A Comparative Study of Arabic Motion Verbs to their English Counterparts
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ABSTRACT
This paper examines some semantics aspects of Arabic motion verbs compared to their English counterparts. Although both languages belong to different remote families, both languages share some common features about Motion especially on the idea of locomotors vs. non-locomotors (translative and non-translative movement). A lexically-semantic comparison is drawn between motion verbs in both languages in terms of suggested semantic components such as Motion itself, Manner, Directionality, Path, Fictive, and Motion. The researchers used resources such as encyclopedias, library references books specially Mu’jam Lisan AL-Arab, Al-Mu’jam Al-Waset, English dictionaries specially Oxford, Webster, and Longman, web sites to collect data of motion verbs under discussion. The paper concludes that the semantics components of Arabic verbs are quite similar to their English counterparts, but Arabic verbs differ greatly from English verbs in the notions that can be lexicalized.

1. Introduction
1.1. Motion
Motion is the real expression of life. Everything in life goes through motion and no events escape motion (Dawood 2012). Recently, the study of motion verbs has become the main concern of linguists in almost all languages of the world. In his study, Alonge (1991) concluded that motion verbs became the subject of several studies because they present interesting semantic characteristics. From a scientific point of view, the term motion involves a change in position. It first originated in physics as “a change in position of an object concerning time and its reference point” (Wikipedia). Soon, the term found its way to linguistics. Talmy (1985, p. 85) defines motion as “situations containing movement or the maintenance of a stationary location”

Frawley (1992) described motion verbs as a displacement of an entity. In Arabic, Al Mu’jam Al Wasset’s definition of the word ‘‘haraka’’ “الحركة” was not very far from this definition, if not the same “the displacement of something from one place to another”. In general, Arab linguists agreed on Ibn Manzour’s definition that the word motion is ‘anti-statism’. For this study, the Arabic definition will be taken into consideration more than the English one because the latter definition focuses on displacement and change of state as the main feature of motion verbs. Later, it will be demonstrated that some motion verbs do not necessarily involve displacement or change of state.

1.2. The Arabic Language and its Speakers
Bishop (1998) described Arabic as one of the countless modern languages of the world. Arabic is a language spoken in the Middle East, North Africa and African Horn. It belongs to the Semitic family of languages along with other languages such as Hebrew and Amharic. Bishop adds that Arabic ranks sixth in the world’s league table of languages, with an estimated 300 million- native speakers. As the language of the Qur’an, it is also widely used throughout the Muslim world. There are many Arabic dialects. Classical Arabic – the language of the Qur’an and Modern Standard Arabic which is used in books, newspapers, mass media, mosques, and conversations among educated Arabs from different countries. To understand
Arabic words’ spelling, it is necessary to have a quick look at the various phonological, morphological, and syntactic changes which together have created a unique dialectal Arabic situation.

1.3. Motion and Semantic Classes
Semantics is the study of different meanings. Verbs semantic classes are constructed from verbs that undergo a certain number of alternations. Most definitions of semantic classes agree that a semantic class contains words that share a general semantic property. The category of verbs was particularly chosen because most linguists agree that verbs, in most languages, are the most spread and widely-used category of speech. They are the most important constituents of sentences. Talmy (1985) states that categorizing verbs into semantic classes that share similar features aims mainly to find meaning components forming the semantics of verbs, the specification of more subtle meaning elements that distinguish closely related verbs, and the study of the cooperation between syntax and semantics. In his work on verb classes, Fillmore (1979) states that verb classes are a useful device for reviewing the semantic organization of the verb lexicon. He discusses how the semantic properties of the verb shake differ from those of the verb shudder.

a. She shook. /I shook her.
b. She shuddered. /*I shuddered her.

He explained that (1) things that shudder are people, animals, earth, machines/engines that have ‘self-controlled bodies’. Shake denotes an event that can be ‘externally caused’. (2) Things that shake are the above and leaves, furniture, dishes. Shudder denotes an event that is ‘internally caused’.

