

**The Semantic Implications of the Imperatives  
in English and Arabic**

**Set by**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper is intended to shed some light on the semantic implications of the imperatives in English as well as Arabic. The semantic implications refer to the functions (meanings) of the imperatives in both languages. It has been divided into four parts. The first one gives a description of the semantic implications of the imperatives in English while the second is concerned with those of the imperatives in Arabic. The third part is reserved for the similarities and differences between the implications of the imperatives in English and Arabic. The conclusions are summed up in the last part of the paper.*

# **The Implications of the Imperatives in English**

## **1. Forms of the Imperatives in English**

Imperatives are verbs used to give orders, commands and instructions. The form used is usually the same as the base form. The mood they have usually expresses an intention to influence the listeners' behaviour (Imperatives,2009:1).

Swan (2003:26) shows that the imperative in English may take several forms:

A. Affirmative form (base form of the verb):

1. Sit down, please.

B. Emphatic form (do+imperative verb):

2. Do forgive me. I didn't mean to interrupt.

C. Passive form (get+ past participle):

3. Get vaccinated as soon as you can.

D. Imperative form with subject:

4. Mary come here.

E. Imperative + tag question.

5. Wait here, will you?

F. Imperative joined by coordinators:

6. Go and play outside.

## **2. The Basic Implications of the Imperatives in English**

Imperatives are used mainly to express orders and commands .The two terms are often used interchangeably as a subclass of directives to express the addresser's intention that the addressee takes his expressed desire as a reason to act (Lyons, 1977:745). Searle and Vanderveken (1985:201),however, show that the main difference between commands and orders is that orders do not require an institutional structure of authority. One can order somebody to do something simply in virtue of one's position of power whether or not that power is institutionally sanctioned. The issuance of a command ,anyhow, requires that the addresser to be in a position of authority over the addressee. The two imperative sentences below are examples of an order and a command respectively:

- (7) Make your bed at once. (Quirk et. al., 1985:830)  
 (8) An officer to his soldiers: Fire ! (ibid.)

English grammarians such as Han(2000);Davies(1986);Lyons(1977);Quirk et. al (1985);Bache(2000)...,etc. have recognized other meanings of the imperative. These meanings are the following:

## 1. Permission

Imperatives may serve to give permissions, as might be the case with the following examples:

- (9) Come in. (Han,2000:5)  
 (10) Help yourself to any book you need. (Davies, 1986:41)  
 (11) Watch television if you like: you've already studied enough. (Lapeyre,1993:61)  
 (12) a. Peter: Can I open the window?  
       b. Mary : Oh, open it then. (Wilson and Serber, 1988:3)

The obvious reasons for issuing permissions in the previous examples are either to grant a request for permission or to remove some antecedent restriction against the action in question. In example (12), Wilson and Serber (ibid.) show that when Peter asks Mary if he can open the window, he presents a certain state of affairs as desirable from his point of view, but at the same time expresses doubt about its potentiality (given that Mary can refuse to let him open it). By saying "oh, open it then" Mary incidentally concedes the desirability (to Peter) of this state of affairs, but more importantly, guarantees its potentiality, thus removing the only obstacle to Peter's opening the window.

## 2. Supplication

An imperative is used even in the humblest supplications and prayers of an inferior being to one who is infinitely his superior, as in :

(13)" Wash me clean from my guilt, purify me from sin. For I am well aware of my offences, my sin is constantly in mind. Against you alone I have sinned".

The verbs 'wash' and 'purify' are not to order God to do something; rather they show the perception of God as the absolute source of forgiveness for the errors committed substantially against Him (Murray,2007:53).

## 3. Request

Requests are a subclass of directives that express the addresser's desire that the addressee do something. Request is a directive implication that can be refused or granted by the addressee (Lyons, 1977:749).

With requests the indeterminacy is resolved in favour of the addresser who is understood as indicating that the state of affairs described is desirable from his own point of view(Wilson and Serber,1988:6).

