

ARTICLES

A SEARCH FOR SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS IN ARABIC

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The study aims at providing a short summary of issues associated with verb sequencing and, more specifically, verb serializing in some of the world's languages, and to confront them with the linguistic situation of Arabic. Since the analytic structures stand relatively closer to the process of sequencing than fully inflected synthetic ones, the evidence gathered from the colloquial varieties of Arabic will constitute the chief material basis for the present inquiry.

Key words: argument sharing, compound verb, coordination, coordinated verb pairs, modal verb (Vm), as opposed to full or main verb (V), serial verb (SV), serial verb construction (SVC) subordination, verb pairs, verb phrase (VP), verb sequence.

1. Serial verb constructions have attracted the attention of linguists for several decades. The relatively large literature, devoted to the topic, did not succeed so far in proposing a generally acceptable definition of what is known as serial verb construction (SVC), nor has it managed to dissipate doubts about whether the SVC represents an autonomous and self-contained linguistic phenomenon at all.

SVCs are presented as phenomena occurring in a number of the world's languages, most frequently in certain African, Asian and Creole languages on both hemispheres of the globe. Despite a great number of tentative, sometimes contradictory definitions, scattered through the literature, the linguistic nature of

SVCs does not cease to be highly controversial. Alexandra Aikhenvald's definition of the SVC is patently influenced by semantic considerations:

'A serial verb construction is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination or syntactic dependency of any other sort. Serial verbs describe what can be conceptualized as a single event. They are monoclausal; their intonational properties are those of a monoverbal clause, and they have just one tense, aspect and polarity value.'¹

Aikhenvald's definition, however, is confronted by a host of conflicting views touching on the very basic notions, like 'single predicate', 'monoclausal', 'single event' and others.² In view of the persisting uncertainty about what a SVC actually is, Charles Li and Sandra Thompson, known for their protracted interest in the phenomenon, seem to confirm that the identification of SVCs ultimately depends on extralinguistic factors: "We claim ... that it is 'knowledge of the world', and not linguistic knowledge which is responsible for suppressing or encouraging a particular reading for a serial verb sentence ... ; the choice between them in any given speech situation depends on the context and the hearer's knowledge of what the world is like."³

Difficulties with creating an exclusive definition of the SVC have led Crowley to suggest a structural continuum instead, an abstract scale that would signal gradual loosening of the syntactic juncture between the two verbal constituents, with verbal compounds at its maximum, coordinate clauses, at its minimum pole, and serial verbs somewhere in-between.⁴

In spite of all these conflicting views about the very essence of the SVC, the literature devoted to the phenomenon abounds. The SVC is most currently presented as a construction consisting of two or more verbs or verb phrases without any subordinating or coordinating conjunction (the exclusion of conjunctions seems to be the major source of controversies about the SVC structure), as illustrated by the following sentences borrowed from Krio, a West African English-based creole:

bai (buy) + gi (give):
i bai klos gi im pikin
he buy clothes give his child

¹ AIKHENVALD, A.Y. Some Thoughts on Serial Verbs, p. 1; quoted in Newmeyer, F.J. Some Thoughts on the Serial Verb Construction, p. 1.

² Cf. NEWMEYER, F.J., *ibid.*

³ LI, C. and THOMPSON, S. Serial Verb Constructions in Mandarin Chinese: Subordination or Coordination?, pp. 96-103; quoted in Waltraud, P. The 'serial verb construction' in Chinese: A Gordian knot, p. 9.

⁴ CROWLEY, T. Serial Verbs in Oceanic: A Descriptive Typology, p. 18; quoted in Newmeyer, F., *op. cit.* p. 5.