Later, linguists began to classify motion verbs according to semantic components that contain a variety of lexicalization. The following lexicalization, for example, walk, run, stalk, jog, hurtle, and march belongs to the semantic component of movement. Within the group, semantic features entitle a particular verb to be suitable for a particular situation and another to be suitable for other situations and so on. For example:

run ‘move at a speed faster than walk’.
walk ‘move at a regular pace’.
jog ‘to run slower than running’.
march ‘related to military’.

The same subject is present in the Arabic language. According to Dawood(2012), the following lexicalization masha مشي, sara سري, madaa مضى, salaka سلك, kharaja خراج and ghada غدا belongs to the semantic class of al dhahaab. They all encode movement in all directions towards a specific goal, but they differ lexically according to a set of factors. For example, speed, force, time of the day, and so on.
- Sara سري expresses obligation and related to a specific time of the day (night) and the specific destination.
- masha مضى is voluntary and not necessarily towards a goal.
- madaa مضى is quicker than sara سري and masha مضى.

Motion is central to the human experience. It seems to be a universal concept present in all the languages of the world. Languages encode motion in different ways. Since the appearance of Talmy’s typology of motion verbs, many non-English linguists carried out studies(1) to certify whether their languages satisfy Talmy’s typology or not and (2) to draw a comparison with the English language to indicate where the two languages meet and where they differ in terms of expressing motion.

According to Talmy, all Germanic languages are satellite-framed languages. On the other hand, all Romance languages and some non-Romance languages, including Arabic, are verb-framed. A satellite-framed language expresses the core component of motion, Path, for example, in satellites (e.g., up, down) or in prepositional phrases (e.g., into/out of the house), leaving the verb slot free to encode the manner-of-motion. A verb-framed language typically expresses path in the main verb while relegating the expression of manner to adjuncts e.g. dokhala/kharada jaryan enter/exit running. Talmy’s argumentation extends to classifying motion verbs according to primary semantic components such as (Motion, Manner, Direction, Goal, Source, Path, Medium, and Purpose).
This paper, while discussing Talmey's typology, aims to provide a systematic and detailed account of the semantics of some Arabic motion verbs and compare them to their English counterparts. As claimed, a better understanding of the semantics of motion verbs in these two languages is of primary importance for cross-linguistic research on motion event descriptions.

The primary goal of this work is to provide a comparative account of the semantics of a substantial part of the Arabic motion verb lexicons, focusing specifically on Talmey's general semantic components for the motion: (Motion (Space), Direction, Manner, Path, and Environment). For that purpose, several fine-grained motion verbs which have been widely used in everyday speech, have been discussed. On the whole, this paper seeks to provide answers to the following general research questions:
1. What are the semantic properties of Arabic motion verbs?
2. Does Arabic have a motion verbs lexicon that is comparable to their English counterparts?

1.4. Locomotors and Non-Locomotors

Locomotors motion verbs require the movement from one place to another (displacement) as in the verbs taharraqa, intaqala, and intashara. Non-Locomotors motion verbs require the verb not necessarily to change state from one position to another as in the verbs daqqa and khabata. Along the same line, Talmey (1985:141) states that "translative movement involves the movement through space of the entire theme, or entity in motion, and results in a change of location of the theme. Nontranslative movement involves body-internal movement, periodic or random movement, or movement through space of a part of the theme but not the entire theme". Some of the widely-spread locomotors and non-locomotors verbs in Arabic include:

| Locomotors | Non-locomotors |
|------------|----------------|
| IPA spelling | English counterpart | IPA spelling | English counterpart |
| intaqala | Transfer | khabata | hit |
| taharraqa | Move | daqqa | knock |
| intashara | spread | sadama | collide |

2. Literature review

Talmey (1985) states that semantic features that distinguish motion verbs classes are the moving entity (Figure), the landscape against which it moves (Ground), the Motion itself, the path along which it moves, and the Manner of its movement (running, sliding, bouncing, etc.). For example: 'Ali ran to school' where Ali represents the Figure, the school represents the Ground, to expresses the Path, and ran represents the Motion and Manner.

