

SLOVENIAN INCEPTIVE PREFIX ZA-: A VP-INTERNAL P

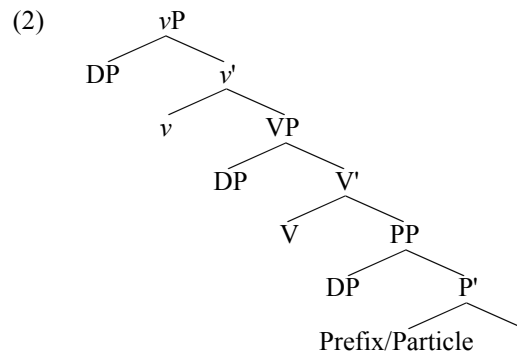
Rok Žaucer
University of Ottawa

This paper discusses Slovenian/Slavic verbs with an inceptive prefix *za-*. Some recent proposals analyze *za-* as external to the *v*P; some parallel it to aspectualizers like *start/begin*, others (perhaps implicitly) to activity predicates in the scope of an inceptive ‘in-x-time’ adverbial or a ‘from-x-time-on’ temporal-boundary adverbial, but both in effect detach *za-* from resultative *v*P-internal prefixes. Going against this view, I argue that neither parallel holds, that *za-* is inside the *v*P, and that it is predicational; I analyze it as a P originating in a typical PP position, low in the *v*P, in parallel to resultative prefixes.

1. Background

The Slovenian prefixed in (1)—or their counterparts in other Slavic languages—are often analyzed with the prefix originating in a resultative PP (e.g. Dimitrova-Vulchanova 1999, Svenonius 2005, Ramchand 2005, cf. Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998). They thus get a structure that is more or less parallel to that of Germanic resultative particle verbs (e.g. Zeller 2001, Ramchand 2003, McIntyre 2004). Ignoring the specifics of the individual proposals, such prefixed/particle verbs are given a structure along the lines of (2). The prefix/particle contributes a result state, leading to the telic interpretation such verbs normally get.

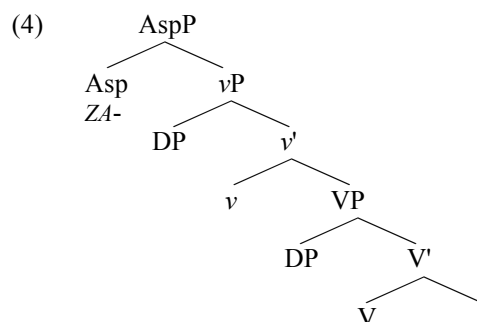
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|-----|----|---|----|---|
| (1) | a. | raz-rezati pomarančo apart-cut orange-ACC ‘cut an orange into pieces’ | b. | iz-kopati kost out-dig bone-ACC ‘dig up a bone’ |
| | c. | za-liti klet behind-pour basement-ACC ‘flood the basement’ | d. | od-laufati away-run ‘run away’ |



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On the other hand, *za*-prefixed verbs with an inceptive meaning, such as the intransitives in (3), are analyzed as crucially different in that the prefix is analyzed as originating outside the sentential-subject-hosting *v*P, and as such outside the lexicalization domain (in the sense of Marantz 1997). Ramchand (2005) places the prefix in the head of a *v*P-embedding (perfective) AspP and Svenonius (2005) puts a *za*-PP in the Spec of a *v*P-embedding (perfective) AspP, saying that such prefixes play an adverbial function. Similar in spirit are Schoorlemmer (1995) and Verkuyl (1999), who see such prefixes as an IP-domain aspectualizer like *begin/start* (cf. also Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998). Again ignoring the specifics of the individual proposals, such inceptive-prefixed verbs get a structure along the lines of (4).

