

## Catenative Verbs in English and Arabic: A Comparative Study

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### Abstract

The present study focuses upon catenative verbs in English and Arabic. English catenative verbs refer to a large class of lexical verbs characterized by their intrinsic ability to be joined with non-finite verbs as complements in English yielding a structural chain. Arabic catenative verbs are those non-finite verbs whose predicate is an imperfect verb, generally with to-infinitive.

The problem of this study addresses the questions of how to distinguish catenative verbs in both English and Arabic. The objective of this study is to figure out similarities and differences between English and Arabic catenative verbs.

This study is classified into three sections. The first one sheds light on English catenative verbs in terms of definitions, comparisons with other verbs, syntactic as well as semantic classifications. The second one tackles definitions, structure and semantic classifications of Arabic catenative verbs. The third one is dedicated to study English and Arabic catenative verbs to show how far these verbs are similar and/ or different to one another.

The study has shown that English catenative verbs are followed by all forms of non-finite verbs whereas those Arabic verbs are followed by a verbal clause in the accusative case functioning as its predicate. Semantically, English catenative verbs denote futurity, report, causation, perception, process, attitude, need, achievement, and appearance while their Arabic counterparts denote appropinquation, hope and beginning; all of which with a future reference.

**Keywords:** catenative verbs, comparative study, English, Arabic

## أفعال المقاربة والرجاء والشروع في اللغتين الانجليزية والعربية: دراسة مقارنة

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### الملخص

تُركز الدراسة الحالية على المقارنة بين أفعال المقاربة والرجاء والشروع باللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية، إذ تُشير هذه الأفعال باللغة الإنجليزية إلى صنف كبير من الأفعال اللغوية التي تتميز بقدرتها الجوهرية على الارتباط بالأفعال الناقصة مكملة معناها ومكونة سلسلة سياقية، بينما تُشير في العربية إلى مجموعة من الأفعال الناقصة التصريف التي يكون خبرها جملة فعلية، فعلها مضارع غالباً ما يكون مسبقاً بأن المصدرية.

تدور مشكلة هذه الدراسة حول كيفية التمييز بين أفعال المقاربة والرجاء والشروع في اللغتين الإنجليزية والعربية، إذ أن الهدف منها هو إظهار أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين هذه الأفعال في هاتين اللغتين.

تنقسم الدراسة إلى ثلاثة مباحث، يُسلط المبحث الأول منها الضوء على هذه الأفعال باللغة الإنجليزية من حيث التعريفات، والمقارنات مع الأفعال الأخرى، والتصنيفات النحوية والدلالية، أما المبحث الثاني فيتناول هذه الأفعال باللغة العربية من حيث تعريفاتها وتركيبها وتصنيفاتها الدلالية، كُرس المبحث الثالث منها لبيان أوجه التشابه والاختلاف بين هذه الأفعال في هاتين اللغتين.

وقد أظهرت الدراسة أن أفعال المقاربة والرجاء والشروع باللغة الإنجليزية تكون متنوعة بجميع صيغ الأفعال الناقصة التركيب، في حين تُتبع هذه الأفعال في اللغة العربية بجملة فعلية يعرب خبراً لها. من الناحية الدلالية، تُشير هذه الأفعال الإنجليزية إلى المستقبل، والتقرير، والسببية، والإدراك، والوسيلة، والاعتقاد، والحاجة، والإنجاز، والمظهر، بينما تشير نظيراتها إلى المقاربة والرجاء والشروع وكلها ذات دلالات مستقبلية.

## 1. Catenative Verbs in English

### 1.1 Definitions

According to Rizo Rodriguez (1990:282), catenative verbs can be defined as those lexical verbs with the ability to be combined with non- finite forms of

verbs depending on certain fixed rules. A part from other lexical verbs, these verbs create catenative constructions both verbal and non- verbal form groups.

Leech( 2006:16) defines catenative verbs as verbs followed by a non-finite clause considered as a complement as in:

1. The girls **like** playing tennis.

As a term, 'catenative' is taken from the Latin word **catena** meaning a chain. This indicates a possibility for these verbs to recur as a chain. It is possible but improbable for the non-finite verb in the complement to occur as a catenative verb with another non-finite complement as in:

2. Someone will need to try getting him to help mend the dishwasher.

Similarly, for Huddleston and Pullum( 2002:65), catenative verbs represent a small list of verbs permitting a non-finite complement showing a recursive series of verbs. More verbs can be added to make a longer chain of about four:

3. They **intend** to try to persuade her to help Sue decorate her house.

Example (3) involves four catenative verbs with a complement forming a sequence of five verbs. They are **intend**, **try**, **persuade**, **help** and **decorate**. First, **intend** is followed by a non-finite complement **to try to persuade her to help Sue decorate her house**. Second, **try** is followed by **to persuade her to help Sue decorate her house**. Third, **persuade** is completed by **her to help Sue decorate her house**, and fourth **help** is followed by **Sue decorate her house**. This illustrates the possibility of having more than one catenative verb within the same sentence. But this does not mean that all catenative verbs can be followed by such a long chain.

Huddleston(1988:63) confirms that the term 'catenative' denotes a construction characterized by being repeated, i.e. recursive, shaping a series of verbs occurring before other non-finite verbs as a complement with or without an intervening material between the two verbal groups. One should distinguish catenative complement from other complements as in:

4. He is reading a short story.

**reading** is not catenative because it is followed by an object, **a short story**, not a non-finite catenative complement.

