

## Composing Arabic With Style: الجملة الفعلية

I. Reduce the occurrence of الجملة الاسمية in your writing. Arabic prefers to use الجملة الفعلية by a margin of 9:1 and has a wide range of verbs that enable this. English doesn't mind using the equivalent of الجملة الاسمية; sentences beginning with "There is...." are quite common in English. In Arabic, the equivalent sentences (...هناك or ...عنده or ...كان هناك) are considered anemic and inexpressive. If you find yourself writing a الجملة الاسمية, stop immediately and reformulate it as a جملة فعلية by using one of the many verbs that you've studied over these last few months. You know plenty of verbs, and with a little work, you'll find a means to express what you'd like to say in a fashion that is truly Arabic and not simply a translation of English.

For example, you'd like to write: "Muhammad Ali was also famous for his controversial political positions." This is a perfectly viable sentence in English. The direct translation of this sentence into Arabic using الجمل الاسمية is dull and will demonstrate that you are not a native speaker of Arabic:

كان محمد علي مشهوراً لمواقفه السياسية المثيرة للجدل.

You can turn this sentence into *real* Arabic by replacing «مشهور» and «المثيرة للجدل» with verbal phrases:

اشتهر محمد علي بمواقفه السياسية التي أثارت الجدل {في المجتمع الأمريكي}.

This is a small change, but it makes a world of difference.

The fact that you overuse the جملة اسمية is perfectly natural and, until now, was nothing to be ashamed of. The first sentences that you learned in Arabic followed the pattern of «الولد لطيف». It wasn't until later that you were introduced to verbs, and in the meantime, you got used to composing Arabic almost exclusively with الجملة الاسمية. Now that you have plenty of verbs at your disposal, you'll need to break habits formed during your first year of Arabic by expanding your repertoire of productive vocabulary and by imitating a native writing style.

II. Please translate the following sentences into Arabic with 1) a جملة اسمية and 2) a جملة فعلية :

There was a florescence (> الازدهار) of Islamic thought in Yemen in the 18th century.

1)

2)

American popular culture is different from other popular cultures in terms of its influence.

1)

2)

She is sick because of the food she ate yesterday.

1)

2)

There were many forms of political thought that appeared at that time.

1)

2)



اشتتلك المفكرون المسلمون في جدل كبير حول مسألة القضاء والقدر عبر القرون. لذلك، من المستحيل أن نتناول كل جوانب هذه الفكرة في تقديمنا هذا.

تتعلق {ترتبط} فكرة القضاء والقدر بعلاقة حياتنا هذه مع حياتنا في الآخرة. إذا خطأنا في فهمنا لهذه الفكرة، فتشوّهت العلاقة بين حياتنا هذه وحياتها في الآخرة تشوّهًا كبيرًا من ناحية المحاسبة. من ثمّ فينبغي لنا أن ندرس الموضوع بكل جوانبه فمنها: أصول الفكرة عبر التاريخ والآراء المختلفة حولها والتحليل/التأويل السليم لها.