Talmey (1985) claims that languages according to verb roots with relation to the expression of 'Motion' are classified into two types: Verb-framing describes the path which refers to the direction of the movement, e.g., movement across, into, out of, etc. The direction of the verb is expressed in the root verb itself. The manner is expressed independently. These types include Romance, Semitic and Polynesian ones. Satellite-framing describes the manner of motion which expresses motion using a particular verb (satellite such as from, away, to......). They encode Path in a satellite (that is, a verbal dependent). This type includes English, some other Indo-European languages, and Chinese.

Later, Levin (1993) discussed how the semantics of path verbs differ from the semantics of manner verbs depending on Talmey’s theory who cited (Kudrnáčová 2008: 35), saying that "Path verbs cannot encode motion as translocation by themselves". To do so, they need grounding. For example, a moving entity cannot just come, but must come to /out to a certain place. The same is done with the verb leave which must leave a place. Levin classified the directionality of verbs into five categories. The largest of those was the manner of motion in which he distinguishes two- subtitles (1) Roll verbs and (2) Run verbs. The Roll verbs were characterized by the semantic feature of inanimate (bounce, drift, drop, float, glide, move, roll, slide and swing). Run verbs describe how animated entities can move (skip, sweep, swim, travel, climb, drift, file, flit, and float). Levin argued how to discover meanings of verbs. One of her arguments was “the Foundational Assumption: Verb
Meaning Provides a Key to Verb Behavior”. She supported her claim with the English denominal verbs and provided a case study of texting and faxing:
He texted/faxed the answer/ the librarian wanded the barcode.

Double-object construction: He texted/faxed me the answer/ *the librarian wanded me the barcode. Levin explained that text and fax are verbs of information transfer, while wand is not a verb of information transfer.

A second case study is Fillmore’s (1970) well-known study, “The Grammar of Hit and Break which shows how examining verb behavior can provide insight into verb meaning via a case study of two verbs. Some of his different realizations of these two verbs were:

a. The boy broke the window with a ball.
b. The boy hit the window with a ball.
c. The boy broke the window.
d. The window broke.
e. The boy hit the window.
f. The window hit.
g. The window was broken.
h. The window was hit.

Fillmore answered the questions of why the divergences take the forms that they do by saying that the verbs break and hit are each representatives of a larger semantically identifiable class of verbs. The Break Verbs: bend, fold, shatter, and crack are verbs of change of state. The Hit Verbs: slap, strike, bump, stroke are verbs of surface contact. Fillmore concluded that the fact that classes of verbs with similar meanings show characteristic argument realization patterns which suggests that the patterns can be attributed to facets of meaning common to class members. Fillmore’s case study shows how semantic and syntactic properties of a verb are not idiosyncratic but may be attributed to an entire class.

Matched and Paykin (2016) claim that weather verbs can be considered as motion verbs, although with a very dissimilar behavior according to the presence of the conceptual components figure and path. If ‘rain’ involves one single figure and path, other weather verbs may or may not involve some or none. However, they consistently express manner, both in atmospheric and metaphorical contexts express directional motion.

Barlew (2017) concluded that come and zu ‘come’ requires the retrieval of a contextually supplied perspective, a body of knowledge that represents the way a particular individual imagines things to be. For come and zu to be used acceptably, it must be true, according to the retrieved perspective, that the individual is located at the destination of motion event being described. If the individual does not self-ascribed being located at the destination, then neither come nor zu can be used.

In his extensive study of the transitional motion verbs in the Noble Qur’an, Shalaby (2010) depends on Arabic famous Ma’ajim and Al Tafaseer books to deduce the semantic properties of each verb. His study was to put verbs that share common characteristics into semantic classes, then to tackle each verb separately, and finally to discuss the entire class as a whole. He discusses thoroughly why, in the Noble Qur’an, ُأرسل أرسل is used in a certain context with prophets and why ba’atha معنَى with others, why hadara حضر here and أتا أتا there, and why to mention the motion verbs dakhala دخلَ and dhahaba ذهبَ for 109 and 44 times, respectively.