Consequently, a predicate which consists of two or three verbal groups is not always considered as a catenative construction. Although the verb **arrived** in example (5) is followed by –ing form **running**,

5. The boys arrived running.
6. The driver stopped to check the tires.

yet still it describes the manner in which the boys arrived. In example (6), **to check**, following **stopped**, is a prepositional phrase expressing purpose. So, neither **arrived** nor **stopped** are catenative because their complement shows manner and purpose respectively which is not the main concern of catenative complement (Mindt,1999:343).

Downing and Locke(2006:331) note catenative verbs are "mid-way between lexical verbs and auxiliaries. They do not function as operators, also require the do-operator". Unlike modal and semi-modal, catenative verbs have three to five forms of the verb paradigm. They can be used in the past and present tenses, active and passive forms, and with indefinite, progressive, perfective or progressive and perfective aspect:

7. The lady has been **asked** to write a scientific report.

In terms of function, modal and semi-modals function as auxiliaries within the verbal group whereas catenative verbs function as head of the verb phrase followed by another verb functioning as the direct object:

8. He ought to study hard.
9. The boy wants to borrow a book.

So, **to** in example (8) is a particle connected with semi-modals whereas **to** in (9) is the infinitive marker related to the catenative verb **want** (Huddleston,1984:126).

Peters(2004: 96) points out that catenative verbs might be followed by –ing form, to infinitive, -en form and bare infinitive form of the verb, but a modal verb precedes bare infinitive form of the main verb only. With reference to meaning,

catenative verbs can either describe the action of the following verb such as **fail, continue, finish, get, happen, help, chance, get, keep, stop, tend and manage**. Or they initiate a mental viewpoint such as **remember, attempt, forget, try, expect, consider, prefer, regret, strive, risk and want**.

In terms of similarities, Quirk et al (1985:1477) mention that catenative verbs and semi-auxiliaries are characterized by catenation reflecting their capacity to formulate a sequence of verbs, i.e. followed by non-finite constructions. Sabir (2016: 40-1 ) adds that semantically these two types are similar. One might say, for example, the meaning of **want to** is the same as that of **will**. Syntactically, they do not depend upon the subject in passive sentences expressing meanings of modality and aspect. Moreover, catenative verbs resemble other types of main verbs syntactically speaking being preceded by the auxiliary verb **to do** in negatives and interrogatives.

## 1.2 Semantic Properties

Huddleston and Pullum(2002:160) comment on the idea of time with reference to the main clause and the dependent -ing clause in which catenatives occur:

- 10.They **remembered** going to the party.
- 11.They **enjoyed** going to the party.
- 12.They **intended** going to the party.

Example (10) shows the time of going referred to in the non-finite or embedded clause is anterior to the time of remembering referred to in the main clause. In (11), the time of going in the non-finite clause and the time of enjoying in the main clause is simultaneous, i.e. happening at the same time. In (12), the time of going in the non-finite clause is posterior, i.e. later in time, to the time referred to in the main clause.

Semantically, Huddleston and Pullum(2002:160) state catenative verbs show temporal interpretation with their complement. The verbs **recall, recollect, forget, remember** are only anterior to other verbs in the sentence:

- 13.We **remember** giving you the book.

But verbs such as **deny**, **admit**, **regret**, and **resent** can be anterior or simultaneous to other verbs in the sentence:

14. She **resent** taking the mobile while she was busy.

The verbs **like**, **believe**, **begin**, **seem** occur at the same time with other verbs in the same sentence:

15. He **seems** to do 'The Times' crossed.

When catenative verbs express possible future, i.e. prospective, the second verb can almost be used in the infinitive form with 'to' such as **decide**, **want**, **need**, **expect**, **promise**, **plan**, **hope**, **intend**. This indicates the infinitive denoting important hypothetical situations:

16. My friends **plan** to open a new restaurant in London this summer.

But once denoting an emotion, a principle, or a permanence; the second verb is most likely used in the -ing form like **stand**, **love**, **detest**, **hate**, **like**, **enjoy**, **can't stand**, **dislike**. The meaning of the -ing complement is that of a situation reflecting a fact or actuality:

17. My sister **hates** making cakes. ( Johansson,1987:282-3)

Matsumoto(2016:13) states although most of the non-finite complements are characterized by the absence of the subject yet still one should know its identity since the typical function of the verb phrase is of a predicate, i.e. argument, of which it is predicated. Consequently, there are two kinds of subjects within non-finite complement: raising and non-raising.

Huddleston (1988:165) shows a comparison between raising and non-raising subject in accordance with catenative verbs depending on whether there is a semantic relationship existing between the subject and its catenative verb or not:

18. Albert managed to find the book.

19. Albert happened to find the book.

Example (18) shows that there is a direct semantic relation between the subject and the catenative verb **managed** meaning **Albert** made an effort to find that book. However, there is no such semantic relation between **Albert** and the catenative verb **happened** in example (19). This is supported by the paraphrase **It happens that Albert found the book**. So, the paraphrase emphasizes **Albert** has no connection with **happen** because the act of finding the book took place accidentally without any effort. This justifies how it appears in **find** clause semantically speaking though it appears in **happen** clause syntactically speaking. Consequently, **Albert** in (18) is a non-raising subject whereas **Albert** in (19) is a raising subject since it has been shifted, i.e. raised, out of the subordinate clause to the main clause syntactically and semantically speaking. **Albert** in (19) is not the argument of the verb **happened** and the missing subject has a raised interpretation. The difference between raising and non-raising can also be seen with reference to bare infinitive and –ing forms as catenative complements as in:

