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## THE SUPPORT VERB TAKE

### Abstract

Using the lexicon-grammar framework as developed by Maurice Gross (1994), we systematically analyzed 245 verbs that can be used as nominals with the light or support verb *take*. The data was divided into three main tables: purely intransitive verbs (e.g. *bathe* → *take a bath*), transitive (e.g. *drink*  $N_1$  → *take a drink of*  $N_1$ ), and intransitive with prepositional complements (e.g. *look at*  $N_1$  → *take a look at*  $N_1$ ). A final table demonstrates a set of converse *take* constructions as initially observed by Gaston Gross (1989), (e.g.  $N_0$  *confess*  $N_1$  to  $N_2$  ↔  $N_0$  *take* *confession* ↔  $N_2$  *take* *the confession*).

**Key words:** lexicon-grammar, light verbs, support verb constructions, support verb *take*

Gross (1988) claims that verbs should be separated into three types: ordinary verbs, verbs as constituents of idiomatic expressions, and support verbs. While traditional grammars often group these three types of verbs together based on surface similarities such as tense, conjugation, and the syntactic structures of sentences in which they appear, lexicon-grammar clearly distinguishes the three types on semantic grounds.

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (1) Max took the money             | [= steal]                          |
| (2) That performance took the cake | [= be the best or most surprising] |
| (3) Ty took a bath                 | [= bathe]                          |

In (1) *take* is an ordinary verb meaning "obtain possession," while in (2) it is part of the idiomatic expression *take the cake*. On the other hand, in (3) the verb *take* is a support verb or light verb. The semantic content of the expression is carried by the following noun, *bath*, which we refer to as a deverbal nominal that can be derived from the verb *bathe*.

This article presents a preliminary analysis of 245 support verb constructions with *take* within a lexicon-grammar framework. The data was collected by systematically sifting through the *Oxford English Dictionary 2010* and verified using Google search engine. Expressions were limited to the relatively semantically empty verb *take* with the meaning being similar to that of dummy *do*, or other light verbs such as *make*, *have*, or *give* (Machonis 1991 & 2004). Support verb constructions are highly productive in language. Although Wierzbicka (1982) recorded expressions such as *take a feel*, *take a chat*, *take a try*, and *take a cuddle* as unacceptable English constructions, using the Google search engine resulted in thousands of instances of these expressions. For example, *took a feel* resulted in 40,200 instances, perhaps not all genuine support verb constructions, but still showing that native speakers continue to create these expressions.

Although the boundary between idiomatic expressions and support verbs is at times fuzzy, the semantic argument of prototypical support verb constructions, which Langer (2004) sees as "semi-compositional verb-noun constructions," is selected by the noun rather than the verb, i.e. *complain to*  $N_1$  about  $N_2$  → *make a complaint about*  $N_1$  to  $N_2$ , *look carefully at*  $N_1$  → *take a careful look at*  $N_1$ , etc. All of the constructions analyzed in this study can be syntactically represented as the following:

- (4)  $N_0$  V ↔  $N_0$  take V-n
- Ty bathed ↔ Ty took a bath
  - Evan chugged (E + the milk) ↔ Evan took a chug (E + of milk)
  - The boxer swung (E + at his rival) ↔ The boxer took a swing (E + at his rival)

In (4)  $N_0$  indicates the subject,  $N_1$  indicates the first complement, and the arrow signifies relative synonymy. The  $V-n$  indicates a deverbal nominal, i.e. a verb derived from a noun.

All of the verbs in our corpus may undergo the transformation in (4). This criterion distinguishes the support verb *take* from its more ordinary uses such as in (1). It also distinguishes it from *take* in idiomatic expressions as in (2), as well as expressions in which the support verb construction cannot appear in simple verb form, i.e. *Max took hold of the situation* → *\*Max held the situation*. Although it is at times difficult to clearly differentiate support verbs from idiomatic verbal expressions – Freckleton (1984), for example, lists *(give + take) umbrage* as an idiom, whereas others might see this as a support verb construction – for this preliminary analysis we only considered *take* followed by a noun clearly related to a verb in the sense of (4) above.