'he bought some clothes which he gave to his child' (benefactive interpretation); the English relative clause may freely be replaced by a coordinated sentence: "he bought some clothes and (he) gave them to his child"; or:

tek (take) + kut (cut):

a tek nef kut di bred

I take knife cut the bread

'I cut the bread with a knife'(instrumental interpretation)⁵

Muysken and Veenstra widen the list of the SVC's properties. A SVC must have:

- only one expressed subject
- at most one expressed direct object
- one specification for tense/aspect (only on the first verb, or on both verbs /but semantically one specification/, or only on the second verb)
- only one possible negator
- no intervening coordinating conjunction
- no intervening subordinating conjunction
- no intervening pause possible.⁶

Speculations about the possibility to view some types of the English multiverb sequences as SVCs did not lead to conclusive results. A sequence like 'go get the book' is excluded from the list of potential candidates since, as Crowley argues, the same meaning can be expressed by means of coordination (go and get the book) or subordination (go to get the book).⁷

1.1. Although using coordination as a structural model for analysing SVCs seems to be highly suitable and appropriate, chiefly for its ability to show temporal ordering of events or states expressed by verbal constituents of the construction (concurrence, simultaneity or succession, sequentiality), most researchers reject this choice. Collins⁸ tries to explain the reason for this exclusion in some multiverb sequences from Ewe, a Niger-Congo language:

a. me fo kaɖɛgbɛ gba
 I hit lamp break

⁵ FINNEY, M. 'Substratal Influence on the Morphosyntactic Properties of Krio', pp. 58-81; quoted in Johnson, S., Revisiting the structure of serial verb constructions, pp. 39-48.

⁶ MUYSKEN, P. and VEENSTRA, T. 'Serial Verbs'; quot. in Johnson, S., op. cit., pp. 40-41.

⁷ NEWMeyer, F., op. cit., pp. 3-4.

⁸ COLLINS, C. 'Argument Sharing in Serial Verb Constructions'. In *Linguistic Inquiry* 28, 461-497; quoted in Newmeyer, op. cit., p. 2.

ʾI hit the lamp and broke itʾ

- b. me fo kaḏegbe gba (yeme) tsimini
 I hit lamp break its glass
 ʾI hit the lamp and broke its glassʾ

Both sequences are compared from the point of view of their compliance with the postulate of argument sharing (a single argument, subject or object, has to be linked to two or more verbs acting as a single predicate⁹) which is one of the very basic distinctive properties of SVCs. Viewed from this angle, only the a-sequence is recognized as a SVC, while in the b-sequence there is no argument sharing as it has two separate arguments in the structural frame of what is assumed to be a covert coordinated construction. In case of doubts with this reasoning, Collins provides additional evidence supporting his analysis which is of no direct relevance to the present inquiry.

2. The fact that coordination, as a structural model for SVCs, gained little support in the literature, it cannot be excluded altogether from the domain of serial multiverb sequences in the search for an acceptable theory. Let us say at the very outset that Arabic, irrespective of whether the full inflected Standard (Classical and Modern Written) Arabic or regionally differentiated Colloquial Arabic with a considerably reduced inflectional system, is hardly an ideal medium for the study of verb sequencing and tentative assumptions around verb serialization, all the more so when coordination, as a method of ordering verb sequences tending to be serialized, is put in question. When including coordinated sequences in the list of the Arabic multiverb (MV) constructions examined, it is with the understanding that despite the lowest level of conceptual dependence between their verbal constituents they may, as potential precursors to serialized verb sequences, further evolve towards tighter conceptual units. In tune with the aim of this inquiry the following MV sequences will be examined:

- (1) overt coordinated sequences (V+c+V)
- (2) covert coordinated sequences (V+ø+V)
- (3) modal sequences: modal verb with full verb (Vm+V)
- (4) verb pairs: full verb sequences (V+V).

A number of language-specific features of the Arabic MV sequences and, quite particularly, the inclusion of coordinated MV sequences in the list of constructions, selected for confrontation with the hypothetical SVC, calls for a number of introductory remarks. These result from differences between the linguistic system of Arabic and that known in typical serializing languages. The

⁹ See Aikhenvald's definition in §1 above.

confrontation will involve only a limited number of very basic structural characteristics shared by the Arabic MV sequences and the cross-linguistically defined SVCs. The Arabic MV sequences, conventionally reduced to two-verb units, do not strictly exclude more complex structures. Some of the basic issues:

- Only one expressed subject (ES): in the Arabic MV sequences, as listed in § 2 (1)-(4), is by convention, only one ES admissible; the latter competes with the inherent subjects (IS) of the Arabic verbs: the occurrence of an ES in the sequence invalidates the syntactic role of all ISs therein, in the case of its absence, the position of subject is assumed by the IS linked to the first verb in the sequence, that is:

ES is present: ES-1, V-1 + (ES-2),¹⁰ V-2

ES is absent: IS-1, V-1 + (IS-2), V-2.

