

The verb phrase

In English, a verb phrase may contain either a main verb or an auxiliary followed by a main verb as in:

1. Jack drinks milk.
2. She will invite me to her wedding.
3. In (1), the verb (drinks) is finite because it specifies a certain tense which is present simple here. In (2), the auxiliary verb is the finite one and the following infinitive is the non-finite. A non-finite verb is of three types:
 - An infinitive as in (He wants to **travel**)
 - A gerund as in (**Smoking** is a killer)
 - A participle (present or past) as in (He has **retired**)

In Arabic, a verb phrase may contain either a single finite verb or a sequence of two finite verbs. Consider the following:

1. جاء الولد
2. راح يبكي فور وصولنا

In (1), we have just one finite verb denoting the past tense, but in (2), there are two main verbs (راح & يبكي).

To compare, we can see that Arabic can have two finite verbs occurring together but English allows only one.