- (3) a. *za-laufati* b. *za-jokati* c. *za-spati*
 behind-run behind-cry behind-sleep
 ‘break into a run’ ‘start to cry’ ‘fall asleep’



There are, however, at least two reasons for hypothesizing that the inceptive-prefixed verbs should get a more similar treatment to that of the verbs in (1). One is perfectivity. For the present purposes, a predicate can be seen as perfective when the event, telic or atelic, is seen as temporally bounded either at one end or at both (Bertinetto 2001, Depraetere 1995). The unprefixed counterparts of the verbs in (1) are atelic, and on the above definition of perfectivity, compatible with both imperfective and perfective readings. When prefixed, they reject the ‘for-*x*-time’ adverbials and accept the ‘in-*x*-time’ ones, they are telic and obligatorily perfective, with the perfectivity resulting from the presence of the prefix-introduced result state (e.g. Brecht 1985, Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998). Similarly, the unprefixed counterparts of the verbs in (3) are atelic and compatible with both imperfective and perfective readings, and when inceptive-prefixed, they are also obligatorily perfective, and they also reject the ‘for-*x*-time’ adverbials and accept the ‘in-*x*-time’ ones. It is not unreasonable to think, then, that the perfectivity of inceptive-prefixed verbs also results from a prefix-introduced result state. And the second reason for a more parallel treatment of the verbs in (1) and (3) is the prefix’s prepositional origin. Just like the resultative prefixes in (1), the one in (3) also has a cognate preposition, namely *za* ‘behind’. The question that arises from these two parallels, then, is the following: is there evidence that the inceptive *za*- introduces a result state?

I will claim that *za*-inceptives indeed have a resultative prefix, and that the structure in (2) is shared by both the verbs in (1) and those in (3), but that the latter have additional structure which leads to the the different interpretation.

2. Data

2.1 Result-State Adverbial

The English ‘for-x-time’ adverbial is ambiguous between what one may call a durative reading and a result-state (durative) reading. The former is the only reading the adverbial in (5) can get, the latter the typical reading it gets in (6), that is, one where the cake’s stay in the fridge lasted 5 minutes, while we have said nothing about the duration of the putting event. Slovenian encodes the two readings with distinct adverbials: the simple durative one with a bare NP adverbial (*5 minut*) and the result-state one with a prepositional adverbial (*za 5 minut*). The latter cannot modify the Slovenian counterpart of, say, (5).

- (5) Jim ran for 5 minutes.
 (6) Jim put the cake in the fridge for 5 minutes.

Piñón (1999) argues that a result-state adverbial is only licensed when the constituent it combines with includes a result-state subevent (such as the cake’s being in the fridge in (6)). Now, the inceptive-prefixed example in (7) freely accepts a result-state adverbial, suggesting that *za*-inceptives indeed contain a result-state subevent. And given that (8), which differs from (7) only in the absence of the prefix, does not allow the result-state adverbial, it seems that the result-state of (7) must be encoded in the prefix. Further, if the event denoted by the prefixed verb contains a result subevent, then the latter needs an argument of which the subevent is predicated. This can get a natural implementation if the prefix heads some sort of a prepositional small clause.¹

- (7) Juš je za-plaval (za 5 minut).
 J. AUX ZA-swam for 5 minutes
 ‘Juš broke into a (5-minute) swim.’
- (8) Juš je plaval (*za 5 minut).
 J. AUX swam for 5 minutes
 ‘Juš swam.’

Moreover, in view of the account that sees *za-* as a *begin/start*-like aspectualizer, one can compare (7) to (9), which shows that sentences with *začeti* ‘begin/start’ normally do not allow a result state adverbial. And in view

¹ It should be pointed out that unlike activities (cf. (8)-(11)) and ordinary statives such as ‘Juš loved Špela’, locative statives such as ‘Juš is in Ljubljana’ *do* admit the result-state adverbial. While this may call for a renaming of the adverbial, it does not invalidate the argument. What the adverbial is sensitive to is the presence of a stative small clause (not necessarily one that is part of a resultative predicate); in ‘Juš is in Ljubljana for 3 days’, the adverbial modifies the PP small clause embedded under a stative copula/vP.