One-subject constraint, imposed to the coordinated MV sequences (§ 2(1)-(2)) by convention (to obtain the maximum compatibility with serial structures), implies one-predicate syntactic role shared by two (or more) verbs in the sequence; as the coordination relationship does not allow satisfaction of the constraint, conceptual compatibility of the two predicates is postulated instead.

Inability of coordinated MV sequences to comply with the one-predicate syntactic role implies, at the same time, their incompatibility with monoclausal structures.

- No more than one expressed object may occur in a MV sequence (§2(1)-(4)).

- Asyndetic structures do not necessarily disconfirm their identity with coordinate sequences, nor do they automatically signal a monoclausal sentence structure.

- The basic tense/aspect (TA) specification¹¹ is implicitly signalled by the Arabic verbal stem forms as an inherent property of all verbs in the sequence, but only that linked to the first verb is the decisive TA specifier for the whole sequence. In coordinated MV sequences (§2(1)-(2)), the compliance with the latter constraint is only due to the accepted convention.

2.1. Overt coordinated MV sequences (V+c+V):

Only conjunctive sequences joined together by the coordinator (c) *wa-* 'and' will be examined, that is V+*wa*+V, as in:

Standard Arabic:

ES-1, V-1 + *wa* + (ES-2), V-2:

ʿazza + *ǧalla*:

¹⁰ Invalidated syntactic roles are marked by bracketing.

¹¹ Perfective/past tense, imperfective/present, future tense; a more detailed specification by a variety of morpho-syntactic means and by the position in a variety of syntactic contexts is of no relevance to the matter.

allāhu ʿazza wa-ğalla 'God is Mighty and Glorious' (expression of eulogy);
ğallā ʿalā + sallama:

(*muḥammadun*) *ğallā llāhu ʿalayhi wa-sallama* '(Muḥammad) God bless him and grant him salvation!' (eulogy);

ištadda + istaḥkama:

ištaddat ʿazmatu l-ʿasʿari wa-staḥkamat 'the prices crisis worsened and took hold' (Bg 543), etc.;

IS-1, V1 + wa + (IS-2), V-2:

yyāka naʿbudu wa-yyāka nastaʿinu 'You alone we worship, and to You alone we turn for help' (Q 1:4; transl. AA, 11);

frequent coordinated imperatives:

ismaʿ wa-ntabih 'listen and pay attention' (Bg 439);

iʿqilhā wa-tawakkal 'tie her (your camel) up and trust in God' (proverb; Bg 543)

iğlis wa-ntazir dawraka 'sit down and wait your turn' (ibid.).

Coordinated MV sequences like *ḡaḥika wa-nṣarafat ilā ʿamaliḥā* 'he laughed and she went off to her work' (Bg 544), have to be excluded from the class of coordinated sequences here examined, for their failure to comply with the convention of argument (here IS) sharing expressed in the formula IS-1, V-1 + wa + (IS-2), V-2, where (IS-2) is deprived of its syntactic role.

Colloquial Arabic:

yisʿfik wiḥannik 'may (God) you grant health and peace' (Takrāna, Tunisian Arabic, p. 1771-2);

staḥmed-utšakker 'praise (God) and be thankful (to Him)' (ibid., 2072);

hazz-uḥaff 'to hesitate', lit. 'to lift and put down' (ibid., 4164);

ihezz-uyunfuḡ 'to talk nonsense', lit. 'to lift and shake' (ibid., 4163: 'il parle à tort et à travers');

barred-usaḥḥen 'to hesitate (before taking an important decision)', lit. 'to (make) cool and to heat' (ibid., 1779: 'hésiter à prendre parti, à s'engager dans une entreprise', lit. 'laisser refroidir une place (en se levant) et la réchauffer (en se rasseyant)');

žrē-uzē bināthum (SA: *ğarā wa-ğā'a* ...) 'he rushed in and came among them' (ibid., 685: 'il accourut et vint se mettre entre eux');

šqē-wulqē (SA: *šaqiya wa-laqiya*...) 'he struggled hard and succeeded' (ibid., 3664: 'il a peiné et il a trouvé!'; se dit de celui qui a réussi après avoir pris de la peine).

