-Verb* construction occurs in a variety of uses: in examples (1a-c) it seems to express 'annoyance on the part of the speaker,' an implication that the action described by the main verb is 'stupid' or 'undesirable;' in example (2) it expresses a certain degree of 'surprise;' in example (3) it conveys something like 'proceeding without hesitation' or 'without regard to others;' in examples (4a-c) it expresses 'actual motion.'

Note also that in example (3) there is an optional particle, *ahead*. I will briefly return to the place of such particles in the overall account developed in this paper at the end of Section 4.

The wide range of uses associated with the *go-and-Verb* construction has prompted most authors who mention its meaning at all to react in one or both of the following ways: they either concentrate on the uses where *go* is used literally, or they treat the different uses as unrelated idiomatic expressions, usually mentioning only one of the uses

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[1] All examples in this paper are constructed. For English, I have based them on an analysis of some 200 examples from the *OED* and various corpora (I have chosen to use constructed examples rather than the original data for expository ease; cf. Stefanowitsch 2000 for an analysis of English corpus data). For the other languages, I work with what my consultants (and in some cases, the relevant literature) have provided.

(for example, most dictionaries mention only examples like those in [1]), or claiming that *go* has lost most of its meaning in such expressions (e.g. Visser 1969).[2]

However, both approaches fail to account for a fact which has largely gone unnoticed, namely that motion verbs like *go* in general, and the *go-and-Verb* construction in particular,exhibit some cross-linguistic semantic regularities that are rather surprising if one assumes that *go* either means 'go' or nothing at all.

First, *go* and other basic motion verbs are used in many verb serializing languages in order to impose a motion profile onto an otherwise stative verb, or to give other motion verbs a deictic orientation, with *go* typically expressing motion through space in general or away from the speaker in particular (cf. Sebba 1987), as in the following example from Akan:

(5)   oguaN   kçç   ahabaN   mu
       he-flee-Past   go-Past   bush   in
       'he fled into the bush' (Sebba 1987)

In such constructions, then, the motion verb adds an aspect of motion or deixis to the overall meaning of the expression. Note that this is exactly the function of *go* in examples 4a-b above: neither *see* nor *get* have an inherent motion component to their meaning. In both examples, *go* imparts a motion reading onto an otherwise stative verb (or at least one not associated with motion through space). Both situations can alternatively be described with verbs that *do* have such an inherent motion component: *go and see* means roughly the same as *visit*, and *go and get* means roughly the same as *fetch*.

Second, *go* and related verbs often serve as a source for tense and aspect morphology in grammaticization processes. Bybee et al. (1994) have shown that *go* develop into markers for progressive, continuative, or habitual aspect (as well as future tense, and sometimes perfective aspect); such aspectual notions are also encoded by the *go-and-V* construction across languages (see section 4 below, cf. also Stefanowitsch 2000).

Third, other languages have structurally parallel constructions which have some of the same semantics associated with them as the English examples in (1) through (4) above (again, by assuming that *go* contributes nothing to the *go-and-Verb* construction, this cross-linguistic pattern remains unaccounted for).

Consider the following examples from Swedish:

(6)   a.   *Han*   *har*   *gått*   *och*   *gift*   *sig.*
             he   has   gone   and   married   Refl.
             'He went and got married.' (Joseffson 1991)

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[2] The semantics of the *go-and-Verb construction* is mentioned or referred to in passing in Carden and Pesetzky (1979), Kruisinga and Erades (1947), Poutsma (1928), Shopen (1971), Visser (1969), Lakoff (1986), Quirk et al. (1991), Zandvoort (1966); for Swedish see Joseffson (1991), cf. also Hulden (1961), Wellander (1965); for Spanish see Arnaiz and Camacho (1999).

	b.	*Och*	*så*	*går*	*han*	*och*	*berättar*		*det*
		and	so	goes	he	and	tells		it
		för	*sin*	*fru!*					
		to	his	wife					

'And then he goes and tells it to his wife.' (Joseffson 1991)

	c.	*något*	*jag*	*har*	*gått*	*och*	*tänkt*	*mycket*	*på*
		sth.	I	have	gone	and	thought	much	about

'something I have been thinking about a lot'

The meanings commonly associated with this construction are 'surprise' and/or 'disapproval' in (6a-b), two meanings also found for the English construction. Example (6c) shows a use of the construction which is not found in English: 'activity for an extended period of time,' corresponding functionally to the progressive in English.