The 245 verbs appearing as nominals in light verb *take* constructions were divided into three main tables: (1) purely intransitive verbs (e.g., *bathe*), (2) transitive verbs (e.g., *chug N<sub>1</sub>*), and (3) intransitive with prepositional complement (e.g., *swing at N<sub>1</sub>*). All the deverbal nominals in the data were also specified for determiner and quantificational phrases. These expressions are highly productive in language and, as will be shown, require the development of a formal lexicon or lexicon-grammar to best describe the not always predictable properties of support verb constructions. Nevertheless, as Newman (1996) points out in his cognitive study of the verb *give*, the literal meaning of a support verb may influence which figurative extensions are acceptable. For example, the light verb *take* "is compatible with complements relating to an assumption of control," by the taker argues Newman (1996:245), "without any necessary implication that control was passed to that person from someone else," as in the case of *give*.

### 1. Intransitive verbs with support *take*

Intransitive verbal constructions that may appear in expressions with the light verb *take* consist of 62 of the 245 entries. Many of these may be categorized into a subclass of Levin's (1993) verbs of **manner of motion** which we further divide into **run**, **jump**, and **walk** verbs, but also include other categories, like **wash** and **sleep verbs**, and **bodily function verbs**:

- (5) a. **Run verbs:** The runner (hiked + jogged + ran) ↔ The runner took a (hike + jog + run)
- b. **Jump verbs:** The tiger (hopped + leaped) ↔ The tiger took a (hop + leap)
- c. **Walk verbs:** The old man (walked + strolled) ↔ The old man took a (walk + stroll)
- d. **Wash verbs:** Ty (bathed + showered) ↔ Ty took a (bath + shower)
- e. **Sleep verbs:** The woman (napped + snoozed) ↔ The woman took a (nap + snooze)
- f. **Bodily function verbs:** The old man (peed + puked) ↔ The old man took a (pee + puke)

These support verb *take* constructions, however, are not entirely predictable based solely on semantic class as seen by the unacceptability of the **manner of motion** verbs *\*take a (dart + roam + race + scurry + scam)*, the following **sleep verbs** *\*take a (drowse + sleep + slumber)* and the ungrammaticality of the **bodily function verbs** in *\*take a (drool + vomit + weep + bleed)*. Although Newman's "implication of control" criterion might help to explain the acceptability and unacceptability to some of these verbs, there still seems to be an element of randomness, for example between the acceptability of *take a puke*, but not *\*take a vomit*. For the verb *race*, the person who races might not have full control, and thus might help to explain the unacceptability of *\*take a race*, yet the control factor does not sufficiently explain why *roam* and *scurry* are also unacceptable.

It is also worth mentioning that the support verb may contribute an aspectual interpretation not fully synonymous with the single verb expression. Thus a construction may be ambiguous between the semantically empty *take* and a more contentive verb, as in *The lawyer took the foreclosure* where the expression may be interpreted as "did, accept, choose." This is similar to the difficulty we saw in trying to delimit lexical *make* "bring into existence" from the support verb *make* in such expressions as *make an estimate* (Machonis 1991:146).

Finally, the choice of determiner may be responsible for the difference between the support verb *take* interpretation (e.g. *Ty took a bath*) and the literal meaning (e.g. *I then took the bath to a panel beater and they sprayed the thing with baked enamel for \$250*), where the indefinite determiner *a* forces a more natural light verb interpretation, whereas the definite determiner *the* forces a literal one. However, even with the indefinite determiner *a*, there is also the possibility of the idiomatic expression *take a bath on N*, as in *Max took a bath on that deal* (i.e. "obtain a severe financial loss").