Shalaby classified his work into three chapters. The first one included classifying verbs that share similar semantic properties into classes, and then to discuss each verb according to specific factors such as the force that causes movement and speed of the action. For example, the semantic properties of masha مشي indicate that it is voluntary but the semantic properties of insarah انصرف indicate that it is compulsory. Speed is apparent in the verb rakada ركض whereas speed in other verbs is determined according to situation. For example, the verb raja’a رجع can carry the feature of quickness or slowness according to the situation.

Dawood (2012) went further in defining motion verbs as the real expression of life. He also objected to translating the following English terms of motion, movement, action, and motor into one Arabic term as haraka. The most relevant and suitable English and Arabic counterparts are (motion vs. haraka), respectively because both terms in both languages are the most common and comprehensive than any other terms. Moreover, Dawood explained that motion verbs need five factors: the time they take, the place where they occur, the force needed for them, the source of such verbs, and the environment accompanying them. He discussed three main issues related to classifying motion verbs. The first one is the dilemma of ‘which is a verb of motion and which isn’t? The second one has to do with how common and frequent a motion verb is being

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used in the language of a specific era. Language is always changing and developing. If a certain verb is rarely or widely used in the contexts of time, this indicates that the linguistic society of the time is abdicating or approving such a verb and thus can or cannot be counted upon. The third issue is that classifying motion verbs of a language remains a point of view after all. It is controlled by different considerations: alphabetical, developmental, historical, or in terms of meanings. Overlapping between the fields permits a verb to be a member of more than one field and many other sub-fields.

3. Data collection
A deep study will be carried out on the target verbs. The researchers used resources such as encyclopedias, library references books specially Mu’jam Lisan AL-Arab, Al-Mu’jam Al-Waseet, English dictionaries specially Oxford, Webster, and Longman, web sites to collect data of motion verbs under discussion.

4. Data analysis
4.1. Semantic Components of Arabic Motion Verbs
In general, most Arabic motion verbs seem to fall into the main component of Direction. For demonstration, representative verbs of each component are discussed to show how the groups work.

4.2. Direction of Motion (Movement)
The direction is divided into three groups: (1) horizontal movement which in turn is divided into two subgroups: leaving and arrival, (2) vertical movement which in turn is divided into two subgroups: ascending and descending (up and down) and (3) circular movement.

4.2.1. Horizontal Movement
4.2.1.1 Motion Verbs of Leaving (Departure)
Some of the verbs of this group include:

| Spelling | Arabic spelling |
|----------|----------------|
| kharaja  | خرج           |
| dhahaba  | ذهب           |
| raḥala   | رحل           |
| raḥa     | راح           |
| safara   | سافر         |
| inšarafa | انصرف        |
| ghadara  | غادر          |
| maḍa     | مضي           |
| haajara  | هاجر           |

All these verbs indicate leaving a place to another. For the first sight, the whole content might seem the same. kharaja خرج is the same as dhahaba ذهب and ghadara غادر; saafara سافر is the same as haajara هاجر. maḍa مضي as raḥa راح. But the fact is that they differ in specific features such as the importance of the place being left, whether leaving happens voluntarily or willingly, distance, the period of leaving, and so on.