of the proposals with the prefix in a ν P-embedding perfective AspP, observe that simple perfectivity does not license a result-state adverbial either, (10), and nor does (11)'s combination of an unprefix-ed-verb activity predicate and an 'in-x-time' adverbial, where the latter strictly defines the inception of the activity.² Such a comparison is particularly warranted in view of theories like Cinque's (1999), whereby if *za-* is some kind of an aspectual head, one could expect the possibility of using an adverb that is associated with this Asp head and getting the same reading, and if it is in the Spec of an Asp head, one could expect to be able to substitute it with another adverb of the same type and get the meaning.³

- (9) Juš je začel plavati (*za 5 minut).
 J. AUX startedto-swim for 5 minutes
 'Juš started/began to swim.'
- (10) Juš je od dveh naprej plaval (*za 5 minut).
 J. AUX from two on swam for 5 minutes
 'From two on, Juš swam.'
- (11) Juš je v 5 minutah plaval (*za 5 minut).
 J. AUX in 5 minutes swam for 5 minutes
 'In five minutes, Juš swam/was swimming.'

The result-state adverbial data thus suggest that *za*-inceptives contain a result-state subevent, that the latter is brought in by the prefix, and that some parallels which—if one adopts the proposals mentioned in section 1—one might expect to find between *za*-inceptives and certain other structures, do not exist.

2.2 Restitutive *nazaj* 'back'

Essentially the same argument can be made with the help of the restitutive *nazaj* 'back'. Stechow (1996) argues that the ambiguity between a repetitive and a restitutive reading for examples such as (12) is structural. On the repetitive reading (the whole putting-event has happened before), *again* is attached above ν P; on the restitutive reading (we are only asserting that the cake is back in the fridge), *again* is attached right above the VP-internal result PP.

- (12) John put the cake in the fridge again.

² The absence of the activity before the time denoted by a simple left-edge temporal boundary, as in (10), is a cancelable inference; the absence of the activity before the end of the time span denoted by the 'in-x-time' adverbial is entailed.

³ Throughout the paper, I will use inceptive PP-adverbials, not adverbs. Note, though, that if the PPs are replaced with inceptive adverbs (e.g. *brž* 'quickly', *nenadoma* 'suddenly', *nemudoma* 'immediately'), the readings stay the same.

Testing the compatibility of inceptive-prefixed verbs and the restitutive-only *nazaj* ‘back’⁴ (*nazaj* does not have a repetitive use), observe first that the latter freely accepts the restitutive ‘back’, (13), suggesting that the predicate must contain a result state that *nazaj* can restate. Further, in contrast to (13), simple adverbial inceptivity/perfectivity in (14), which combines the unprefixated counterpart of the inceptive-prefixed verb and an inceptive ‘in-x-time’ adverbial, does not license the restitutive ‘back’. The parallel Svenonius (2005) and Ramchand (2005) presumably predict is not borne out. Comparing (13) and (14) further suggests that the result state in (13) can only come from *za-*.

(13) Juš je nazaj za-laufal.
 J. AUX back ZA-ran
 ‘Juš broke back into a run.’

(14) ?? Juš je (v eni uri) nazaj laufal (v eni uri).
 J. AUX in one hour back ran in one hour
 ‘(In an hour,) Juš was again running (in an hour).’

2.3 Habituality/Iterativity

The running event embedded under *začeti* ‘begin’/‘start’ in (15) can get a habitual/iterative reading, as suggested by the brackets in the English translation. Similarly, the running in (16) also gets a habitual reading. In contrast to (15) and (16), however, (17) cannot be interpreted as an inception of iterated runnings; *za-*inceptives cannot embed habitual events.

(15) Juš je začel laufati trikrat na teden.
 J. AUX startedto-run 3-times per week
 ‘Juš started [to run three times per week].’

(16) Juš je od 2002 naprej / v 10 letih laufal trikrat na teden.
 J. AUX from 2002 on in 10 years ran 3-times per week
 ‘From 2002 on/In 10 years, Juš was running three times per week.’