### 1.1 Determiners and quantifiers

All of the *take* constructions were systematically analyzed for the indefinite determiner *a*, the definite determiner *the*, zero article represented as *E*, and general quantificational phrases such as number terms and quantifiers like *several*, *many*, *much*, and *the first*. Over 90% of the data may take the indefinite determiner *a* in the *take* construction:

(6) Max took a (drive + swim + plunge + jog)

There are, however, 30 expressions that do not accept the determiner *a* as part of the light verb *take* construction, and prefer the zero article, noted *E*:

(7) The security officer took (E + \*a) (watch + guard + patrol)

Although some might argue that these should be construed as idiomatic expressions, we point out that these also appear with the support verb *keep*, as well as part of *be + Prep* expressions:

(8) The security officer (keeps + is on) (watch + guard + patrol)

Other verbs reject both the indefinite determiner *a*, as well as the zero article, but prefer the definite determiner *the* instead, like (9).

(9) Max took (\*E + \*a + the ) (rebound + reign)

Few examples freely accept any determiner or quantificational expression as part of the construction:

(10) The artist took (E + a + the + several + two + the two) (sketches + photographs + flights)

Some only accept the indefinite article and reject all the other phrases, while other expressions accept, or reject, a combination of possible phrases that precede the nominal. Even verbs from the same semantic class vary in the type of determiner or quantificational phrase the construction accepts:

#### (11) **Bodily function verbs**

- a. The girl took (a + \*the + \*E + \*several + \*the two + \*the first) pee(s)
- b. The boy took (a + \*the + \*E + several + the two + the first) poop(s)
- c. The man took (a + \*the + \*E + \*several + \*the two + \*the first) puke(s)

#### (12) **Drink verbs**

- a. The man took (a + \*the + E + several + \*the two + the first) sip(s)
- b. The woman took (a + \*the + \*E + \*several + \*the two + \*the first) drink(s)
- c. The girl took (a + \*the + \*E + several + \*the two + \*the first) chug(s)

#### (13) **Wash verbs**

- a. The baby took (a + \*the + E + several + two + \*the two) bath(s)
- b. The girl took (a + \*the + E + several + two + \*the two) shower(s)
- c. The boy took (a + the + \*E + \*several + \*two + \*the two) rinse(s)

Table 1 illustrates a sample of the intransitive support verb constructions with *take* and some of the possible combinatorial properties of determiners and quantificational phrases these expressions exhibit. For each verb, a potential subject  $N_0$  is marked for the properties of human (*Nhum*) and non-human (*N-hum*) indicated by a plus or minus sign. The next column illustrates the verb, while the following columns show the acceptability of the indefinite article *a*, zero article *E*, the definite article *the*, a quantifier, and *the* plus a quantificational phrase, marked by a plus or minus sign. While all the verbs in the data were specified for determiner and quantificational phrases, for exposition purposes, they have been excluded from the subsequent tables. Finally, the *V-n* indicates the nominalizing suffix of the verb, where *-E* represents empty morpheme. This column is followed by the intransitive construction and the semantic properties of the verb.

$N_0$ :: <i>Nhum</i>	$N_0$ :: <i>N-hum</i>	Verb	<i>N take a V-n</i>	<i>N take V-n</i>	<i>N take the V-n</i>	<i>N take quant V-n</i>	<i>N take the quant V-n</i>	<i>V-n</i>	$N_0 V = N_0 take V-n$	Semantic Properties
+	-	pace	+	-	-	+	+	-E	+	walk
+	-	pant	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	breathe
+	+	pause	+	-	-	+	-	-E	+	stop
+	-	pee	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	bodily function
+	-	poop	+	-	-	+	+	-E	+	bodily function
+	-	pout	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	be sad
+	+	prance	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	run
+	-	relax	-	+	-	-	-	-ation	+	relax
+	-	resign	-	-	+	-	-	-ation	+	resign
+	-	rest	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	relax
+	-	retire	-	+	-	-	-	-ment	+	retire
+	-	rinse	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	wash
+	+	roar	+	-	-	+	-	-E	+	sound
+	-	rotate	+	-	+	-	+	-ation	+	transfer
+	-	run	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	run