According to Shalaby (2010), this motion verb is mentioned in the Noble Qur’an 44 times because of the various semantic properties it has. The most important one is (+purpose) because someone goes somewhere for a goal and a purpose. It might happen willingly or voluntarily. It might be quick or slow depending on the context. Al Mu’jam Al Wasseet mentions the following main usages of this motion verb.
• general meaning: going somewhere
dhahaba ālṭlibu ila ʾalmadrasati
ذهب الطالب إلى المدرسة
• vanishing and ending
dhahaba alloahu binurihim
ذهب الله بثورتهم
• an endpoint of thinking
dhahaba bikhayalihi baʾidan
ذهب حياته بعيدا
ghadara
غادر
This verb has the same property of leaving a place to another one. It differs by indicating the far distance and the importance of the place being left.
• leaving a place and going away
ghaadara farīquna ʾalwatani ila baghdad
غادر فريقنا الوطني إلى بغداد
kharaja
خرج
This verb has also the property of leaving, but from some kind of a narrow space into a wider one. It is distinguished by its wide variety of semantic features. The agent might be animate or inanimate. It might be quick or slow. Shalaby (2010) counted 137 occurrences of kharaja in the Noble Qur’an.
• Go from .....to
kharaja min ʾalbayti ila ʾalḥadiqati
خرج من البيت إلى الحديقة
• change and transformation
ātamanna ʿan nakahruja min ʾalḥalati ʾalrukud ʾaliqtiṣadi
انتمى إلى حالة الركود الاقتصادي
• from silence to speech
ma kharaja min fami ḥarfun wahidun
ما خرج من فمي حرف واحد
• refusal and denial
kharaja ʿan raʾi ʾaljamaʾati
خرج عن رأي الجماعة
4.2.1.2 Motion Verbs of Arrival
Some of the verbs of this group include:

| Spelling | Arabic spelling |
|----------|-----------------|
| ātaa     | ان |
| jaaʾa    | جاء |
| ḥḍara    | حضر |
| dakhala  | دخل |
| dana     | دنا |
| rajaʾa   | رجع |
| ʿada     | عاد |
| aqbala   | اقبل |
| iqṭaraba | اقرب |
āta إن، āqba Ḱa حضر: ātaa ‘āqba Ḱa جاء، Ḱaḍara

These verbs share the characteristics of moving forward to achieve a specific goal. The one who is coming knows exactly where to come and why. He/she does so willingly without fear. Most of such verbs were related to prophets in the Noble Qur’an because prophets know where to go and why (delivering a message) without fear or obligation (Shalaby 2010). These verbs nearly have the same meaning. Semantically, they differ according to context.

ātaa إن

ātaa ‘ān is used to indicate a forward movement to achieve a specific goal willingly. That is why this verb is used in some verses of the Noble Qur’an with prophets because prophets were sent willingly to deliver a specific message. The motion might be performed quickly or slowly, by animates and inanimates.

- **pass by**
  ātaa ‘āl a qawmin

- **become too close**
  ātat sa ‘ātuhu

- **annihilate and destroy**
  ātaa ‘āl ālākhari wa āl yabiṣi

āqba Ḱa āqba Ḱa has the same semantic properties as ātaa except that it is (+animate). It was never mentioned in the Noble Qur’an with inanimate although Arabic dictionaries do classify it as (+/-animate). Some of the semantic uses of this verb are:

- **imminent/ happening soon**
  āqba Ḱa ʾālsabaḥu

- **energy and activity**
  āqba Ḱa ‘la āldarsi bihimatin

- **production and fruitfulness**
  āqbalat āl āl Ḱabari bilnabati

- **livelihood and open-handedness**
  āqbalat ‘alayhi āldunia

jaa’a جاء

jaa’a جاء is specially related to prophets bringing their evidence and proofs to convince people with religions of Allah, to motivate them to do the righteous deeds and to show the powers of Allah, the Almighty. Shalaby (2010) counted 260 occurrences of this verb in the Noble Qur’an. Al Mu’jam Al Wasseet and Al Mu’jam Al Muḥeet agree on the following semantic meanings of this verb:

- **came down to earth**
  jaa’a ʾāl ghaythu

- **arrived**
  jaa’a ʾālkhabaru ʾāssar

- **taking place/ occurring**
  jaa’a nāṣru ʾālāhi
4.2.2. Vertical Movement

4.2.2.1 Motion Verbs of Ascending

Some of the verbs of this group include:

| Spelling | Arabic spelling |
|----------|-----------------|
| ḥamala   | حمل             |
| rafa’a   | رفع             |
| irtaqa   | ارتق             |
| tasallaqa| نسلق             |
| ṣa’ada   | صعد             |

The main semantic properties of this group are: (+motion + moving upward). The frequency of usage depends on the status of the person. For example, rafa’a is mentioned in the Noble Qur’an more than ṣa’ada because of the superior status that Allah promised believers with.