(14) Buy me a new bike, will you? (Takhashi, 2004:42)

A marker like "please" may frequently co-occur with imperatives and that when it does, it serves as "attitudinal" in the sense that it represents the addresser's serious request for the addressee's future action or situation (Bache,2000:145).Here are some examples of this implication:

(15) Please, pass the salt.

(Bach and Harnish, 1979: 200)

(16) Shut the door, please.

(Quirk et. al, 1985: 831)

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#### **4. Advice**

An advice is a kind of non-willful directives in which the addresser does not express the desire that the addressee do a certain action, but the belief that doing it is a good idea. That is , compliance is not for the addresser's benefit but normally for the addressee's (Bach and Harnish, 1979:49). Davies(1986:37) comments on imperatives that convey an advice by saying "advising is not trying to get you do something... advising is more like telling you what is best for you.":

(17) Take plenty of exercise if you want to stay slim.

(18) Never speak to strangers!

(19) Don't buy that brand.

(20) Get some rest.

#### **5. Instructions**

Instructions expressed by imperatives are a kind of directives, but they differ from other directives in that they are not aimed at getting the addressee do something; rather they tell him how to do something or how to behave in a certain way.

(Bache, 2000:145)

Imperatives are used to convey instructions whenever the addressee undertakes a certain kind of project, they suggest a recognized means to an end by which he/she will guarantee success( Huddelston and Pullum,2005 :160)

(21) Wash hair and rinse carefully(Bache, 2000:145)

(22) Beat two eggs. Put salt and sugar into the beaten eggs.Mix them well.

(Han,2000:5)

(23) Use a moderate oven and bake for 20 minutes. (ibid.)

## 6. Wish

Imperatives can be used to imply good wishes. Wishes are used to express certain feelings toward the addressee. In expressing wishes two assumptions are required: first the addresser manifestly believes that neither he/she nor his/her addressee is in a position to bring about the state of affairs described, and second he/she manifestly regards this state of affairs as beneficial to the addressee (Wilson and Sperber, 1988: 4):

(24) Get well soon.

(25) Have a nice day.

## 7. Challenge

Davies (1986:40) asserts that imperative sentences may also indicate that the addresser is prescribing with his/her sentence some future course of action for the addressee. The notion of prescription seems general enough to cover an interpretation that imperative sentences can be used to issue a challenge as in :

(26) All right then, if you're so clever, prove it to me.

(27) Catch me if you can!

(28) Go on, shoot, if you can! (Takahashi, 2004:2)

In cases like these, while the addresser expresses an intention that the addressee attempts the function proposed, he may actually be in the hope or expectation that the attempt will fail (ibid.)

## 8. Threat

Imperatives can express the implication of threat when the addresser commits himself/herself to do something not for the benefit of the addressee but rather to his determinant (Searle and Vanderken,1985:193).In uttering an imperative sentence with this function, the addresser seeks to influence the addressee's behaviour to his/her own benefit. Moreover, the addresser works under the assumption that the proposed action involves a cost to the addressee. Because of this, the addresser anticipates a potential resistance by the addressee to grant his/her request, which he/she attempts to overcome by telling the addressee that his refusal to do as he/she is told will result in a greater cost to himself/herself (Hernandes, 2001:78).

(29) Make a move and I'll shoot (Quirk et. al.,1985:832).

(30) Say that word again and I'll hit you (Leech,1983: 117).

## 9. Insult

An imperative sentence can express rudeness. The addresser because of the authority he exercises may insult the addressee by speaking to him rudely as in:

(31) You shut up !

(32) Push off ! (The Imperative,2009:2)

## 10. Exhortation

An imperative may denote exhortation. That is to try hard to persuade or encourage someone to do certain action(Kellerman,2007:242),for example:

(33) Run !!

(Davies,1986:34)



(34) Make me proud of you. (Harnish,1994:38)

(35) Be big and strong! (ibid.)