**Table 1: Sample of Intransitive Verbs with *take* specified for determiner and quantificational phrases**

## 2. Transitive verbs with support *take*

Table 2 demonstrates a sample of the transitive verbs that may appear as a nominal complement to the light verb *take*. The first two columns are specified for human/non-human properties, followed by the verb, the determiners and quantifiers, and the nominalizing suffix, *V-n*. This column is followed by the intransitive  $N_0 V$  and transitive  $N_0 V N_1$  features, and a potential first complement  $N_1$  marked for *Nhum* and *N-hum*. The next three columns demonstrate the  $N_1$  complement optionally reappearing in the light verb construction as part of a case or prepositional phrase such as *of*, *at*, *with*, *on*, *in*, *over* or *around*. The five columns of determiners, as seen in Table 1, are not shown in this table due to space considerations. Transitive verbs consist of 113 entries – almost half of our entire database of 245 examples.

$N_0$  take  $V-n$  of  $N_1$  was the most common transformation seen in our data. In fact, 75% of the constructions derived from the transitive verbs in Table 2 can introduce the second complement  $N_1$  into the *take* expression by means of an optional case particle *of* phrase, as exemplified in (14) and (15):

- (14) **Verbs of protecting:** The officer is (patrolling + watching + observing + guarding)  
 ↔ The officer is (patrolling + watching + observing + guarding) the area  
 ↔ The officer is taking (patrol + watch + observations + guard) (E + of the area)
- (15) **Verbs of recording:** The director is (photographing + recording + videotaping)  
 ↔ The director is (photographing + recording + videotaping) the artist  
 ↔ The director is taking a (photograph + recording + videotape) (E + of the artist)

$N_0$ :: Nhum	$N_0$ :: N-hum	Verb	N take a V-n	N take V-n	N take the V-n	N take quant V-n	N take the quant V-n	V-n	$N_0$ V = $N_0$ take V-n	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n	$N_1$	$N_1$ :: Nhum	$N_1$ :: N-hum	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n of $N_1$	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n at $N_1$	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n on $N_1$	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n in $N_1$	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n over $N_1$	$N_0$ V $N_1$ = $N_0$ take V-n around $N_1$	Semantic Properties
+	-	observe	+	+	+	-	-	-ation	+	+	engine	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	observe
+	-	pardon	-	+	-	-	-	-E	-	+	his sins	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	forgive
+	+	patrol	-	+	-	-	-	-E	+	+	the area	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	patrol
+	-	photocopy	+	+	+	+	+	-E	+	+	paper	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	photocopy
+	+	photograph	+	+	+	+	+	-E	+	+	Max	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	photograph
+	+	pick	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	+	the shirt	+	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	pick
+	-	pity	-	+	-	+	-	-E	-	+	the man	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	feel bad
+	+	profile	+	-	+	-	-	-E	-	+	Max	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	profile
+	-	profit	+	+	+	-	-	-E	+	+	money	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	profit
+	-	puke	+	-	-	-	-	-E	+	+	the food	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	bodily function
+	-	pull	+	-	-	+	-	-E	-	+	the door	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	pull
+	-	punch	+	+	-	+	-	-E	-	+	Max	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	punch
+	-	quote	+	-	+	+	+	-E	-	+	the car	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	estimate

**Table 2: Sample of Transitive Verbs with *take***

33% of the verbs classified in Table 2 *take* have no intransitive ordinary verb use, but can appear in both intransitive and transitive support verb constructions, as in (16):

- (16) **Verbs of controlling:** Max (\*controlled + \*surveyed + \*gripped)  
 ↔ Max (controlled + surveyed + gripped) the situation  
 ↔ Max took (control + surveillance + grip) (E + of the situation)

This highlights not only the difficulties of support verb constructions, but also of the need to further classify English ordinary verbs in a lexicon-grammar, similar to the work of Boons, Guillet & Leclère (1976). In fact, some of these verbs have both an intransitive and transitive use as ordinary verbs, while others are purely transitive even though they form part of the same semantic class:

- (17) **Verbs of inhaling:** Max (breathed + sniffed + gasped + \*smelled + \*whiffed)  
 ↔ Max (breathed + sniffed + gasped + smelled + whiffed) the air  
 ↔ Max took a (breath + sniff + gasp + smell + whiff) (E + of the air)

### 3. Intransitive *take* constructions with prepositional complements

Table 3 of our data represents 70 light verb *take* entries that can be derived from intransitive verbs that take a prepositional phrase, but reject a direct object  $N_I$ . These intransitive verbs with prepositional complements are marked with a plus or minus in the appropriate column syntactically represented as (18):

- (18)  $N_0 V \leftrightarrow *N_0 V N_1 \leftrightarrow N_0 V \text{ Prep } N_1 \leftrightarrow N_0 \text{ take a V-n (E + Prep } N_1)$   
 a. The man (winked + gazed + glanced + glimpsed + looked + stared + smirked)  
 ↔ \*The man (winked + gazed + glanced + glimpsed + looked + stared + smirked) the woman  
 ↔ The man (winked + gazed + glanced + glimpsed + looked + stared + smirked) at the woman  
 ↔ The man took a (wink + gaze + glance + glimpse + look + stare + smirk) (E + at the woman)

Some verbs in this table, however, take a prepositional phrase complement, but reject both the purely intransitive and transitive uses, as exemplified in (19):

- (19)  $*N_0 V \leftrightarrow *N_0 V N_1 \leftrightarrow N_0 V \text{ Prep } N_1 \leftrightarrow N_0 \text{ take a V-n (E + Prep } N_1)$   
 a. \*The surfer barreled ↔ \*The surfer barreled the wave ↔ The surfer barreled in the ocean  
 ↔ The surfer took a barrel (E + in the ocean)  
 b. \*The class broke ↔ \*The class broke 5 minutes ↔ The class broke for 5 minutes  
 ↔ The class took a break (E + for 5 minutes)

Finally, again highlighting the importance of constructing lexicon-grammars, other examples show that the preposition changes in the prepositional phrase between the ordinary verb and the support verb construction, as in the following cases:

- (20) The mother cared **for** the baby ↔ The mother took care **of** the baby  
 (21) Max obsessed **over** his girlfriend ↔ Max took an obsession **for** his girlfriend  
 (22) The hockey player went **for** the goal ↔ The hockey player took a go **at** the goal  
 (23) The scientist accounted **for** the situation ↔ The scientist took an account **of** the situation

And in one particular case, the verb seems to not allow the prepositional phrase when part of the support verb construction:

- (24) \*Max sided ↔ \*Max sided friends ↔ Max sided with friends  
 ↔ Max took (a side + sides) (E + \*with friends)

The sample Table 3 shows the variety of prepositional complements these verbs may take and the variation exhibited when part of the light verb construction. Again, the five columns of determiners, as seen in Table 1, are not shown in this table due to space considerations.

### 4. Residual data.

In addition to the three tables analyzed in this article so far, we also noticed two smaller, restricted, but rather interesting tables. Some of the verbs in these tables do not appear in Tables 1-3 (e.g. *appeal*, *confess*, *criticize*), while others (e.g. *sail*, *hike*) appear in other tables. Table 4 consists of 22 intransitive verbs that can also be transitive (e.g., *sail* (E + *the ocean*)). Due to space considerations, these residual tables are not shown, but briefly, the verbs in Table 4 can all introduce a prepositional phrase complement *Prep N<sub>I</sub>* that

may be an implicit part of the construction when in its transitive form  $N_0 V N_1$ . These transitive verbs with implicit locative prepositional phrase complements vary as to the type of preposition accepted by the construction, even if part of the same semantic class, as exemplified in (25):