ṣa’ada

This verb requires an effort to reach a high place gradually. It might happen willingly or voluntarily. Speed is slow because it is done carefully to reach a specific goal safely. The direction also plays a part in determining the meaning of this verb.

• **common meaning: going upward**
  ṣa’ada ʾal imamu ʿala alminbari
  صعد الإمام على المنبر

• **superiority and fame**
  ṣa’ada ʾal najmu sulama ʿalishhuhrati
  صعد النجم سلم الشهوة

• **increase and abundance**
  tataṣa’adu ālanashidu min afwahi āltalabah
  تتصاعد الأناشيد من أفواه الطلبة

rafa’a

This verb, when relates to animate, is voluntary because Allah is alrafi’. Speed tends to be slow since quickness might cause damage to the one being pulled up.
- **common meaning: moving upward**
  
  \[ \text{rafa'a } \text{āltalibu yadahu} \]

  رفع الطالب يده

- **displacement / removing**
  
  \[ \text{rafa'a } \text{āl'amulu ālsakhrata 'an ālardī} \]

  رفع العامل الصخرة عن الارض

- **an endpoint of something**
  
  \[ \text{rafa'at ālduwalu ālḥadhra 'an āl'iraq} \]

  رفعت الدول الحظر عن العراق

- **political connotations**
  
  \[ \text{rafa'a } \text{sh'ar} \]

  رفع راية كنها / رفع شعار كنها

- **dignity and grace**
  
  \[ \text{rafa'tum āljibaaха 'alyan} \]

  رفعتم الجبه عاليا

  \[ \text{irtaqa} \]

  ارتقي

- **sit on throne**
  
  \[ \text{irtaqa āl maliku 'ala 'arshi} \]

  ارتقي الملك العرش

- **promotion**
  
  \[ \text{irtaqa fi ālwadhifati} \]

  ارتقي في الوظيفة

### 5.2.2.2. Motion Verbs of Descending

Some of the verbs of this group include:

| Spelling | Arabic spelling |
|----------|-----------------|
| inḥdara  | انحدر           |
| saqāta   | سقط            |
| sakaba   | سكب            |
| habaṭa   | هبط             |

\[ \text{habaṭa} \text{ هبط, saqāta سقط} \]

This verb indicates descending from a higher place to a lower one. It usually happens willingly. It is done quickly, but carefully.

- **Common meaning: coming downward**
  
  \[ \text{habaṭat ālṭa’ratu} \]

  هبطت الطائرة

- **imminent**
  
  \[ \text{habaṭa } \text{āl dhalamu sarii’an} \]

  هبطت الظلم سريعا

- **decrease and diminution**
  
  \[ \text{habaṭat sha’biat ālra’ees ila ālḥadidi} \]

  هبطت شعبية الرئيس إلى الحضيض
• descendent and declination
  *habaṭat ʿāklaqū ʿālnasi*

Saqaṭa

This verb indicates falling heavily. Direction plays a central part in determining the meaning of this verb. It usually happens unwillingly.

• common meaning: falling helplessly
  *saqaṭa ʿārąjulu ʿajīzān*

• demolition
  *yjawma saqata jidaru barliin*

4.2.3. Circular Movement

Some of the verbs of this group include:

| IPA spelling | Arabic spelling |
|--------------|-----------------|
| dāra         | دار             |
| laffā        | لف              |
| ṭaaffā       | طاف             |
| ḥaamma       | حام              |
| dāhraja      | دحرج            |

Daara, ṭaafa, laffā

These verbs share the feature of a circular movement. They differ according to how complete the circle of movement is. Some of them do not require the agent to perform a closed circle while moving. Others are obligatory in some religious rituals and so cannot be replaceable.

Daara

Movement in this verb is circular in a closed circle. Its environment might be water or air. The agent might be animate or inanimate. The movement might be willing without external force or voluntarily with an external one.