(17) Juš je za-laufal trikrat na teden.
 J. AUX ZA-ran 3-times per week
 ‘Juš broke into a run three times per week.’
 *‘Juš started [to run three times per week].’

Given that habituality is standardly placed somewhere in the IP-domain, above the *vP*, *za-*inceptivity could still be somewhere between a HabP and the *vP*, so this test does not show that *za-* cannot originate above the *vP*. However, the fact that an unprefixated-verb activity predicate in the scope of simple inceptivity/perfectivity—as encoded with an inceptive ‘in-x-time’ adverbial or a left-edge temporal-boundary ‘from-x-time’ adverbial in (16)—denotes a habitual event

⁴ I use *nazaj* ‘back’ rather than *spet* ‘again’. In view of previous proposals for inceptive-prefixed verbs, *spet* might be unreliable as it can also restate a simple activity with an unprefixated verb (cf. Fabricius-Hansen 2001); *nazaj* tends to be clearer in this respect.

without any problems, shows that such structures and *za*-inceptives cannot be analyzed in parallel. And similarly, the fact that the complement of *začeti* ‘begin’/‘start’ can freely embed a habitual event shows that *za*-inceptives are not comparable to ‘begin’/‘start’-like aspectualizers either.

2.4 Manner Adverbs

The attachment site of manner adverbs, such as *vigorously* or *rhythmically*, is typically taken to be no higher than *vP* (Cinque 1999, Ernst 2004). If *za*- really embeds the *vP*, then manner adverbs should not be able to scope over the inception part of the event denoted by a *za*-prefixed verb. This prediction, however, is not correct. The adverbs in (18) scope over the entire ‘inception-of-swimming’ event (the same is true if they appear preverbally); and while describing the manner of breaking into a swim as ‘vigorous’ makes sense, describing it as ‘rhythmic’ (which should work fine as a manner modification for ‘swimming’) seems infelicitous. The fact that manner adverbs scope over the entire ‘inception-of-x’ event suggests that the inceptive *za*- cannot be above *vP*.⁵ If one still claimed that *za*- is above *vP*, explaining the scope of adverbs in (18) would require analyzing *za*-, implausibly, as projecting a second *vP/VP*.

- (18) Juš je za-plaval energično / #ritmično.
 J. AUX ZA-swam vigorously rhythmically
 ‘Juš vigorously broke into a swim.’

Note, moreover, that once again, *za*-inceptives do not behave on a par with an unprefix verb with simple inceptivity/perfectivity (as encoded with an inceptive adverbial or a left-edge temporal-boundary adverbial), or with an unprefix verb under ‘start’/‘begin’. In (19) and (20), the manner adverbs can only scope below the elements *za*- is being paralleled to.

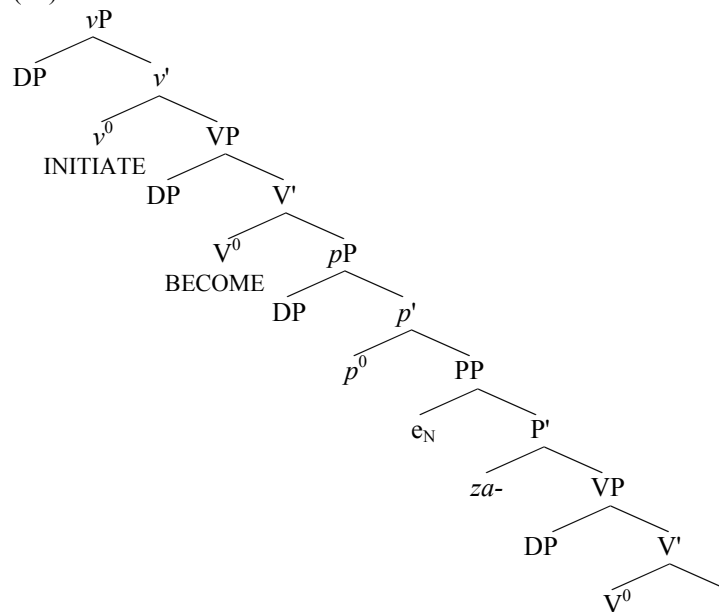
- (19) Juš je plaval energično / ritmično v 5 minutah / od 3 naprej.
 J. AUX swam vigorously rhythmically in 5 minutes from 3 on
 ‘Juš was swimming vigorously/rhythmically in 5 minutes/from 3 on.’
- (20) Juš je začel plavati energično / ritmično.
 J. AUX started to-swim vigorously rhythmically
 ‘Juš started to swim vigorously / rhythmically.’