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## 11. Advertising

Another interesting use of the imperative is one which appears to be restricted in its occurrence to advertisements addressed to the general public rather than specific individuals. The force of examples like the following seems to be that of drawing attention to the existence of a possibility which people might otherwise not be aware of:

(36) Win up \$ 1000 in this week's competition.

(37) Speak a new language after as little as eight week.( Davies,1986:43)

Examples number (36) and (37) show that the intent of the authors of such imperatives is usually to get the public use their products or services. They have informative function, merely indicating that something could be done (ibid.)

## 12. Irony

In certain cases, in its consequential relationship with the 'and-clause', the imperative sentence can imply the meaning of irony as in the following example:

(38) Be rich and you'll have lots of friends :be poor and you'll have none.

(Lapeyre,1993:64).

## 13. Warning

Warnings expressed by imperatives are other kinds of non-willful directives where the compliance is normally for the addressee's benefit. The addressee should not perform a certain act based on the assumption that this act is not in his best interest (Davies, 1986:36):

(39) Be quite. I'm warning you.

(40) Close the window or you'll get a cold.

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An imperative sentence followed by or-clause like that in (40) is called by (Lapeyre,1993:64) as imperatives –like- ultimatums because the second clause conveys a kind of ultimatums, an indication of the undesirable consequences which will follow if the proposition is not performed. When the source of consequence is not the addresser, then this will express the addresser's will that the addressee should carry out the propositions. In other words, they are warnings to the addressee so as to avoid the consequence of not doing so.

#### **14. Suggestion**

Imperatives are also commonly used to convey suggestions which need not be expressions of an intention that the addressee do something, but can be more indications of something the addressee could do if he felt so inclined. The addresser in this sense shows himself to be totally indifferent as to whether or not the addressee acts upon his proposal, as in :

(41) A. What shall I do today?

B. Go to the shops, have a meal out, see a film-do whatever you want, since you're free for the day (Davies, 1986:40).

#### **15. Invitation**

Imperatives that imply invitations can be counted as attempts to get the addressee to carry out an action which is assumed to be beneficial to him. This means that, in uttering an invitation, the addresser is creating in the addressee's expectations that he will obtain a benefit upon completion of the specified action(Allan,1986:22):

(42) Come in, please. Come in and share us our meal.(Hernandes,2001:81)

Inviting requires the involvement of both the speaker and the addressee in the bringing about a future state of affairs. Example(42) requires an involvement on the part of the addressee (i.e. to carry out the specified action, namely, to physically come in the

addresser's home) and a passive involvement on the part of the addresser(i.e. to honor his invitation by not backing out at the last minute)(ibid.).

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## **16. Offer**

Imperatives can be used to convey offers. An "offer" is peculiar among the commissive speech acts. The logical form of an offer is : committing me to perform a certain course of action if it is accepted by the addressee (Bach and Harnish,1979:50). Imperatives can express two types of offering: those which involve the transfer of an object from the addresser to the addressee (i.e. giving and taking):

(43) Have another biscuit.

In offering a strawberry to the addressee as in:

(44) Do try one! (Hernandes, 2001:87).

Other types of offers are those which involve a physical action by the addresser(i.e. the bringing about the beneficial state of affairs for the addressee and a non-physical one by the addressee(i.e. accepting and rejecting of the offer):

(45) Shall I close the window for you? (ibid.)

The offer under (45) presents an active involvement of the addresser(i.e. to close the window) and just a passive involvement on the part of the addressee(i.e. to accept or reject the addresser's offer).

## **17. Promise**

Imperatives clauses joined by 'and' may be used to express promises. In this sense, the addresser obligates himself to do something for the benefit of the addressee:

(46) Finish your homework and I'll give you some ice-cream.

(47) Don't make any noise and I'll take you inside.(Quirk et. al.,1985:831-832).