• general meaning: movement in a circle
  *taduuru ʿālʿajalatu*

  دور العجلة

• turning around (not necessarily in a circle and according to the thing being turned around)
  *dāra ḥawla ʿalsayyarti*

  دور حول ال شيء

• turning into another direction
  *dāara wajhahu wa maḍa fi ṭariqīhi*

  ادارة وجهه ومض في طريقه

• violence and severe war
  *dārat yjawma ʿāms ʿanafū ʿalmaʿarik*

  دارت يوم امس اعنف المعارك

• disorder and nervousness
  *darat bihi ʿaldunia*

  دارت به الفتن

• leadership
  *dāara ʿāldaktur ḥalaqta ʿalniqash*

  ادار الكلور حلقة مقابلة

• lack of care and interest

IPA spelling | Arabic spelling |
|--------------|-----------------|
| dāra         | دار             |
| laffā        | لف              |
| ṭaaffā       | طاف             |
| ḥaamma       | حام              |
| dāhraja      | دحرج            |
ādara  ālaābu  dhahrahu  linaasi
 إدار الناس ظهورا للناس

- suspicion
  yaduru  ḥawla  hadha  ālrājlu  shubuhatin  kathiratin
  يدور حول هذا الرجل شبهات كثيرة

taaffa
 This verb has strong religious indications with attawaf around the Holy Ka'ba in Mecca. A Muslim starts from a specific point at Al hajar Alaswad (the black stone) on the right side of the Ka'ba and ends tawaf at the same starting point.

- moving to start and ending at the same point
  taafa  ālimuslimuuna  ḥawla  ālka'bati
  طاف المسلمون حول الكعبة

- passing on places of the same kind at the same time.
  ūuftu  fi  mahali  Irbid  ābhathu  'an  kutub
  طفط في محال اريد ابحث عن كتب

- remembering and thinking about it.
  taftat  fi  ra'si  afkarun  'adiida
  طافط في رأسه أفكار عديدة

laffa
 Lisan Al Arab defines this verb as surrounding something with something else. The movement might be in a complete or incomplete circle. The verb has recently found its way into sports/ games.

- general meaning: movement of something around something else.
  ākhadhtu  āluffu  wa  āduru  ḥawla  nuqṭati  ālhirasati
  اختط الف وادور حول نقطة الجرسة

- meeting and gathering around someone or something
  iltaffaa  āltalabatu  ḥawla  ustadhahim
  التفت الطالب حول استاذههم

- covering/ wrapping
  laffaa  āltabibu  ra'aa  ālmaridi
  للف الطبيب رأس المريض

- smooth movement at sports
  yaluffu  ṣila'ibu  wa  yaduru  fi  ālmal'ab
  يلف اللاعب ويدور في الملعب

- encouragement and support.
  iltaffat  ḥawlahu  āljamihiir
  التفت حوله الجماعي

- deception and cunning
  ilattfa  ḥawla  ālsu'ali
  التفت حول السؤال

5. The Semantics of Motion Verbs in Arabic and English
The semantic properties of English motion verbs are complex and display several levels of organization (Kudrnáčová.2008: 1). Like English, it seems that motion verbs in Arabic are also complex and display several levels of the organization. Motion verbs in Arabic may be grouped into components that are similar to those Talmy set in the year 1985, Theme (location), Figure, Ground, Path, and Manner. The most important is the direction. The semantic component ‘Direction of Motion’ is present in both languages. In English, for example, we have “verbs of inherently directed motion” (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1992) because they carry a specification of the direction of motion once they are uttered. He entered, he walked, he came, and he arrived. Levin also states that “semantically, these verbs always describe an entity’s movement to an endpoint”.
All verbs in this class are (+ motion + directional). The Arabic language is not different in this respect. Arabic does have inherently directed motion verbs once they are uttered such as dakhala دخل, wasala وصل, and kharaja خرج. The subcategories of this component can be found in both languages.

English and Arabic have subclasses depending on the direction of motion along a given path (forward/backward on the horizontal axis as is the case for (advance/ retreat) upward/downward on a vertical axis, for (ascend/ descend), or no direction at all (arrive/reach), and circular movement).