⁵ While adverbs like ‘rhythmically’ always scope over the entire inception-of-x event (in the company of a restitutive ‘again’, it may seem that they need not, but this seems to be an illusion due to the difficulty of differentiating between what is restituted), some manner adverbs *can* scope below the inception, e.g. *trdno za-spati* (lit. firmly behind-sleep) ‘fall fast asleep’. Without going into this, I stress that what is important is really only that manners, which (even if at the VP-level or even lower) are no higher than *vP*, *can* scope over the entire inception-of-x event, which is unexpected if *za*- is above *vP*.

3. Structure

I have argued that the inceptive *za-* is below the sentential-subject-hosting *vP*, and that *za-* cannot be seen as some kind of adverbial but should instead be seen as heading a prepositional small clause. I propose that *za*-inceptives look like (21). Following Ramchand (2003), I see the *vP* as structurally encoding an initiation subevent, the *VP* as encoding a process/change subevent, and the shelled *PP* (perhaps as a complement to *ResultP*) as encoding the result subevent; the subevents are combined with a ‘leads-to’ relation, so that the initiation ‘leads to’ all that it embeds, and the process ‘leads to’ the result state.

(21)



In the case of intransitive inceptive verbs, such as *za-laufati* ‘break into a run’, the only argument starts out in *Spec,lower-VP* (with ‘run’ in its head) and moves up to *Spec,pP* (becoming the subject of the result predicate), and then further up through the *Spec* of the higher *VP* (becoming the undergoer of a process/change leading to the result state), and finally to *Spec,vP* (becoming the initiator of the transition into the result state of being *za-* ‘behind’ and running). The empty nominal, the object of *za-*, could have a meaning something like ‘beginning’, in an abstract sense. As for the interpretation of (21), one can join the lower *VP* and the prepositional part with event identification, so that the *VP* further describes the properties of the result subevent, and this whole chunk then enters in the ‘leads-to’ relation with the subevents higher up.

So, the lexical verb root is inserted in the lower *V*. As for the higher *V* and *v*, they are filled with null heads; one could say that they only contribute the structural meaning. While positing a null default causalional/*v* head is not uncommon (Ramchand 2003, for example, has it for English), the idea of a null

default BECOME (or UNDERGO) head in V may not go down so well, as V is typically seen as filled with lexical material, and null lexical verbs may not be that popular (but cf. Marušič & Žaucer, in press). However, especially if VP is seen more as a structural position, as in Ramchand's system, then a null default V head is really no different from a null default *v* head. The VP, then, might just as well be labeled a ProcessP (as in Ramchand's later work) or a ChangeP (McIntyre 2004), and if no other lexical material is inserted in it, it will be filled with a default head with no encyclopedic meaning. And as for the lexical root from the lower V, it can incorporate into *v* and then move further up to get inflected; this part will proceed the same way as it does in ordinary structures where a verb starts moving up from an only VP. Note that the structure in (21), including the null V, is in fact very close to Rapp & Stechow's (1999) structure for the German inceptive verb *ein-schlafen* (lit. in-sleep) 'fall asleep': [VP BECOME [XP *einschließ*'asleep']] (they leave the XP unidentified).