Structurally and semantically parallel examples can be found in Danish (unless otherwise indicated, all non-English examples are from the consultants mentioned in the acknowledgment note):4

(7)	a.	*Lad*	*os*	*gå*	*hen*	*og*	*danse*	*i aften.*
		let	us	go	there	and	dance	tonight

'Let's go and dance tonight.'

	b.	*Han*	*var*	*gået*	*hen*	*og*	*havde*	*gifted*
		He	had	gone	there	and	had	married
		sig.						
		Refl						

'He went and got married.'

(8)		Jeg	*går*	*(rundt)*		*og*	*tænker*	*på*	*den*
		I	go	(around)		and	think	about	that
		eksamen		*hele*	*tiden.*				
		exam		all	the-time				

'I am thinking about that exam all the time.'

Again, the construction is used to express 'actual motion' in (7a), 'surprise' and/or 'disapproval' in (7b), and 'continuous action' in (8). Notice that there is an obligatory particle *hen* 'there, over' in the construction expressing the first two meanings, and an optional particle *rundt* 'around' in the construction expressing the third meaning. I will return to the importance of these particles in Section 4.

Next, consider the following example from Spanish (Arnaiz and Camacho 1999):

(9)		*Y*	*entonces,*	*el*	*niño*	*va*	*y*	*se*	*cae.*
		and	then	the	boy	goes	and	Refl	falls

'And then, the boy (suddenly/unexpectedly) falls.'

The meaning commonly associated with this construction is a 'sudden change in the expected flow of events' (e.g. in a narrative), i.e. 'unexpectedness' or 'surprise.'

Finally, consider these examples from Modern Hebrew:

(10)   a.   *Kulam*   *paxadu*   *liftoax*   *et*

everyone   was-afraid   to-open   DO

ha-kufsa,   *aval*   *Dan*   *halax*   *ve*   *asa*   *et*

the-box   but   Dan   went   and   did   DO

ze

it

'Everyone was afraid to open the box, but Dan just did it.'

          b.   *Dan*   *halax*   *ve*   *kana*   *lo*   *etmol*   *shaon*

Dan   went   and   bought   him   yesterday   watch

xadash.

new

'Dan went and bought himself a new watch yesterday.'

The meanings commonly associated with this construction are the idea of a 'daring act', of 'no attention paid to obstacles,' as in example (10a); in addition, it can express 'surprise,' i.e. (10b) would be used in a situation where the act of buying a watch is for some reason unexpected.

In sum, *go* is being put to many different uses across languages.[3] However, these uses repeat themselves across languages: *go*, and more specifically the *go-and-Verb* construction, have certain cross-linguistically recurring uses, which include expressing:

- actual motion through space;
- annoyance, disappointment, disapproval;
- evaluation of an action as stupid or unfortunate;
- surprise, sudden change in the expected flow of a narrative;
- proceeding without hesitation or regard to others, paying no attention to obstacles;
- continuous action, progressive/habitual aspect.

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this cross-linguistic recurrence of certain meanings: first, and most importantly, *go* is not being used in arbitrary ways. Instead, there seems to be an underlying systematicity to the semantics associated across languages with constructions containing a general motion verb in conjunction with another verb. Second, this systematicity must in some way be related to the meaning of the verb *go*.

We are confronted with the issue of how to characterize the semantics of such general motion verbs in a way that allows insights into the current problem. After all, we are

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[3] The survey given here is far from complete. Constructions which are structurally parallel or closely parallel to the *go-and-Verb* construction can be found, for example, in Portuguese, Greek, Finnish, and Japanese. A thorough investigation of the functions of motion verbs in verb-serializing languages also seems promising: for example, in Supyire, *sa* 'go' can mark the beginning of a new action after some action which has gone on for some time, cf. Carlson (1994: 305).

dealing with different words from different languages. Specifically, we have to find a way of capturing the semantics of verbs like *go* language-independently. I believe that this can be done in terms of *image schemas* (in the sense of Johnson 1987).

3. THE IMAGE-SCHEMATIC STRUCTURE OF MOTION VERBS.

Image schemas are defined as general patterns which we abstract over recurrent experiences, they 'emerge as meaningful structures for us chiefly at the level of our bodily movements through space, our manipulation of objects, and our perceptual interactions' (Johnson 1987: 29). Such schemas are non-linguistic, involve all sensory modalities, and there is evidence that they are acquired during the first year of life, i.e. before language acquisition proper sets in (cf. Mandler 1992).