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## **18. Prohibition**

The imperative can be used to forbid an action. It is simply a negative command. The use of "do not" before the imperative will turn the command into a prohibition:

(48) Don't shoot! (Zandvoort, 1972:208).

(49) Don't drink alcohol and drive.(Geiring et. al.,1987:223)

Davies(1986:70) and Spring(1999:1-2) take the view that prohibition is "a negative imperative" used by the addresser to prohibit the addressee from doing something he/she is apparently about to do or to tell him to stop doing something he/she has already begun doing. Thus:

(50) Don't talk.

Can be paraphrased as in:

(51) Don't keep talking.

Or

(52) Stop talking.

Semantically, both types of paraphrasing serve the purpose of focusing on the execution-termination of the action to be performed by the addressee(Haverkate,1979:41).

## **19. Condition**

An imperative sentence that is coordinated with 'and' can be used to imply a condition(Lapeyre,1993:64):

(53) Give them a pound and they'll steal three from you.

(If you give them a pound, they'll steal three from you).

(54) Sit down on the cat's chair and you'll have hair all over your coat.

(If you sit down on the cat's chair and you'll have hair all over your coat)

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## **20. Defiance**

An imperative may signal the addressee's intention to show indifference or defiance(Takahashi,2004:56) as in:

(55 ) Love me or hate me, but you are my daughter.

(56) Believe it or not, she is my daughter.

The essential implication of the imperatives above is that 'I don't care at all whether you love me or you hate me' or 'I don't care at all whether you believe it or not'.

## **23. Plea**

Imperatives may convey humble requests or helpless pleas, where it is clearly not the addresser but the addressee who has the power to decide(Davies,1986:39) :

(57) Do please help me.

(58) (please) let me go.

## **The Implications of the Imperatives in Arabic**

### **Forms of the Imperatives in Arabic**

The Arab grammarians as well as rhetoricians recognize four forms of the imperative sentence (Haroon, 1979:14):

A. A verb in the imperative:

1. افتح الباب .

(Open the door.)

2. نظف أسنانك قبل النوم .

(Brush your teeth before sleeping.)

B. A verb in the present tense beginning with (لام الأمر) as in:

3. ليحضر زيد .

(Let Zaid come.)

C. Verbal noun with an imperative sense such as:

4. صه .

(Hush, be Silent or stop.)

D. The infinitive form as in:

5. سعيا في سبيل الخير .

This sentence can be paraphrased with an imperative verb as:

6. اسع في سبيل الخير .

(Strive to do the good).

## **2.The Basic Implications of the Imperatives in Arabic**

The imperative in Arabic is basically used to give commands. Matlub (1987:313) states that for rhetoricians, the imperative is (طلب الفعل على وجه الاستعلاء وإلزام).

That is the imperative denotes demanding of an action(from the addressee) as issued from the addresser who enjoys authority.

The imperative sentence in Arabic can have other meanings beside its basic meaning of command. Arab grammarians and rhetoricians have recognized several other meanings of the imperative. In their discussion of these meanings, they have stressed

the importance of context to arrive at the proper meaning of the imperative. These meanings are the following:

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### 1. الأذن (Permission)

Al-Hashimi (2006:500) points out that the typical use of the imperative is giving permission. The addresser has the authority to allow the action to be done as in response one gives on hearing someone knocking the door:

أَدْخُلْ. 7.

Enter.

### 2. الدعاء (Supplication)

The imperative can denote a supplication or a prayer. Al-Hashimi(ibid.:500) states that the condition for this use of the imperative is that it must be made by a person of a lower position to another of a high position with power. In Islam, this is exclusively reserved to the relationship between a worshipper and God the Almighty:

8. قَالَ رَبِّ اشْرَحْ لِي صَدْرِي ﴿طه: ٢٥﴾

"He said: My lord, ease my breast for me!"(Irving,2003:313).

In this verse, Prophet Moses turns to God for help and support in his mission. Fayood (2004:293) observes that the secret behind this is to show ultimate submission to God and the urgent need for the fulfillment of the supplication.