One can ask if in the case of intransitives like *za-laufati* (lit. behind-run) 'break into a run', one could not posit—instead of the empty nominal—a noun *lauf* 'run' as the object of *za-*, and then somehow verbalize the thing; such an underlying structure would actually come very close to the English *break into a run*. The problem is, however, that besides intransitive *za*-inceptives, there are also transitive ones, as in (22). In such cases we have to introduce the object somehow, so we seem to need another VP.

- (22) Juš je za-pel pesem / za-plesal polko.
 J. AUX ZA-sang song-ACC ZA-danced polka-ACC
 'Juš broke into a song / into a polka.'

The derivation of (22) would go as follows. 'Song'/'polka' originates in the Spec of the lower VP, and picks up accusative case in Tr(ansitivity)P (cf. Bowers 2002). 'Juš' starts out in the Spec,*p*P (getting interpreted as resultee), moves up to the Spec,VP (getting interpreted as undergoer of process/change), and then to Spec,*v*P (getting interpreted as initiator) (and moves to TP for nominative case). Note that although there are two VPs, the complement of the PP is a VP with no higher functional structure, such as TrP, *v*P, etc., so that there can be just one subject and—despite two VPs—also just one accusative object. The same structure would presumably underlie predicates like *Juš za-sovraži Špelo* (lit. Juš-NOM ZA-hates Špela-ACC) 'Juš comes to hate Špela'.^{6,7}

Now, the empty nominal with an abstract sense of 'beginning' might seem a bit far-fetched. However, note that there is a group of (non-inceptive)

⁶ Besides the inceptive reading, (22) also gets some sort of a 'complete-event' reading, 'Juš sang a song' (this is in fact the preferred reading). The ambiguity might be related to the ambiguity that one gets in sentences like (i).

- (i) Juš je pel pesem dve minuti.
 J. AUX sang song-ACC two minutes
 'Juš was singing the song for two minutes (and didn't finish it).'
 'It took Juš two minutes to complete the song.'

⁷ As we need the second VP for transitives, I will assume, for simplicity, that intransitive *za*-inceptives also have the structure in (21); however, for *za*-intransitives, the alternative mentioned above seems just as plausible, so I have no reason to reject it.

resultative verbs with *za-* where the result is interpreted as some negative state, as in *za-govoriti se* (lit. behind-talk self) ‘talk oneself into a corner’ (cf. Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998, Žaucer 2005). The empty prefixal object in such cases is presumably something like ‘trouble’, in an abstract, general sense. The above-positing ‘beginning’ may thus seem a bit less of a curiosity.⁸

In this way, we can, for example, approach two readings of *za-spati* (lit. behind-sleep), namely, ‘oversleep’ and ‘fall asleep’. The difference is in the presence/absence of the lower VP and in the nature of the empty object to *za-*. The abstract empty nominal ‘trouble’ is the one that appears in the ‘oversleep’ version, which then has a standard unaccusative resultative structure. The ‘fall asleep’ version, on the other hand, has the ‘beginning’ empty nominal, and is built on the structure of (21) (presumably without the initiational vP layer).

4. Some Consequences

Assuming that resultative prefixed verbs have the structure in (2), the structure in (21) naturally explains the things that *za*-inceptives share with standard resultative prefixed verbs, i.e., a prepositional prefix, the perfectivity of the derived verb, the compatibility with ‘in-x-time’ and result-state adverbials, etc., but at the same time it also explains the intuition behind the previous proposals for *za-*, which saw it as being higher than the verb. In (21), *za-* is in fact both resultative/VP-internal and VP-external (though not vP-external).