An example for such a schema is given in Figure 1: the *motion schema.* In its most basic form the motion schema specifies a trajector moving along a path which functions as its landmark. A child acquires this schema by extracting commonalities over many instances of the experience of moving (or being moved) through space and of watching things move through space.
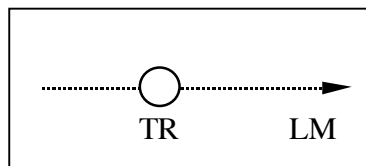

FIGURE 1. THE MOTION SCHEMA.

Their non-linguistic nature as well as the fact that they are grounded in basic experience not specific to a particular culture make image schemas ideal candidates for cross-linguistic semantic descriptions: they are evoked as a central aspect of the meaning of any given word. Note that this does not mean that image schemas can be equated with word meaning; the semantics of any given word will include much more than just image schematic structure. For example, the English verbs *crawl* and *run* both evoke the motion schema, but in addition they invoke, for example, information about speed ('slow' vs. 'fast').

Thus, we can assume that the English verb *go* and its nearest equivalents in other languages—although they may differ in their specific semantics—evoke as part of their meaning the motion schema in Figure 1.

Since motion events may differ from each other in certain fundamental ways, there is a number of more richly specified variants of the basic motion schema which are likely to be shared across cultures. These variants can be seen as schemas of intermediate abstractness, including more information than just the configuration of a trajector moving along a path. Figures 2a-c show what I take to be typical variations of the motion schema.

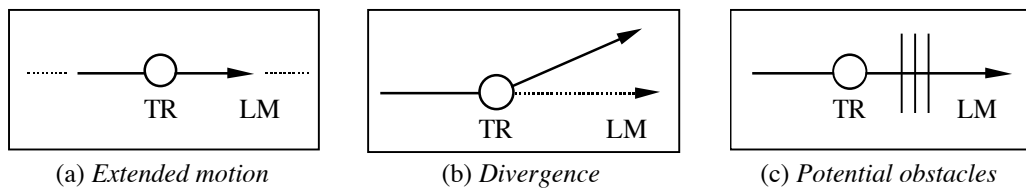(a) *Extended motion*   (b) *Divergence*   (c) *Potential obstacles*

FIGURE 2. VARIANTS OF THE MOTION SCHEMA.

Figure 2a contains additional information about duration: it is a schema of motion over an extended period of time (symbolized by the broken lines on either side of the arrow. Figure 2b shows a situation where the actual path of the trajector (symbolized by the solid arrow) diverges from the expected path (symbolized by the broken arrow). Figure 2c shows a variant of the basic schema which focuses on potential obstacles (symbolized by the vertical lines), which have to be overcome by the trajector.

Image schemas do not just organize basic bodily experience; they can also be extended to structure abstract thinking via conceptual metaphors. In the case of the *go-and-Verb* construction, the basis for extension is the metaphor PROCESSES (or ACTIONS) ARE MOTION, a submetaphor of the very widespread metaphor CHANGE IS MOTION.[4]

The literal and the extended uses of the basic schema in Figure 1 and its variants in Figure 2 can account for the semantic contribution of *go* to the *go-and-Verb* constructions:

- 'actual motion' is the basic meaning of all schemas in Figures 1 and 2;
- meanings like 'continuous action' in the Scandinavian languages and progressive/habitual aspect more generally can be accounted for in terms of a metaphorical extension of the schema in Figure 2a from 'motion over an extended period of time' to 'action over an extended period of time';
- meanings like 'surprise' and 'unexpectedness' result from the same metaphorical extension applied to the schema in Figure 2b. Here, the expected conceptual path corresponds to the expected flow of events (in real life or in a narrative), and the divergence from this path corresponds to an unexpected event;
- meanings like 'annoyance,' 'disappointment,' 'disapproval,' or 'evaluation of an action as stupid' are also accounted for by the schema in Figure 2b, with the difference that the expected conceptual path corresponds to the kinds of actions that the speaker considers desirable or rational, and the divergence from this path corresponds to an event that is not desirable or rational from the speaker's perspective;
- finally, meanings like 'proceeding without hesitation,' 'paying no attention to obstacles' can be accounted for in terms of the same metaphorical extension as before, this time applied to the schema in Figure 2c, where the obstacles correspond to potential reasons not to act in a certain way.