In the following examples, each of Dragan’s and Levin’s classes of directed motion is accompanied by the Arabic counterparts from Shalaby’s and ma’jim’s classifications.

-forward: advance, cross, forge, penetrate, proceed.
backward: rear, recede, retreat, return.
-upward: arise, ascend, climb, rise, lift, and mount.
-downward: collapse, descend, crumble, drop, and fall.

circular: spin, wrap, roll, twist, , whirl.

The Merriam Webster’s School Dictionary differentiates members of the English group in the following way. Advance is to move forward; Proceed is to continue after a pause or interruption; the cross is to go from one side to the other; forge is to move steadily but gradually; penetrate is to pass into or through. So elements of the context such as speed, agent, and force determine the correct verb to be chosen. Shalaby (2010) differentiates members of the Arabic group as having the characteristics of moving forward to achieve a specific goal. āta is( -/ +animate) while aqbala is (+animate); ja’a is( +/- willingly); hadara (+continuous attendance)

All these verbs have in common the feature of turning backward for a specific purpose whether willingly or unwillingly. The speed of action is determined according to the situation. For example, the Webster’s Dictionary of Synonyms and Antonyms gives retreat and recede (+ voluntary) because they mean withdrawal from a point or position under pressure, while the return is (+/- voluntary). In Arabic, Shalaby demonstrates that adbara ادبار and wallaa ولأ have the feature (+voluntary) and are usually faster than rajā’ رجع and ʿāda عاد. Al Mu’jam al Wasseet defines both verbs as to flee quickly, whereas rajā’ رجع and ʿāda عاد are (+/- voluntary).

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circular: spin, wrap, roll, twist, , whirl.
Spin has the property of rapid rotation; an excursion in a vehicle especially on wheels. dara has the same property of movement in a circle tāduurrū al′ajalatu. wrap/ laffa, in both languages, is to cover especially by winding or folding wrap a baby in blanket'/ laffa alṭabiibu raása almaridi.

To summarize, in both languages, motion verbs that share particular semantic features are grouped into semantic components. Grouping a set of verbs under one component does not mean that these verbs are synonyms. The slightest semantic property, for example (slow/quick), makes a difference.

6. Conclusion
The primary goal of this work is to provide a comparative account of the semantics of a substantial part of the Arabic motion verb lexicons, focusing specifically on Talmy’s general semantic components for motion. This study of some motion verbs in Arabic revealed many interesting facts.

1. Arabic motion verbs are rich with sense relations:
   - Synonyms šaṭa ḥażibalā, ja’ā and ḥadara
   - Antonyms ša’ada ṣa’dā, habata
   - Metaphor

2. Some motion verbs are rarely used because they are related to specific time, place, and religious rituals or all together such as sara ṭaf and ṭafa.

3. Arabic prefers verbs with specific directions: horizontal, vertical, circular, and so on. Verbs that express random direction are rare in Arabic.

English is a Germanic language. Arabic is a Semitic one. This means that both languages belong to two different remote language families. Despite this fact, the two languages show no big differences in the way they express motion. Both languages admit the semantic components according to which motion verbs are classified: Motion; Direction; Manner; Path and Environment. Both languages contain pairs of Locomotors verbs which require the verb to change the place from one point to another such as in go/ kharajā خرج and Non-Locomotors verbs which require the verb not to change the place from one point to another and to move around the spot such as kneel/ raka’a ركع. Both have motion verbs of the component Direction and its categories: (1) horizontal come/ ja’ā, and return rajār رجع; (2) vertical descend habata and ascend rafa’a رفع; and (3) circular roll dahrajā دحرج. Finally, both languages express path using particles. They differ in that in Arabic, an additional element is needed to show how the action is carried such as in dakhala jarian. Although each group is categorized under one title, they are not synonyms. The choice of the adequate verb depends on the semantic properties, even if slight, of such a verb. Further studies can investigate motion verbs in religious books such as the Noble Qur’an and the Holy Bible.

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