- 20. Linda needn't send the email. (raising)
- 21. Linda daren't send the email. (non- raising)
- 22. Tom heard the guards beating the prisoners. (raising)
- 23. Tom caught the guards beating the prisoners. (non- raising)

### 1.3 Classification of Catenative Verbs

Leech et al. (2009:195) maintain native speakers of English use a number of catenative verbs showing the starting point of an action or state, its continuation or end. The most commonly used verbs include: **begin**, **finish**, **stop**, **start**, **cease** and **continue**. The difference among them lies in the complementation patterns in which they occur when verbs like **finish** and **stop** are to be followed by gerund not infinitive, whereas **begin**, **start**, **cease**, or **go on** can be followed by gerund and infinitive:

- 24. He **started** writing/ to write the story.

This section focuses on how catenative verbs are classified syntactically and semantically.

### 1.3.1 Syntactic Classification

Palmer (1987:173) mentions two main criteria considered in the classification of catenative verbs as far as the construction in which they occur. On the one hand, they might be followed by four forms which are bare infinitive, to-infinitive , -ing form and -en form. On the other hand, there may or may not exist a noun (phrase) or pronoun between the catenative verb and the non-finite verb following it.

Consequently, Huddleston and Pullum(2005: 215) distinguish two forms of catenative verbs dependent upon the existence or absence of the noun (phrase) occurring between the catenative verb and its complement. If there appears such an intervening noun phrase, it is called a complex catenative verb which is understood as the subject of the dependent clause. But if there is no such an intervening noun phrase, it is called a simple catenative verb.

#### 1. 3. 1.1 Catenative Verbs Followed by To- infinitive

Burton-Roberts(2011: 273) remarks that one of the non-finite verb forms following catenatives is to- infinitive formulated by the verb in its stem form preceded by the infinitive marker **to**. Such form can also be in the progressive, perfective, progressive-perfective and passive forms:

25.They **want** to play tennis.

Downing and Locke( 2006:109- 10) state that the catenative verbs followed by to- infinitive fall under two groups depending on whether they are with or without an intervening noun phrase. The first group includes verbs such as **want, intend, love, like, arrange, prefer** and **wish** which are followed by to- infinitive without any pronoun or noun (phrase) between them, i.e.no explicit subject of the dependent clause. Hence, the implied subject will be the same as that of the main clause:

26. Anna has **arranged to** travel to Paris next week.



Example (26) shows the act of travelling is done by **Anna**. The structure of to-infinitive illustrates a situation which reflects an event where **to** symbolically reflects the movement towards the event. So, **Anna** is considered as the subject of the main clause as well as that of the dependent clause.

In addition, the same group followed by to- infinitive can have an explicit subject, i.e. an intervening noun (phrase) as in:

27. My father didn't **like** me to be a bus driver.

Semantically, what **my father**, in example (27), didn't like is not the person or thing rather the whole situation. Consequently, the non- finite clause with its subject **me** is a unit interpreted as an untypical direct object of the main verb **like** (Downing and Locke, 2006:109-110).

The second group consists of speech act verbs such as **recommend, persuade, expect, advise, tell, allow, invite, beg, promise, ask, and offer**. It shows an intervening noun phrase that can function as the object of the main verb as well as the implicit subject of the embedded to- infinitive clause:

28. My grandmother **convinced** Sarah to stay with her brother.

So, **Sarah** is the subject of the verb **stay** as well as the overt direct object of the catenative verb **convinced**. This is clearly shown when **Sarah** becomes the subject of the passive sentence as in:

29. Sarah was **convinced** to stay with her brother (Berk,1999:241)

Semantically, one usually invites, advises, promises or persuades someone not a situation, and the to- infinitive clause expresses the course of the action to be taken. This means that the identity of the intervening noun phrase following catenative verbs of this group must be of human reference or at least animate not a thing (Downing and Locke, 2006:110).

### 1. 3.1.2 Catenative Verbs Followed by –ing Clause

Burton-Roberts (2011: 274) states that another non-finite form following catenative verbs is –ing participle with various forms of the perfect, progressive, perfect-progressive or passive:

30. The lady **stopped** writing her short story a year ago.

Downing and Locke (2006: 112) mention that catenative verbs followed by –ing participle, as a dependent clause, include **avoid, enjoy, like, regret, risk, love, miss, forget, hate, resent, remember, dislike** and **can't help**. There is no intervening noun (phrase) separating these verbs and the non-finite –ing complement:

31. George **avoided** traveling by plane.

Syntactically, the implicit subject of the dependent clause **traveling by plane** in example (31) is similar to that of the main clause, namely **George**. This type of –ing catenative complement reflects a factual meaning of not traveling by plane.

Berk (1999: 249-50) adds another group of catenative verbs followed by an –ing dependent clause, but with an intervening noun (phrase) separating them. The verbs are: **keep, see, come across, hear, find, discover, leave, smell, catch** and **feel**:

32. They **found** the child sleeping on the sofa.

So, **the child**, in example (32), is considered as the subject of the subordinate clause **sleeping on the sofa** and the object of the main clause, which can be made the subject of the passive sentence in example (33)

33. The child was found sleeping on the sofa.

Thomson and Martinet (1986: 169-70) state that there is a group of catenative verbs which can be followed by both –ing and to- infinitive forms as two types of non-finite verbal complements without a change in meaning. These verbs are **begin, start, continue** and **cease**:

34.They **began** watching/ to watch the film.