2.2. Covert coordinated MV sequences (V-∅-V):

Colloquial Arabic:

šāddithā klētilhā qalbhā 'she hit her badly', lit. 'she beat her harshly and ate up her heart' (Sāsa, Tunisian Arabic, p. 52);

fa ḥarabet, tnakkaret ḡayyaret šakla 'she ran away, disguised oneself and changed her appearance' (Nabk, Syrian Arabic, p. 170); nevertheless, a subordinate interpretation cannot be excluded: 'she ... disguised oneself to change her appearance';

mšā:t žā:t fi hā:ki-ššowwā 'she came to the green meadow', lit. 'she walked and came...' (Sāsa, p. 62).

The expression *elli yašqā yalqā* 'who struggles hard, succeeds' (Takrāna, 2064: 'qui prend peine, trouve succès') has a meaning similar to *šqē-wulqē*, quoted in the previous paragraph, has to be excluded from the list because of its relative clause structure that opposes the principle of monoclausality and its implications.

Neither can constructions like *yžīu yaḥzru ʿa-dḏbiḥa* 'they (will) come to assist to the sacrifice' (ibid., 685) be safely classified as V- \emptyset -V sequences, as the second verb, as also in the previous example, stands in the position of the predicate of a subordinate clause that may be introduced, in Standard Arabic, by an overt subordinator *yağīūna li-yaḥḏurū (ilā) d-dabiḥata (-ti)*.

The two last constructions oppose conventions accepted for coordinated MV sequences in §2 above and, as complex sentences with subordinate clauses, they are by definition unable to comply with the constraint of monoclausality. The last construction, *yžīu yaḥzru ʿa-dḏbiḥa*, could perhaps more satisfactorily be analysed as a Vm+V sequence (see later on).

2.3. Modal MV sequences (Vm + V):

A modal MV sequence consists of a modal (Vm) and a full or main verb (V). A modal verb is an auxiliary verb that indicates modality. It is a verb that cannot act as an autonomous predicate unless followed by another verb (V), subordinated to the latter, that coact with it to this purpose. Owing to its pre-V position, the Vm is alternatively referred to as the proverb (Badawi-Hinds, Woidich and others). Functional aspects of modality expressed by the dichotomy of epistemic and deontic interpretations thereof¹² are of no relevance to the matter.

The following constructions are excluded from the set of Vm+V sequences (unless stated otherwise, the examples quoted refer to Standard Arabic):

- syndetic sequences: *wa-huwa mā sabaqa ʿan ʿa-lantuhu* 'and this is what I previously announced' (Bg 433); another reason for exclusion is the impersonal nature of the Vm *sabaqa* 'it happened before what is indicated by V'; the impersonal *sabaqa* may alternatively occur even in formally coordinated sequences, like *kamā sabaqa wa-qulnā* 'as we have previously said' (ibid.); an exception is allowed for formally coordinated sequences involving inflected modal verbs, like *ʿāda(t) wa-qāla(t)* 'he (she) said (it) again', lit. 'he (she)

¹² WOIDICH, M. Das Kairenisch-Arabische. Eine Grammatik, p. 275, 304, 313, 322.

returned and said', as in *'āda wa-šarraḥa* 'he repeated his declaration (Bg 422); in the latter sequence, the V is actually subordinated to the Vm, as may be confirmed by structural periphrases, such as *'āda yuṣarriḥu*, *'āda muṣarriḥan* and the like. In the latter interpretation, *'āda wa-qāla* -featured sequences that, moreover, comply with the constraint of argument sharing and confirm the identity of TA specification, stand markedly closer to the hypotactic nature of SVCs;

- impersonal sequences: see above, as well as sequences whose Vm is a verb like: *yumkinu ('an)* 'be able (to do), can (do)'; *yanbaġī ('an)* 'be desirable, ought (to do); *yaġibu ('an)* 'be necessary (to do)', etc.; these sequences further oppose the asyndetic principle and its implications;

- sequences with no stable TA identity of their constituents: since their basic form is implicitly signalled by the inflected verbal stem (schematically: perfective/past tense vs. imperfective/present or future tense) of each constituent independently of the rest of the sequences (except a limited number of sequence types and idiomatic expressions), the bulk of Standard Arabic Vm-V sequences have to be put off the list of precursor constructions believed to assume the structural status of serialized V+V constructions.