Another consequence is that we do not have to see *za*-inceptives as “indeterminate with respect to telicity” (Borik 2002: 63). Borik says that since *za*-inceptives disallow durative/‘for-x-time’ adverbials, they are not atelic, but as the ‘in-x-time’ (supposedly) measures the so-called preparatory stage rather than the actual event, as is also the case when a simple activity is combined with an ‘in-x-time’ adverbial (cf. *He ran in 2 minutes*), they are not plain telics either. With the structure in (21), however, the ‘in-x-time’ adverbial *does* measure the complex event in the very same way as it does with *run to school* or, for that matter, with *break into a run* or *fall asleep*. But since the (higher) V is BECOME, with no encyclopedic meaning, and since the prefixal result state has the lower, encyclopedically filled VP as its complement, the outcome is such that the ‘in-x-time’ *appears* to measure the preparatory stage of the overt verb.

Further, a common reason for placing the inceptive *za-* outside of the vP (or more generally, separating it from resultative prefixes) is the fact that unlike in the case of resultative prefixes, (1b-c), *za-* has no argument structure effects on the base verb, or that there are no unselected objects with *za*-prefixed verbs which exhibit the inceptive reading (e.g. Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998, Svenonius 2005). The structure in (21) actually predicts this. Unselected objects arise when the direct object of a transitive prefixed verb actually originates as the argument of the prefix and is not linked to the V, which is why it can escape the verb’s selectional requirements. But in (21), the external argument of the prefix *is*, in fact, the argument of the higher V as well (and then also the sentential subject)—the inceptive reading of transitives actually depends on this. The

⁸ A perhaps more appealing option for the empty prepositional object with *za*-inceptives would be to see it as a DP variable whose interpretation is determined after it is later bound, somehow, by the lower-originating VP. I cannot explore this option here.

direct object in 'ZA-sing song', on the other hand, is an argument of the lower V, 'sing', and must therefore satisfy the selectional restrictions of 'sing'.

Next, (21) shows an interesting similarity with Butt's (2003) structure for Urdu V-V complex predicates. Analyzing strings such as, literally, 'Nadya letter write take', with the meaning 'Nadya wrote a letter (completely)', she claims that these are telic complex predicates structurally very similar to English telic particle verbs. Butt says that Ramchand (2003) model—with its decomposition into the initiational *v*P, process VP, and ResultP—can be used for both; for the Urdu string above, she merges the light verb ('take') in the head of VP (going against her previous work, where she had it in little *v*), and the lexical verb (participial form of 'write') in the head of ResultP and the direct object as its argument (in Spec,RP), (23) (= Butt's tree in (52), ignoring surface word order).

- (23) [_{VP} [_{DP} 'Nadya'] [_v (=V2) [_v 'take'] [_{VP} [_{DP} 'letter'] [_v [_V (=V2) 'take'] [_{RP} [_{DP} 'letter'] [_R [_R (=V1) 'written']]]]]]]]]

Interestingly, Butt also lists V-V examples with an inceptive meaning, e.g., strings such as 'Nadya laugh fall', glossed as 'Nadya burst out laughing', or 'Nadya house make fall', glossed as 'Nadya fell to building a house'. Now, with a structure like (23), where the Result head is filled with a V, which comes with its argument and which comes in addition to the verb in VP, we have a fairly close parallel with the double-VP structure in (21). Moreover, given the existence of transitive V-V complex predicates with an inceptive reading, my account of transitive *za*-inceptives extends the parallel that several authors have seen between telic V-V constructions in languages like Urdu and telic particle/prefix verbs in Germanic and Slavic, to inceptive predicates as well.⁹

Finally, I stress that I do not think that *all* inceptive prefixed verbs look like (21). Besides *za-*, there are other prefixes that derive inceptive verbs from simple activities; one is *s-/z-* (allomorphs), and an example is *z-laufati* (lit. away-run) 'break into a run'. Unlike *za-*, *s-/z-* only derives intransitive inceptives, and at least in terms of their structure, they are probably ordinary resultatives (quite likely structurally parallel to German verbs such as *los-singen* (lit. off-sing) 'start singing' (cf. McIntyre 2004)). Similarly, I stress that I am not saying that there are *no* verbal prefixes (among those that in some way or other seem related to aspectual notions) which are not resultative. The delimitative *po-*, as in *po-sedeti* (lit. PO-sit) 'sit for a while', is one such case (e.g. Jabłońska 2005, Žaucer 2005).