With reference to the verb **can't/ couldn't bear**, it can precede both –ing and to-infinitive dependent clauses; however the infinitive is preferable once it refers to feelings that prevent the subject performing the action as in (35). The verbs **intend, permit, allow, advise** and **recommend** show no difference in meaning as far as the two types of catenative complements, but it is necessary to use the infinitive if it is followed by an object especially in formal speech, i.e. there is a concentration on the person concerned:

35. She couldn't bear to tell him. (so she didn't)

36.I **advise** her to fill in the form.

37. They don't **allow** parking in front of the cinema.

However, Alexander(1988: 320-1) refers to differences in meaning when a small group of catenative verbs are followed by both –ing and to- infinitive forms such as **forget, try, remember** and **go on**. The verbs **remember, regret** and **forget** have a present \ future - action reference when they precede to- infinitive, and a past- action reference before –ing participle:

38. **Remember** to close the window at night. (**remember** is the earlier action, **to close** is the second action)

39. She **remembered** booking the ticket. (**booking** is the first action, **remembered** is the second one)

The verb **try** means 'make an effort' before infinitive with 'to', but it means 'experiment' before –ing form:

40.You should **try** to solve your problems.

41.**Try** pressing the green button on the left.

The verb **go on** reflects a sense of continuation of the action without being interrupted once it precedes the –ing form whereas **go on** with to- infinitive means 'doing a different thing':

42. **Go on** reading the story.

43. After doing his homework, Tom **went on** to watch TV.

### 1.3.1.3 Catenative Verbs Followed by Bare Infinitive.

Burton-Roberts (2011: 272) illustrates that a catenative verb might be followed by the bare infinitive form of the verb as a complement. A bare infinitive verb consists of a lexical verb in its 'un-tensed stem' since it is not preceded by any auxiliary or the infinitive particle **to**:

44. My mother made me darn my socks.

Here, Huddleston(1988:164) refers to a relatively small group of catenative verbs which can be followed by bare infinitive verbs; most of which follow modal- verb operators such as **may** and **can**. This kind of dependent clause functioning as a catenative complement evokes an event including an end-point. They can denote coercion such as **let, make, have**; sense perception such as **feel, hear, overhear, watch, observe, notice, see**; and the verb **help**:

45. I **saw** her leave the party.

Downing and Locke(2006:111) add that such verbs are followed by an intervening noun (phrase) regarded as the object of the main clause and the subject of the bare infinitive clause. At the same time, some of the clauses having verbs of perception and coercion can be changed to passive. Here, the intervening noun phrase will be the subject of the passive sentence and the bare infinitive will be replaced by to- infinitive as in:

46. She **made** the driver wait for two hours. ~ The driver was made to wait for two hours.

Quirk et al. (1985:1206) point out that the verbs **notice, help, have** and **let**, once used in a mono-transitive construction, cannot be changed into the passive form:

47. The boy **had** me explain the lesson again.

In this case, one cannot say \* I **was had(to) explain the lesson again**. Downing and Locke (2006: 111) state that it is not easy to differentiate the meaning of the verb **help** with or without **to**. With bare infinitive, one might analyze its meaning

as the helper is actively involved in performing the action. With to infinitive, it expresses the meaning of '**contribute to**' the action.

#### 1.3.1.4 Catenative Verbs Followed by –en Form

Downing and Locke(2006:113) mention another non- finite verbal complement with a past participle form of the verb involving **get, have, want, prefer, see, hear, feel, find** and **leave**:

48.The judge **wants** these cases done as soon as possible.

49.She **felt** her arm grasped from behind.

Quirk et al. (1985:1207) list a distinctive small group of catenatives followed by – ed form including the causatives **get** and **have**; the volitional **need, want** and **like**; perceptions **feel, watch, hear, and see**; and the verbs **leave, find** and **discover** showing a resultive state:

50.I would **like** my room cleaned.

Semantically, example (50) with –ed participle as a catenative complement is similar to one with the infinitive form of the verb **to be**. Consequently one can say **I would like my room to be cleaned**.

#### 1.3.2 Semantic Classification

This section is devoted to the semantic classification of catenative verbs. The researcher adopts the nine classes of catenatives by Palmer (1987:191- 205) depending on what they denote. They are as follows:

##### A. Verbs of Futurity

Catenative verbs in this group denote plans, wishes, arrangements, or hopes for future events done by the subject of the main clause characterized by the possibility of adverbials of future time in the dependent clause. They show aspect and voice. They include **wish, decide** and **desire** which come with to- infinitive only with or without an intervening noun phrase. **Plan, propose, and venture** are

similar to **decide** with reference to future actions done by the subject and characterized by the use of the adverbs of future time followed by -ing form and to- infinitive:

51. He **decided** to play tennis next week.

52. I **plan** going(to go) there tomorrow. (Palmer, 1987: 191)

### B. Verbs of Causation

These verbs are used to get or help someone else act or perform something showing the cause or reason behind doing something. These include: **help, make, let, have, get, and want**:

53. Allan **made** the girl finish her work. (Dixon, 2005: 197-8)

Cowan (2008: 500) names this group of verbs as **make verbs** followed by a bare infinitive, and the main clause occurring before them is the subject of the non-finite clause functioning as a catenative complement. Semantically, they are treated as manipulative or influence verbs since their object is affected by the subject of the main clause while performing the action of the catenative complement, i.e. the subject of the verbs of causation manipulates someone/ something to perform the action in the non-finite complement:

54. George **let** her revise his new book.

### C. Verbs of Report

This group includes verbs indicating saying, reporting, believing, etc. characterized by their ability to be constructed with **that clause** as in:

55. I **believe** Albert to be clever. ~ I believe that Albert is clever.

Example (55) shows **Albert** is not the object of the verb **believe** rather the whole dependent nonfinite clause, namely **Albert to be clever** is the object of the verb **believe**. Verbs of this group involve **accept, allege, affirm, argue, announce, certify, assert, estimate, conjecture, prove, believe, judge, know, reckon, read, remember, report, represent, state, say, think, surmise, take, admit, claim, consider** and **understand** (Palmer, 1987: 196-8).

#### D. Verbs of Perception

Palmer (ibid:199-200) remarks that the verbs of this group show sensation and imagination including **see, feel, hear, smell, watch, observe, imagine, conceive, fancy, notice, find, perceive**:

56. I can't **imagine** her doing all that.

Cowan(2008: 500) notes that perception verbs can be followed by bare infinitive, -ing form and -en form with certain restrictions on the use of the type of the complement. The only verb followed by these three forms is **see**. **Feel, hear** and **watch** are regularly followed by bare infinitive and -en form. The verb **feel** is followed by bare infinitive after a reflexive pronoun. **Fancy, imagine, conceive** and **envisage** are followed by -ing as a catenative complement.

#### E. Verbs of Process

This group consists of verbs denoting processes, effort, stopping, starting and continuation. They are: **keep, stop, start, finish, cease, leave, prevent, postpone, quit, complete, escape** and **avoid** followed by -ing form with or without an intervening noun phrase. Example (57) shows that the catenative verb **finished** has the meaning of ending and avoiding:

57. He **finished** playing football. (Dixon,2005:180)

Downing and Locke(2006: 332-3) indicate that to-infinitive form following starting catenative verb admits the initial or terminative meaning of the phased event whereas the -ing form suggests the durative meaning of the second phase as in:

58. The baby **started** to cry.

59. The baby **started** crying.

Furthermore, if a verb of continuation is followed by to infinitive form, it means a shift\ movement towards a different action as in (60). However, the -ing catenative complement confirms the continuation of the same action as in (61):

60. She **went on** (afterwards) to study math.

61. She **went on** (as usual) studying math.

## F. Verbs of Achievement

One can see two subgroups within verbs of achievement which are verbs of attempting including: **strive, attempt, try** and **struggle** and verbs of success or failure including: **come, serve, fail, proceed, get, neglect, manage** and **omit**:

62. She **tried** to move the new table, but she couldn't.

They are followed by to- infinitive attracting the attention towards the starting point or completion of the action. Other verbs are included within this group such as **remember, forget, hate** and **regret** illustrating the action referred to might or might not take place, i.e. failure or success. They are followed by to- infinitive without an intervening noun phrase:

63. He **remembered** to water the planet. (Palmer, 1987:202)

## G. Verbs of Attitude

The verbs within this group express an attitude of mind towards doing an action. They can be of three subgroups. The first group includes **like, abhor, love, hate, (can't) bear, can't stand, dislike, loath** and **prefer** occurring with or without an intervening noun phrase preceding either -ing form or to-infinitive forms:

64. He **likes** (the children) playing/ to play football.

The second group involves verbs followed by -ing form with an intervening noun phrase as in (65) or without it as in (66). They are: **contemplate, chance, miss, consider, detest, enjoy, countenance, (don't) mind, discuss, resent, welcome, (can't) help, justify, risk** and **think about**:

65. I **miss** him coming to see me every month.

66. I **miss** going to the museum.



The third group is followed by the –ing form with an intervening noun (phrase). These are **deplore**, **advocate**, **anticipate** and **deprecate**:

67. I **deplore** them doing that. (Palmer: 203-4)

## H. Need Verbs

In this group, the verbs **need**, **want**, **deserve** have an active meaning, once their subject expresses a human reference, and they precede to- infinitive. However, they have a passive meaning with a non-human reference subject before the gerund:

68. The girls **need** to watch TV.

69. The curtains **need** washing.

In example (68), the subject of the main and subordinate clauses are identical whereas (69) shows that the subject of the main clause and the object of the subordinate is one having a passive meaning. One should pay attention to the verb **want** which has the same meaning as the verb **need** only when it is followed by –ing form. This happens once **need** is followed by to- infinitive, its meaning will be connected with a desire or wish (Palmer, 1987: 204).

## I. Verbs of Appearance and Chance

Downing and Locke (2006: 335) remark that catenative verbs such as **happen**, **chance** and **tend** denote chance or usualness as far as the activity performed in the catenative complement, the non-finite subordinate clause is concerned:

70. The lady **chanced** to overhear their speech. ~ (She heard it by chance.)

According to Palmer (1987: 205), the verbs in this group are of two semantic types. The first one is connected with appearance such as **appear** and **seem** which are very close to epistemic modals. The second one is connected with chance including **happen** and **chance**. These types are different from other types of catentatives by allowing the passive of the whole sentence. Both of them are followed by to infinitive as a catenative complement:

71. Layla **seems** to like Helen. ~ Helen seems to be liked by Layla.

## 2. Catenative Verbs in Arabic

### 2.1 Definitions

Khalil (1999: 232) states the verb phrase in Arabic might contain a single finite verb or a series of two verbs following one another with or without an intervening noun (phrase). Most of Arabic verb phrases are of single verbs as in:

72. نَامَتِ الْبِنْتُ.