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[4] This metaphor is described in detail in Radden (1996), it is entailed by the metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS, which is exemplified by expressions like *John is IN love*. A simple example for the metaphor CHANGE IS MOTION is *John WENT crazy*, an example for ACTION IS MOTION is *He STOPPED SHORT OF hitting her*, or *I don't agree with this COURSE of action*.

4. IMAGE-SCHEMA BLENDING.

So far I have shown (part of) the image-schematic structure evoked by *go* and its equivalents in other languages, and I have shown how this structure can account for the semantics of the constructions presented in Section 2. I have not yet addressed the issue of how the *go-and-Verb* construction as a whole works, i.e. how the semantics of *go* are combined with that of the main verb. Section 4.1 deals with this issue; Section 4.2 points out further applications of the mechanism proposed.

4.1. The *go-and-Verb* Construction as Image-schema Blending. I propose that the *go-and-Verb* construction fuses the semantics of *go* and the main verb into a single event frame. The *and* in *go and Verb* does not function as a coordinator, but as a semantic instruction to blend (a variant of) the image-schematic structure evoked by *go* with the event structure evoked by the main verb. This integration allows the speaker to construe the event in accordance with the motion schema.

Consider example (2), repeated here as (11):

(11)   Nobody believed he could climb Everest, but he went and did it.

The event encoded by *he climbs Everest* is an instance of the transitive event schema, in which an agent acts on a patient with some result. By blending this schema (or rather, one of its semantically richer manifestations) with the divergence schema (shown in Figure 2b above), the event is construed as a divergence from an expected conceptual path—in this case, an expected course of action which would have involved the agent doing nothing to the patient (i.e. *not climbing Everest*). This analysis is summarized in Figure 3.
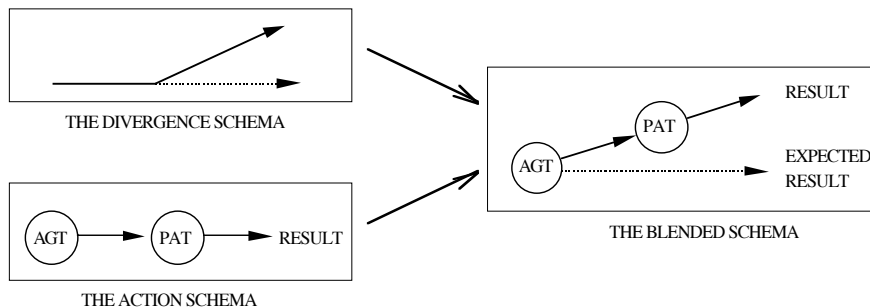

FIGURE 3: BLENDING THE DIVERGENCE SCHEMA AND THE (TRANSITIVE) ACTION SCHEMA.

It is not clear how much this sense of *blending* shares with that developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (cf. Fauconnier 1998 for an overview). In their sense of blending, the blend (more precisely, the blended space) contains a selected subset of elements from each of the sources (the input spaces), as well as additional elements not present in either of the input spaces. In contrast, the sense of the term used here refers to a

complete incorporation of the image-schematic structure of *go* into the more richly specified event frame of the main verb, which is why I also refer to it as *fusion* (cf. Stefanowitsch 2001 for further discussion of this issue).

Evidence for such a complete incorporation of the two schemas comes from the syntactic properties of the construction. Recall that the two conjoined verbs behave syntactically as a single unit. This makes sense: if semantically they *are* a single unit, we would expect this unity to be reflected on the formal side.

The particles which appear in some of the examples can be naturally integrated into this account: their function is to specify a particular variant of the motion schema explicitly. English uses *ahead* to pick out the schema in Figure 3c, thus it occurs in examples that express the fact that someone does something with no regard to potential obstacles (for a more detailed discussion of this and other particles occurring in the English *go-and-Verb* construction, cf. Stefanowitsch 2000). Danish uses *hen* 'there, over' to pick out the schema in Figure 2b, i.e. to express deviation from a conceptual path (i.e. an expected or desirable course of action). Danish can also use *rundt* 'around' to specify the variant of the motion schema that specifies motion for an extended period of time. Intuitively, the particular particles used seem to be well motivated by the corresponding schemas.