Not even Vm+V sequences with identical TA specification, like *lā yazālūna yakrahūna samā'a smihi wa-ru'yata šuratihi* 'they still hate to hear his name and see his picture', can be reliably granted the attribute of pre-serialized V+V structures because of the lack of stable TA identity, as may be seen in comparing the last sentence with *'inna l-ḥarba lā zālat tu'attiru fī kulli šay'in* 'the war still affects everything' (Bg, 426), where an imperfective-imperfective sequence contrasts with a perfective-imperfective construction.

The lack of stable TA identity characterizes most Vm+V sequences with modal verbs like *'aḥaḍa*, *šara'a*, *rāḥa*, *ġa'ala*, *zalla*, *'āda*, *raġa'a*, *mā zāla*, etc., in Standard Arabic. In general, the TA stability with various sets of modal verbs in regionally differentiated colloquial varieties of Arabic seems to be relatively higher.

Colloquial Arabic:

Bišmizzāni Arabic (Lebanon):

'āwdu riž'u 'they came back again', lit. 'they returned /and/ came back' (Jiha, 6);

ma 'utt šbaret ta tistwi il-'ikli 'I could not wait till the food would be ready' (ibid.);

šār trūḥ tżib ḥuwwāra 'she brought chalk', lit. 'she went and brought / to bring chalk' (ibid., 90); Vm is represented by an uninflected *æPr* and an inflected *rāḥ* (*trūḥ*), both verbs operating as inchoatives here, followed by a coordinated or subordinated V *žāb* (*tżib*) 'to bring';

žina rbaṭnā in: *žibna li-ḥmār(w-žina rbaṭnā* 'we brought the donkey and began (set out) to tie him up' (ibid., 100).

Nabk Arabic:

yğō yi'izmo in: *yğō yi'izmo w ysawwo xiṭbi f-wuṣṭ ha-lbāt* 'they invite (them) and arrange the betrothal in the house', lit. 'they go and/to invite ...' (Nabk, 152-3).

Cairo Arabic:

rūḥ gahhiz nomtak 'go and prepare yourself a place to sleep' (BH, 893); despite Badawi-Hinds' coordinatively featured translation, the preverb nature of *rūḥ*, implying a connotation of pressure and urgency, would seemingly allow use of an adverb instead of 'go': 'prepare your bed at once!' or something of the sort; with the preverb, the subordinate translation 'go to prepare your bed' would stand closer to the meaning of the Arabic construction.

In the case of emphasis put on the Vm, the latter can create its own Vm+Vm sequence, as in the following imperatives of *sāb* 'to leave' and *xalla* 'to let, allow; leave': *'ana ma ba'ullakšī sību xallih yimūt* 'I am not telling you to leave him (to die)', lit. 'to leave him /and/ let him die' (Mitchell, 126-7); the whole VP, however, is more complex: ((*sību+xallih*)+*yimūt*), that is:

- (Vm-1 + Vm-2): TA identity (real time of the speech act), argument sharing (at both subject and object positions), as against:

- ((Vm-1 + Vm-2) + V): failure of argument sharing: (Vm + Vm) share the same verbal stem (imperative, transitive) and its paradigmatic properties, contrasting with those of the V (imperfective, intransitive) and its paradigmatic implications;

'a^cad - yu^cud 'to sit; as preverb: to continue to' (BH, 710) + *baṣṣ - yibuṣṣ* 'to look at', i.e., *a^cud abuṣṣilha* 'I observe her (thoroughly)', lit. 'I sit /and/ look at her' in: *lamma kutt ašūf*

bitṭi ḥilwa fi ššāri^c awaⁿafha uddāmi w a^cud abuṣṣilha 'when I meet a pretty girl in the street, I let her stand in front of me and I look at her (appreciatingly)'; likewise: *'axudhum (iṣṣuwar) min ilbaⁿāl wi ṭṭa^cmagi w a^calla^ha 'a lḥiṭān w a^cud abuṣṣi liha* 'I take them (the pictures) from the grocer and the *ṭa^cmīya*-seller and hang them up on the wall and look at them again and again' (W, 302-303); recurrence of this modal sequence seems to signal a more stable conceptual relationship, like *thoroughness*, *protraction*, *repetition* and *visual observation*, *appreciation*, as the last two examples seem to suggest;