The girl slept.\*

However, a number of non-finite verbs can be followed by finite verbs formulating a chain. So, the verb كَادُوا in example(73) is followed by the finite verb يَكُونُونَ, hence called a catenative verb:

73. "وَأَنَّهُ لَمَّا قَامَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ يَدْعُوهُ كَادُوا يَكُونُونَ عَلَيْهِ لِبَدًا (الجن: 19)"

“ Yet when the Devotee Of God stands forth To invoke Him, they just Make round him a dense crowd. ”(Ali, 2001:299)

نور الدين (2007:397) points out catenative verbs are detective verbs which cannot stand alone with their subject to complete the meaning of the sentence so they should be followed by another element which is a predicate. The main order of words in any nominal sentence is the subject المبتدأ, followed by a predicate الخبر. Sometimes the grammatical function of the subject and predicate might be changed due to the addition of certain detective verbs placed before this nominal sentence. This process is called 'النسخ' **annasx**. The verbs involved in this process, which are the main concern of this study, include: verbs of appropinquation, hope and beginning. They occur before the subject of the nominal sentence which should be in the indicative mood, whereas the predicate should be in the subjunctive mood( Khalil, 1999: 99). In this case, they are similar to **was** and **its sisters** كان وأخواتها. The difference between Arabic catenative verbs and **was** and **its sisters** is connected with the predicate. The predicate of the former should be a verbal sentence whether preceded by 'an أن **that** which governs the subjunctive mood as in (74) or not as in (75) whereas that of the latter is a noun(phrase). The

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\* The researcher's translation.

verb in the predicate after a catenative verb should be in the imperfect form whereas its subject is an implied pronoun having the same reference with the subject of the catenative verb:

74. أوشك الامتحان أن ينتهي.

The exam was about to finish.\*

75. (الأندلسي، 1998:1224) كاد الولد يصطدم بالسيارة.

The boy **was about** to collide with a car.\*

الدحاح ( 1995: 5) gives general features for catenative verbs. First, nearly most are uninflected verbs, i.e. perfect, since they are restricted to the past except **أوشك** and **كاد** which can be inflected for the present **يوشك** and **يكاد** , and for the agent( active and passive) **موشك** and **كاند**. Second, the predicate should be a verbal sentence in the present form and in the subjunctive mood whose subject is an indicative pronoun referring back to the subject of the catenative verb. Third, the normal sequence in which the predicate occurs is after its subject, but it might occur before it as in (76). In example (77), **البرق** is its subject while **يخطف** is the verbal sentence which consists of the verb and an implied pronoun referring to **البرق**, functioning as the predicate of the catenative verb **يكاد**:

76. كاد يحترق البيت. \ كاد البيت يحترق.

The house was about to burn.\*

77. "يَكَادُ الْبَرْقُ يَخْطَفُ أَبْصَارَهُمْ كُلَّمَا أَضَاءَ لَهُمْ مَشَوْا فِيهِ وَإِذَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ قَامُوا وَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَذَهَبَ بِسَمْعِهِمْ وَأَبْصَارِهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ." (البقرة: 20)

"The lightening all but snatches away their sight; every time the light (Helps) them, they walk therein." (Ali, 2001:20)

## 2. 2 Classification of Catenative Verbs

This section is devoted to the classification of Arabic catenative verbs semantically speaking only because they have one structure of a subject realized by a noun(phrase), and a predicate realized by a verbal sentence. There are three types of Arabic catenative verbs which are as follows:

## 2.2.1 Verbs of Appropinquation

This group includes verbs implying the simple proximity of the events, near future, as expressed by the predicate. These verbs are: **كادَ** and **كَرَبَ**، **أوشكَ**. The predicate of **كادَ** and **كرب** is not preceded by the particle '**an أن that**' as in:

78. (الاستراباذي، 1996:219) **كادَ** وقتُ الامتحان **ينتهي**.  
The time of the exam was about to finish.\*

(بن يعيش 2011: 126) confirms that the verb **كادَ** is an uninflected verb only used in the perfect, and its predicate is used in the imperfect without a noun following it. This verb denotes nearness of the occurrence of the action of the predicate more than the verb **أوشكَ**. This justifies why its predicate is mostly without the particle '**an أن that**'. الهمداني (1980:329) illustrates that **كادَ** can take the form of the active participle especially in poetry as in:

79. أموتُ أسى يومَ الرجم، وإنني يقيناً لرهنٌ بالذي أنا كائنٌ.  
I die of grief on the day of stoning, indeed I'm surely bound by the plot I breed.\*

For عبد الحميد (1990: 312-6), usually the predicate of the verb **أوشكَ** is mostly preceded by '**an أن that**' as in (80), but it is rarely without it as in (81):

80. **أوشكَ** أحمدٌ أن يسافر.  
Ahmed was about to travel.\*  
81. **يُوشِكُ** مَنْ فَرَّ مِنْ مَنِيَّتِهِ فِي بَعْضِ غِرَاتِهِ **يُوافِقُهَا**.  
He who flees from his fate, beware in some of his raids, it will meet him there.\*

الهمداني (1980:328) sustains that the verb **أوشكَ** is used in the present form **يوشك** more than in the past form, and rarely it takes the form of the active participle **موشك** as in:

82. **فَمُوشِكَةٌ** أَرْضُنَا أَنْ تَعُودَا ... خَالَفَ الْأَنْبِيَا وَحُوشَا يَبَابَا.  
Our land is on the verge to revert, contrary to being inhabited, a wild and desolate place.\*

Example (82) shows that the active participle **مُوشِكٌ** is followed by its subject **أَرْضُنَا** and its predicate **أَنْ تَعُودَا**.

