

A-3: The Imperative

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Definition

The role of the imperative is to communicate a compelling command from someone in a position of authority to a subordinate.

The imperative is may be recognised by the following:

- A verb in the imperative case
- Prefix of *li* to a present tense verb in the jussive mood
- Use of *'ala* and *hatta'*
- Use of verbal noun in place of the imperative

For rhetorical purposes, the imperative may be used for purposes other than for commanding.[\[1\]](#)[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)[\[6\]](#)

Examples

1) To advise

أُرْسِنْ جِيَّدًا لِهَذِهِ الْاِخْتِبَارَاتِ!

Study well for these exams!

2) To give a choice

خُذْ هَذَا الْكِتَابَ أَوْ تَلْكَ الْمَجَلَةَ.

Take this book or that magazine.

3) To denote an equal choice

زُرْنِي أَوْ لَا تُرْنِي الْيَوْمَ، سَأْرَاكَ غَدَّاً فِي أَيِّ حَالٍ.

Whether or not you visit me today, I will see you tomorrow in any case.

4) To supplicate

رَبِّ رَبِّي عَلَيْهِ

"Oh my Lord, increase me in knowledge!"

Quran 20:114

5) To challenge

عِيشْ حَيَاكَ بِدُونْ خَوْفٍ مِنْ أَيِّ بَشَرٍ.

Live your life without fearing any human.

6) To threaten

أُحْضِرُ إِلَى الشُّغُلِ مُتأخِّرًا مَرَّةً ثَانِيَةً وَالْمَدِيرُ سَيْطِرُكَ.

Come to work late again, and the manager will fire you.

7) To express sarcasm

إِغْعَلْ مَا تَشَاءُ، لَا يَهْمِنِي.

Do whatever you want, I don't care.

8) To plea

سَاعِدُنِي!

Help me!

9) To give permission

خُذْ رَاحْتَكَ.

Take your time.

10) For a weaker person to petition someone in authority

أَبْهَا الْمُلْكَ، كَنْ كَرِيمًا تَجَاهَ شَعْبِيِّ.

Oh King, be generous towards my people!

11) To insult

كَنْ كَسُولًا مِثْلُ أَصْدِقَائِكَ.

Be lazy like your friends.

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