Finally, the image-schema blending account is compatible with what is known about the discourse function of the *go-and-Verb* construction. Sanchez (1999) has shown that the *go-and-Verb* construction and the *come-and-Verb* construction are typically found in three discourse contexts: (i) commands, suggestions, and invitations; (ii) introducing a new episode in a narrative; and (iii) returning to the main topic in a narrative after a digression. All of these functions can be related to the divergence schema shown in Figure 2b above: commands, suggestions, and invitations all entail a divergence from the expected flow of events (in Speech Act Theory, it is actually one of the felicity conditions of such speech acts that the hearer was not already planning to do what the speaker suggests he do, cf. Levinson 1983: 240), and a digression or a return to the main topic within a narrative are also divergences from the currently expected flow of events.

4.2. Some Other Applications of Image-schema Blending. The account given in the preceding section has the potential of being applied to many other areas of language than that for which it was developed here. I will mention three areas here, but of course, this is not an exhaustive list.

First, the account can be extended to other *Verb-and-Verb* constructions which can be found in English and other languages, with main verbs such as *sit*, *stand*, *run*, and *try*. For example, let me briefly comment on the *try-and-Verb* construction. According to Quirk et al. (1991: 978), *I'll try and come tomorrow* is 'roughly equivalent to *I'll try to come tomorrow*, but is more informal in style.' However, as Nordquist (1998) has shown, this is not true: *try and* is more likely to be used when the action described by the main verb is unlikely to be completed, whereas *try to* is neutral with respect to this parameter. This makes sense in terms of image-schema blending: the *try-and-Verb* construction blends the semantics of both verbs into a single event schema. The event structure of this event will incorporate the inherent semantics of 'incompletion' provided by *try and* into

the event structure of the main verb. The *try-to-Verb* construction on the other hand does not blend the semantics of the two verbs; it simply encodes two separate events, one of which is the purpose of the other. Thus the event encoded by the main verb does not incorporate the potential incompleteness of *try*.

Second, a blending account also proves insightful for analyzing the English *Adjective-and-Adjective* construction (as in *I'll come when I'm good and ready*, *It's nice and warm in* here, etc.). Young (1999) and Young and Stefanowitsch (2000) have drawn on the mechanism postulated in the preceding section to show that such constructions do not encode two separate qualities (as the co-ordinating conjunction suggests), but that they encode a single quality which is a blend of the two conjuncts. Thus, for example, *It's nice and warm in here* does not mean 'it is both nice and warm in here,' but it means 'it is warm in here and the warmth is nice.'

Finally, the idea of image-schema blending seems to have great potential in the analysis of various aspects of sign language. Sign languages are less restricted than spoken languages in terms of linearization; if image-schema blending is indeed a universal conceptual mechanism, it seems that sign languages are structurally very well suited for exploiting it.

An example may clarify this idea and show that it may indeed be right: in American Sign Language, a whole array of aspectual distinctions is marked by imposing different kinds of motion schemas onto the same basic hand shape encoding a verb or an adjectival predicate (cf. Klima and Bellugi 1979). For example, durational aspect is encoded by 'smooth, circular, reduplicated movement,' and continuative aspect is encoded by 'slow, elongated, continuous reduplications that are elliptical in shape' (ibid.: 294). In other words, ASL does exactly the same thing that Danish is doing when it blends a verb with *gå rundt* 'go around' (as in [9] above). The difference is that ASL can create a perfect blend due to the possibility of simultaneity, while Danish has to indicate this simultaneity with the conjunction *og* 'and'.

5. CONCLUSION.

This paper has offered a unified account of the *go-and-Verb* construction and its meaning across languages. It was argued that all uses of this construction are motivated by the image schematic properties of the verb *go* and whichever second verb occurs in a particular expression. More specifically, the image-schematic properties of *go* are incorporated into (or blended with) the event structure of the second verb to allow the speaker to construe the event denoted by the second verb in accordance with the image-schematic meaning of *go*. The account of the *go-and-Verb* construction in terms of image-schema blending suggests a motivation for the fact that these structurally and semantically similar constructions exist in different languages.

The semantic similarity of these constructions is due to the fact that the conceptual structure proposed here is independent of language; the slight variation in the exact set of

meanings associated with it in any particular language is due to the fact that conceptual structure manifests itself in language-specific ways.

The fact that the constructions are formally similar is due to the fact that every element in the construction is motivated by some aspect of conceptual structure, with the main verb encoding some event structure, *go* encoding some construal in accordance with its image schematic meaning, and a coordinating conjunction encoding the blending of the two (i.e. the incorporation of the image-schematic structure of *go* into the event structure of the main verb).

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