žām - yi'ūm 'modal of consequent action' (BH, 723) + *ḥibil - yiḥbal* 'to become pregnant (woman)', i.e. 'to become immediately pregnant' in: *inniswān illi ma-txallifšī trūḥ tixatṭi lkāfir min dōl tūm tiḥbal 'ala ṭūl* 'the women who have no offsprings step over such a *kāfir* and they become pregnant at once' (W,

331); it should be noted that the connotation of immediateness flows from the modal sequence alone and the adverb *'ala fūl* 'at once' is added for emphasis;

(*rāḥ - yirūḥ* 'to go (away)'; as preverb: 'to up and do something' + *gāb - yigīb* 'to bring' in: *law 'irift innu fī ššām l-arūḥ agību* 'if I knew he was in Syria I would bring him in' (W, 331).

2.4. Verb pairs: full verb sequences (V + V):

The notion, so far unexploited in the Arabic dialectology, has recently appeared in Woidich's grammar of Cairo Arabic (see note 12) to denote verb sequences whose two constituents, hence verb pairs (Verbpaare), form steady connections and conceptual units.

The tight coherence of the sequence prevents any sentence part to separate the two verb constituents from each other.¹³ The syntactic relationship connecting verb-pair constituents recalls that of SVCs, notably in leaving free space for speculations oscillating between covert coordination and subordination (see §1). The lack of a clear dividing line between modal and full meaning in a number of verbs, like Standard Arabic *rāḥa*, *'āda*, *raġa'a*, etc. (motion verbs or modals?) seems to suggest close affinity between some types of Vm+V and V+V sequences, especially in the domain of Colloquial Arabic. Cairo Arabic inflected sequences *rāḥ gāb* 'to go to bring' or simply 'to bring, set out to bring' or an equally ambiguous Tahrāna Arabic *yžū yahzru 'a-dḍbiḥa* 'they will come to assist to the sacrifice' or 'they will assist to the sacrifice' with an implied connotation 'set out to do' (685). Not even some overt coordinated pairs are quite free from ambiguity: *žrē-užē bināthum* 'he ran in and came to join them' or 'he rushed to join them' (ibid.).

The sequences like *mšā:t žā:t* 'she walked /and/ came' in: *mšā:t žā:t fī hā:ki-ššowwā* 'she came to the green meadow', with an implied meaning 'as a pedestrian, on foot' (Sāsa, p. 62), as well as Cairo Arabic V+V sequences *gih zār* 'to come to visit, for a visit' or *rāḥ zār* 'to go to visit' alternate between Vm+V and V+V sequences in tune with gradual shifts from modality to facticity in the meaning continuum. The semantic nature of the first verb plays the decisive role here.

In some languages, verb compounds play an important role in actualizing and refining the lexical stock of the lexicon. In Kang's study,¹⁴ the Korean verb compounds (KVVCs) are viewed as two-verb sequences that display properties substantially identical with those of SVCs. These are derived, in the general frame, from the following definition of Collins: 'A serial verb construction is a succession of verbs and their complements (if any) with one subject and one

¹³ WOIDICH, M., op. cit., p. 332.

¹⁴ KANG, SEUNG-MAN. A Comparative Analysis of SVCs and Korean V-V Compounds, pp. 1-35.

tense value that are not separated by any covert marker of coordination or subordination'.¹⁵

KVVCs differ from the Arabic V+V sequences in two points. First, in productivity: the small number of the Arabic, mostly colloquial, V+V sequences, substantially restricted to stable expressions with a distinct idiomatic flavour, can hardly match the almost illimited resources of Korean verb compounds. Second, in the way of connecting constituents: verbs in the Arabic V+V constructions need no overt connector of any type in contrast with KVVCs whose verbs are joined together with the stem connector (Kang's 'infinitive suffix') *-e* or *-a*:

Cairo Arabic V+V: *ba^cat* 'to send' + *gāb* 'to bring' → 'to have s.th. brought (to send for; summon)': *lāzim nib^cat nigīb kassāb ḥālan* 'we have to send for Kassāb immediately', or *yib^catu ygību min maṣn̄ fīssīx* 'they let the salt fish bring from Cairo' ('they have the salt fish delivered ...') (W, 332); *ba^catu ygību t-tamargi* 'they sent someone to bring the nurse' (BH, 85);

the V+V sequence may occur even with formally aberrant imperative of the final verb:

'ib^cat hāt ilbīra 'send out for the beer' (ibid.);

ba^cat (see above) + *xad* 'to take', similar use as that of *ba^cat gāb*, 'to have s.th. taken away': *ḥanib^cat nāxud il'agala lē?* 'why should we have the wheel taken away?' (W, 332); *baṣṣ* 'to look' + *lā'a* 'to discover, perceive', as well as modal of (sudden) awareness' (BH, 79): *baṣṣēt la'ēt ilbāb xabbaṭ* '(suddenly) I heard a knock at the door' (ibid.); *kamān sana 'aw sanatēn ḥatbuṣṣēt tlā' i 'ibnak kibir* 'one or two years more, and you will suddenly discover that your son has grown up' (W, 333).

KVVCs: *nal-ta* 'to fly' + *ka-ta* 'to go /away/' → *nal-a ka-ta* 'to fly away' in:

*say-ka nal-a ka- (*a)-ss-ta* 'the bird flew away' (Kang, 6).

bird nom sc sc pst dec¹⁶

or:

nal-ta 'to fly' + *o-ta* 'to come' → *nal-a o-ta* 'to fly in' in:

say-ka nal-a wa (< o-a)-ss-ta 'the bird flew in'

Similarly: (transitive-transitive): *kup-ta* 'to broil' + *mek-ta* 'to eat' → *kuw-e mek-ta* 'to broil-and-eat', 'to eat what had been broiled' (ibid., 5); *nul-ta* 'to crush' + *cuki-ta* 'to kill' → 'to kill by crushing'; (intransitive-intransitive): *kulm-ta* 'to starve' + *cuk-ta* 'to die' → 'to starve to death' (ibid., 7); *thuy-ta* 'to

¹⁵ COLLINS, C. Topics in Ewe Syntax, p. 91. In Kang, S.-M., op. cit., p. 4.

¹⁶ nom = nominative; sc = stem connector (has double function in this context: connects verbs in KVVCs after deleting the declarative suffix *-ta* of the first verb, and it connects the tense markers to the verbal stem; when the tense marker's bowel is identical with that of the sc, it is deleted: *ka-ss-ta* instead of **ka-a-ss-ta*; pst = past tense marker; dec = declarative mood marker.

bounce' + *ol-ta* 'to go up' → *thuy-e ol-ta* 'to bounce up (e.g., a ball)'; *mal-ta* 'to wither' + *cuk-ta* 'to die' → *mal-a cuk-ta* 'to wither to death (e.g., a flower)' (ibid., 18), etc.

3. Summary

Arabic, as an inflected language, has no real need to develop verbal sequences of the SVC type. The verb inflection is sufficiently represented even in considerably analytized colloquial variants of Arabic (local vernaculars). In the latter domain, only the V+V sequences might be viewed as closest parallels of what is cross-linguistically presented as SVC. All other MV sequences, in various degrees aberrant from the archetyp of the latter, have been labelled, not without a deal of ambiguity, as precursor constructions.

Abbreviations (source quotations)

- AA → Ali, A.;
Bg. → Badawi, E., Carter, M.G., Gully, A.;
BH. → Badawi, E., Hinds, M.;
Q → *al-qur'ān* → AA;
Nabk → Gralla, S.;
Sāsa → Talmoudi, F.;
Takrāna → Marçais, W., Guiga, A.;

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Writing

Widely differing transcription systems in the sources used are moderately unified and technically unrepresentable allophonic writing (Sāsa, Takrāna) is considerably simplified and modified; the non-etymological pharyngealized /r/ is not represented ; the Cairo Arabic cluster-preventing vowel (*i*) is written (*ī*).