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The Structure of the Sentence

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The Structure of the Sentence:

- ❖ A structure is an abstract pattern which is recognizable because it is repeated.
- ❖ Each of these units has its own structure except the smallest one (i.e. morpheme). Why?
- ❖ Concerning sentence structure, the traditional view is to divide the sentence into “Subject = المسند إليه” and “Predicate = المسند”:

Every complete (English) sentence must have a subject and a predicate

Subject	Predicate
<i>The topic of the sentence.</i> <i>It includes who or what the sentence is about.</i>	<i>The part of the sentence</i> <i>It tells something about the subject, or what the subject does.</i>
<i>The subject</i> contains a noun or pronoun.	<i>The predicate</i> contains a verb.

Consider the following examples:

Subject	Predicate	المسند إليه (المبتدأ)	المسند (الخبر)
John	will arrive tomorrow.	عليّ	يصلُ غداً.
Marry	helps her mother.	ماري	تساعد أمها.
The little child	is crying in the next room.	الطفل الصغير	يبكي في الغرفة المجاورة
It	rained steadily all day.	(السماء)	أمطرت دون انقطاع طوال اليوم
He	had given the girl an apple.	(هو)	كان قد أعطى الفتاة تفاحة.
They	make him the chairman every year.	(هم)	ينصبونه الرئيس كل عام.

From the sentences aforementioned, it seems that:

- ❖ Sentences parts are unequal in size.
- ❖ The subject determines concord (i.e. subject-verb agreement).
- ❖ In English, the subject is the part of the sentence that changes its position as we go from statement to question:

He had given the girl an apple. → Had he given the girl an apple?

- ❖ By contrast, there is no need to make word order in Arabic while changing form of statements to questions:

يصلُّ عليَّ غداً. ← أ يصلُّ عليَّ غداً؟
هل يصلُّ عليَّ غداً؟

Notes:

- Sentence structure is made up of Subject and Predicate.
- Sentence elements are S, V, O, C, and A.
- S and V are the obligatory elements of the sentence.
- O, C, and A are optional.
- Predicate consists of: V, (O), (C), (A).

The Predicate:

- In English, the predicate may comprise the verb alone, as in:
✓ **Ali is studying.**
- Or it involves the verb and one or more of the sentence elements (i.e. C, O, and A), as in:
✓ **Layla is clever.** S + V + C. [ليلي ذكية]
✓ **Jack bought a book.** S + V + O. [اشترى جاك كتاباً]
✓ **The teacher is in the class.** S + V + A. [المعلم في الصف]
✓ **They elected him the chairman yesterday.** [انتخبوه رئيساً]
S + V + O + C + A.
- As for Arabic, the predicate may or may not contain a verb.
- Depending on this fact, Arabic sentences may be classified into:
 1. **Verbal sentence:** (i.e. containing a verb).
 2. **Non-verbal sentence:** (i.e. having no verb).

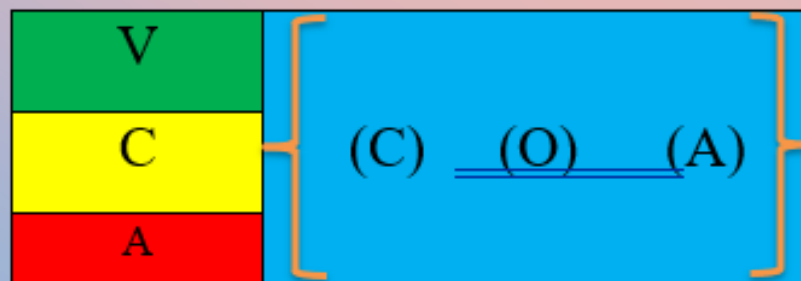
Practical examples for verbal sentences:

←←←←←	
The engineer has come .	جاء المهندس. (S + V)
My friend bought a house.	اشترى صديقي بيتاً. (S + V + O)
Ahmed put the book on the table.	احمد وضع الكتاب على المنضدة.
Ahmed's father will come next week.	أبو أحمد يأتي في الأسبوع القادم.

Practical examples for non-verbal sentences:

←←←←←	
Layla is a pupil.	ليلي تلميذة. (S + C)
Ali is a clever student.	علي طالب ذكي. (S + C)
A fox is a cunning animal.	الثعلب حيوان مكر. (S + C)
He has a house.	عنده بيت. (A + S)
There is a man in the garden.	في الحديقة رجل. (A + S)

- The structure of the Arabic predicate comprises one element or more(i.e. a verb, a complement, or an adverbial). See this figure:



Practical example (try to give me sentences):

←←←←←	
Zaid gave me a book yesterday.	زيد أعطاني كتاباً البارحة.
S V O <u>O_i</u> A	A O _d <u>O_i</u> V S
Zaid is in the house.	زيد في الدار.
Zaid is my brother.	زيد أخي.