- (25)  $N_0 V N_1 \leftrightarrow N_0$  take V-n (E + Prep  $N_1$ )
- a. We sailed the Atlantic  $\leftrightarrow$  We took a sail  
 $\leftrightarrow$  We took a sail (to +\*of +\*at + in + on + around + up) the Atlantic
  - b. The pirate walked the plank  $\leftrightarrow$  ?The pirate took a walk  
 $\leftrightarrow$  The pirate took a walk (\*to + \*of + \*at + on + \*around + up) the plank
  - c. The old man hiked the hill  $\leftrightarrow$  The old man took a hike  
 $\leftrightarrow$  The old man took a hike (to + \*of + at + on + around + up) the hill

$N_0 =:$ Nhum	$N_0 =:$ N-hum	Verb	V-n	$N_0 V = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ for $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ to $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ in $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ on $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ over $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ at $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ into $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_0 V$ with $N_1 = N_0$ take V-n	$N_1$	$N_1 =:$ Nhum	$N_1 =:$ N-hum	$N_0$ take V-n for $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n to $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n in $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n on $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n at $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n with $N_1$	$N_0$ take V-n of $N_1$	Semantic Property
+	+	account	-E	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	situation	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	note
+	+	advance	-ment	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	career	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	improve
+	-	act	-ion	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	the plan	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	act
+	-	audition	-E	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	the play	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	audition
+	-	bake	-E	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	the sun	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	get sun
+	-	bark	-E	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	Max	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	scream
+	-	bargain	-E	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	glasses	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	bargain
+	-	barrel	-E	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	the wave	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	surf
+	-	bet	-E	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	Max	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	risk
+	-	bow	-E	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	Max	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	bow
+	-	break	-E	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	an hour	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	rest
+	-	care	-E	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	the car	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	care
+	-	chat	-E	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	Max	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	talk
+	-	chuckle	-E	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	the joke	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	laugh
+	-	consider	-ation	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	problem	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	consider

**Table 3: Sample of light verb *take* constructions with prepositional complements**

We also found another small table of  $N_0 V N_1$  Prep  $N_2$  expressions that involve a symmetrical relationship such that either  $N_1$  take V-n (e.g. *criticize*) or  $N_2$  take V-n exists (e.g. *confess*). These types of support verbs were first referred to as "converse support verb constructions" by Gross 1989. The 16 verbs in Table 5 (not shown) reveal a variety of transformational properties in the sense of Harris (1956), in which there is a potential relationship of relative synonymy between the transitive verbal expression and the *take* construction. In the converse support verb construction, however, *take* implies "accept" or "receive" in the abstract or metaphorical sense, or perhaps better seen as a type of passive as described in Newman 1996:245-5). In the first of these transformations, the complement  $N_1$  becomes the subject of the *take* construction, as in (26):



(26)  $N_0$  V  $N_1$  Prep  $N_2$  ↔  $N_1$  take V-n

- a. The people criticized the president for the speech ↔ The president took the criticism
- b. The mother blamed the child for the error ↔ The child took the blame

In others, the complement  $N_2$  becomes the subject of the *take* construction. In a few cases, however, both the  $N_0$  and  $N_2$  complement may occupy the subject position of the support *take* expression, as in (27), which shows that *take* may be ambiguous between two interpretations: one being the light verb *Max confessed* ↔ **Max took confession**, and the other being the converse support verb, where *take* means something like "perform" as in *Max confessed to the priest* ↔ **The priest took the confession**.

(27)  $N_0$  V  $N_1$  Prep  $N_2$  ↔  $N_0$  take V-n ↔  $N_2$  take V-n

- a. Lawyers appealed the case to the court ↔ Lawyers took the appeal ↔ The court took the appeal
- b. Max confessed his sins to the priest ↔ Max took confession ↔ The priest took the confession

Further research will show if these last two tables are more productive in English, and perhaps also reflective of other support verbs. Nevertheless, we can see that *take* support verb expressions are highly productive in English, but due to high variability of acceptable expressions, even among verbs in semantically related verb classes, they are best described through a formal lexicon or lexicon-grammar.

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