⁹ It seems that Butt's structure in (23), with the lexical verb in R⁰ and its argument in its Spec, cannot handle her transitive inceptives ('Nadya house make fall', i.e., 'Nadya fell to building a house'). For the structure to be inceptive resultative, 'Nadya' will have to be in Spec,RP (or else there would be no telicity, 'Nadya' would not actually fall to building a house but would only be falling to building a house, cf. *The meteor fell for 2 hrs*). But then 'Nadya', not the 'house', would be the one being built. Perhaps R⁰, with 'Nadya' in its Spec, should be null or containing the root 'fall' (which would then raise up to V, cf. *The tree fell in 2 seconds*) and have the 'house-make' VP as its complement, just like in (21).

5. Notes on Some Potential Objections

A common argument for a different status of inceptive-prefixed verbs is the fact that many of them resist the addition of an imperfective/progressive suffix. But at the same time, many authors add that the generalization is not exceptionless, and it varies across different Slavic languages (Ramchand 2005, Svenonius 2005). I agree with Brecht (1985: 16) who attributes this resistance simply to the unlikelihood of wanting to describe a situation such as, for example, to be in the process of breaking into a run. The important thing is that unless there is some idiosyncratic obstacle (as in *plavati* ‘swim’, which—diachronically—already contains an imperfective suffix), a secondary imperfective *can* be formed, and if it is, the imperfective will regularly scope over the inception, creating the reading ‘be in the process of beginning to V’. This is as we would predict if the inception is derived below the VP and the imperfective/progressive aspect is, as is standard, higher up. Moreover, secondary imperfectivization in Slovenian is not always completely productive with obvious resultative prefixes either; sticking the imperfective *-va-* suffix on *za-laufati* (lit. behind-run) ‘break into a run’ is no worse than sticking it on *od-laufati* (lit. away-run) ‘run away’ or *pri-laufati* (lit. at-run) ‘run to’. None of these will be very good, but they all *can* be formed, and the scope of the imperfective is regular.

An unclear issue is whether (21) predicts that intransitive *za*-inceptives such as *za-laufati* (lit. behind-run) ‘break into a run’ should show signs of unaccusativity. Their only argument does originate low and ends up as the surface subject of a change-of-state predicate; however, it is not clear whether the lower VP could have an effect on unaccusativity diagnostics. While there is no ‘be’/‘have’ auxiliary distinction in Slovenian, *za*-inceptives fail another standard test, i.e., the possibility of using their participle attributively: **pozno za-laufali fant* (lit. late behind-ran boy) ‘the boy that broke into a run late’. However, Pesetsky (1995) questions this test, saying that the relation is unidirectional and that while the availability of this use is a sign of unaccusativity, its unavailability is not a sign of unergativity, and he treats several English verbs which fail this test as unaccusative. Also, Ramchand (2005) treats the intransitive version of *enter*, which does not allow this use, as an unaccusative, with its argument originating in the ResultP and then going up to *vP*. In fact, this use is not always available even with directed-motion prefixed verbs, which are standardly treated as unaccusative: **pozno pri-laufali fant* (lit. late at-ran boy) ‘the boy that ran to x late’. Finally, note that even **pozno za-laufala mašina* (lit. late behind-ran engine) ‘the engine that started to run late’ is bad, which—with its inanimate ‘engine’—should be unaccusative even if (21) is wrong and *za-* is outside the *vP*.

6. Conclusion

Based on data from result-state adverbials, the restitutive ‘back’, habituality, and manner adverbs, I argued that *za*-prefixed inceptive verbs contain a VP-internal prepositional small clause denoting a result state, which is encoded via the prefix. I proposed a structure comprising a *vP*, a VP with BECOME and a PP that embeds a second VP with the lexical verb (and its object). The structure explains the often noted lack of unselected objects with *za*-inceptives.

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