Wright(1996: 107) maintains **أوشك** is little used in the perfect form; and its predicate is rarely used in the imperfect indicative. However, its predicate is generally preceded by the particle '**an أن that**' with the subjunctive mood:

ولو سئل الناس التراب لأوشكوا - إذا قيل هاتوا - أن يملوا ويمنعوا. 83.

If people were asked for soil to share when told "Give!", they'd tire and forbear.\*

In addition, **أوشك** can be personal and impersonal since it is followed by infinitive with or without '**to**'. One might say, for example, 'يوشك احمدُ أن يسافر', 'يوشك احمدُ أن يسافر' in which the form 'يوشك' is a vulgarism.

السامرائي (2000: 274) states that the verbs **كَادَ** and **كَرَبَ** denote the very/ near coming occurrence of the event at present although the event has not happened yet. Consequently, their predicates should be verbs that are not preceded by the particle '**an أن that**' because this particle denotes futurity. What supports this is that the Holy Quran has no single example in which the verbs **كَادَ** and **كَرَبَ** are connected with the particle '**an أن that**'. However, ابن مالك (1977: 812-13) notices it is possible to precede the predicate of these two verbs by the particle '**an أن that**' only for certain poetic purposes intended by the poet. The use of this particle depends on the nearness or farness as far as the performance of the action expressed in the predicate of these verbs are concerned. So, if (s)he means the very near occurrence of the action, there will be no '**an أن that**' before the predicate. But if (s)he does not mean now for certain purposes, the predicate can be preceded by this particle:

Wright (1996:107) adds **كَرَبَ** occurs as a perfect verb only; and what follows it is supposed to be in the imperfect indicative mood rarely with '**an أن that**' with the subjunctive mood. **كَرَبَ** in example (84) is a past-tensed verb of appropinquation which cannot be used in the present or active participle, **الشِّتَاءُ** is its subject, and **يَنْقُضِي** is a verbal sentence functioning as its predicate:

84. **كَرَبَ الشِّتَاءُ يَنْقُضِي.**

Winter was about to elapse.\*

### 2.2.2.Verbs of Hope

Wright(1996:107) defines this kind of catenative verbs as verbs reflecting the hope of an action occurring as expressed in the predicate. **حَرَى** and **عَسَى**، **اخْلُوقْ** are verbs of hope:

85. عسى الحزن الذي أنت فيه يكون وراءه سعادة قريبة.  
May your sadness be followed by soon happiness.\*
86. حرى المريض أن يشفى.  
May the patient get rid of his sickness.\*
87. اخلولق المسافر أن يعود.  
May the traveler be back again.\*

الانباري (1997:127) illustrates that the predicate of the verb عسى should be followed by 'an أن that denoting futurity because عسى expresses a hope going to be fulfilled in the future and this particle occurs in the predicate. Consequently, its predicate is supposed to be preceded by a particle carrying the same meaning of futurity, viz the 'an أن that as in:

88. عسى احمد أن ينجح.  
May Ahmed succeed.\*

الاشبيلي (1998:288) and الهمداني (1980:323) maintain that عسى, as a detective perfect verb which is the main concern of Arabic catenative verbs, is similar to كاد and its sisters when its subject is in the nominative case whereas its predicate, a verbal sentence whose verb is imperfect, is preceded by أن in the subjunctive. This is in contrast to what المبرد (1994 : 70) states saying that زيد in a sentence like 'عسى زيد أن يقوم' is the subject whereas ان يقوم is the object of the verb عسى. Here, ابن عصفور (1972: 100) and الهمداني (1980:323) disagree with him stating that ان يقوم cannot be interpreted as the infinitive noun because the infinitive particle works together with the verb in order to express the meaning of hope. What supports this is that أن يقوم is the predicate of عسى, not the object, which is incapable of being changed into active participle:

89. عسى هند أن تعمل بجد.  
We hope that Hind works hard.\*

Wright(1996:107-8) points out that عسى has the first person singular form which is عَسَيْتُ, but it is rarely seen as عَسَيْتُ. Although it is used in the perfect, yet still it has the meaning which is connected with the imperfect. In most cases, it has the present sense whether definite or indefinite. Originally, عسى is constructed with the subjunctive just like كاد as in:

90. عسى المسافر أن يعود..  
May the traveler return.\*

With reference to **أخلونق** and **حرى** , their predicate is followed by **أن** 'an in the subjunctive. This means they cannot be separated from **أن** 'an for any purpose as in:

حرى سالم أن ينجح. \ حرى أن ينجح سالم..91.  
May Salim succeed.\*

So, the predicate **أن ينجح** in (91) can be placed after the intervening subject **سالم** or directly after the catenative verb **حرى**. Moreover, these verbs are used in the perfect only, and cannot be inflected for the dual or plural (الاستراباذي, 1996: 219).

### 2.2.3 Verbs of Beginning

الغلابيني (1994: 286) defines verbs of beginning as verbs showing the starting point of doing the action. For him, any verb that carries the meaning of the beginning of the action is called as a verb of beginning:

أنشأ خليل يكتب. 92.  
Khalil started writing.\*

Khalil (1999: 232) sustains these verbs are only used in the perfect tense; and they precede an imperfect indicative verb sharing the same subject such as: **طفق، أخذ، جعل، شرع، بدأ، قرب، أنشأ، علق**:

بدأ يلعب كرة القدم بعد أن غادر الضيوف. 93.  
He **started** playing football after the guests left.\*

So, **بدأ** is the verb of beginning whose subject is the implied pronoun referring to **هو** **huwa**, **he** whereas its predicate is the verbal sentence, playing football. **يلعب كرة القدم**.

نور الدين (2007: 399) mentions that though the number of these verbs is nearly eight, yet still the verb of beginning **طفق** is considered as the most commonly used catenative verb whereas the verbs **هَبَّ** and **هَلَّهَلْ** are stronger than other verbs. ابن عصفور (1972: 99) adds that the verbal sentence functioning as the predicate of **أخذ، جعل،** and **طفق** ' cannot be preceded by **أن** **that** because it shows a contrast between **أن** **that** denoting future time and the meaning of verbs of beginning showing actions happening at the present time:



94. "(فَأَكَلَا مِنْهَا فَبَدَتْ لَهُمَا سَوْآتُهُمَا وَطَفِقَا يَخْصِفَانِ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنْ وَرَقِ الْجَنَّةِ وَعَصَى آدَمُ رَبَّهُ فَغَوَى)"  
(طه:121)

"In the result, they both ate of the tree, and so their nakedness appeared to them: they began to sew together, for their covering, leaves from the Garden: thus did Adam disobey his Lord, and allow himself to be seduced." (Ali, 2001: 154)

Moreover, الدحاح (1995: 5) states that all verbs of beginning are detective. If any one of them is inflected for the present, imperative and active participle, they are not detective; rather they are similar other transitive and intransitive verbs. Example (95) shows the verb **يَأْخُذُ taken** is no longer considered catenative because it is inflected for the present, but a transitive verb followed by the subject and object respectively:

95. لم يأخذ التلميذ كتبه.  
The pupil hasn't taken his books.\*

## Comparison of Catenative Verbs in English and Arabic

This section aims to delineate the similarities and differences of English and Arabic catenative verbs in terms of definition and classification syntactically and semantically.

### 2.2 Definition of Catenative Verbs

English catenative verbs are those finite verbs that can be joined with other non-finite verbs within the same clause forming a chain of meaning, i.e. catenation. Arabic catenative verbs are detective which cannot be inflected for the present, imperative or active participle except the verbs **كَادَ** and **أَوْشَكَ**; and are followed by finite verb phrases. The predicate is a verbal sentence whether preceded by the particle **'an أن** **that** or not. If the subject has a semantic relationship with its catenative verb, whether in English or Arabic, it is called 'non-raising subject', but if not, it is called 'raising'.



### 2.3 Classification of Catenative Verbs

Syntactically, English catenative verbs form a sequence of two predicates; each of which is a verbal group where the second one is non-finite. They can be either simple in form once no intervening noun occurring between them and the non-finite complement, or complex with an intervening noun. Moreover, English catenatives are of four types depending on the following non-finite complement: catenatives followed by –ing participle, to- infinitive, -en form and bare infinitive. Arabic catenatives precede nominal sentences consisting of a subject in the indicative mood whereas its predicate is a verbal sentence in the accusative mood. Most Arabic catenatives are followed by an intervening noun(phrase) functioning as its subject except certain verbs whose subject, the intervening noun, is an implied pronoun as such directly followed by the verbal sentence functioning as the predicate. The predicate is a verbal sentence with or without the particle 'an أن that.

Semantically, there are nine English catenative verbs denoting futurity, report, causation, perception, process, attitude, need, achievement, and appearance. Arabic ones are three with reference to the time of the action in the predicate: verbs of appropinquation, hope and beginning.

## 4. Conclusions

English catenatives represent one specific finite verbal class characterized by their capacity to be followed by a distinctive type of complement realized exclusively by non-finite clause shaping a catenation. Arabic catenatives refer to a set of detective verbs followed by finite verbs as a complement. Both English and Arabic catenatives cannot function alone or express meaning unless followed by other verbs. The catenative verb might be separated from its complement by means of an intervening noun phrase both in English and Arabic.

Syntactically speaking, the type of English catenative verb determines the form of the non-finite complement whether to-infinitive, -ing form, -en form or bare infinitive with or without a subject for that complement. The type of Arabic catenative verb determines whether its predicate is preceded by the particle 'an أن **that** so that it could be in the subjunctive mood , or it is not preceded by this particle so that the predicate could be in the imperfect indicative.

The most commonly used types of English catenative verbs are followed by –ing form expressing factual meaning and to- infinitive form denoting hypothetical meaning. Arabic catenative verbs whose predicate cannot be preceded by 'an أن **that** express factual meaning whereas those preceded by 'an أن **that** express hypothetical meaning. .

Semantically speaking, English catenative verbs express futurity, report, causation, perception, process, attitude, need, achievement, and appearance whereas Arabic catenatives express appropinquation, hope and beginning. The time of the action in the catenative complement might be interior, simultaneous or posterior to that of the catenative verb in the main clause both in English and Arabic.

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