### 3. الالتماس (Request)

Unlike the imperative-for-supplication, the imperative-for-requesting occurs between persons of equal social positions(Batahir, 2008:68).

اعطني هذا القلم. 9.

Hand me this pen.

The context for this use of the imperative is that it should be performed in an equal-to-equal exchange and it is usually free of any obligation.

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#### 4. النصح والإرشاد (Advising and Guiding)

The imperative may function as a device for giving a piece of advice or teaching or guiding. This is of a very common use. The addressee is not under obligation to do what he is told, but it is a mere piece of advice (Matlub and Baseer, 1999:120). This usually occurs either among peers or people of different ranks.

10. عَرُّوفٍ وَانِّيهِ مَا عَجِبِي الْمَلَأْتِكُمُ الرِّفْصَةَ الْمَصْدُورِ؛ عَلِمَى مَا أَصَابَكَ إِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ ﴿١٧﴾  
(لقمان: ١٧)

"My dear son , keep up prayer, command what is proper and forbid dishonor. Endure patiently whatever may afflict you; for that shows determination in [handily] matters" (Irving, 2008:452).

The dialogue in this verse goes between a father and his son. The addresser is socially above the addressee. Counseling can take place in the opposite direction, i.e. the addresser who is in lower social rank to an addressee occupying a higher rank. This is when the latter asks for advice of the former.

11. قَالُوا أَرْجِهْ وَأَخَاهُ وَأَرْسِلْ فِي الْمَدَائِنِ حَاشِرِينَ ﴿١١١﴾ (الأعراف: ١١١)  
They said: " put him and his brother off and send recruiters out through the city" (ibid:164).

#### 5. التأديب (Educating by Instruction)

Dr. Batahir (2008:69) mentions that the imperatives in Arabic can be utilized to convey the function of educating or refining. The addresser instructs the addressee to



perform something with the aim of improving his manners of behaviour as in the following example where the Prophet Mohammed addresses a youth:

12. يا غلام، سم الله، وكل بيمينك .

"Youth, pronounce the name of God, and eat with your right hand."

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## 6. التمني (Wishing)

A person may wish or desire something he or she is unable to obtain (Al-Quzweeni, 1993:86):

13. رَبَّنَا أَخْرِجْنَا مِنْ هَذَا مَرْتَبًا فَإِنِ عُدْنَا فَإِنَّا ظَالِمُونَ ﴿المؤمنون: ١٠﴾

"Our lord, get us off here! If we ever should return [to disobedience], then we would indeed be wrong-doers"(Irving, 2003:349).

The unbelievers wish to be allowed to get out of hell which it is something completely impossible.

## 7. التعجيز ( Disabling)

An imperative can be a means to show the addressee's helplessness or inability to do something he is not capable of doing (Matlub and Baseer, 1999:126).

14. وَإِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّثْلِهِ ﴿البقرة: ٢٣﴾

"if you (all) are in doubt about what we have sent down to our servant, then bring a chapter like it"(Irving, 2003:4).

The Quran defies the infidels and shows their helplessness to bring one chapter similar to those in the Quran. The imperative sentence ( فاتوا بسوره من مثله ) is not a real imperative, i.e., the aim is not to command them to bring a similar chapter but to present them a challenge they cannot overcome. They are shown in their weakest and most helpless state.

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## 8. التهديد ( Threat)

An imperative denotes a threat when the addresser is not pleased or satisfied with the addressee (Al-Quzweeni, 1993:183).

15. اعْمَلُوا مَا شِئْتُمْ إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ ﴿ (فصلت: ٤٠)

"Do what ye will.Lo! He is Seer of what ye do".(Pickthall, 1996:481).

The form ليفعل is used to convey this meaning of threat according to Al-Aaloosi(7.n.d.). The following verse imparts a threat:

16. الَّذِينَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ وَيُرِيدُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عِلَّةً لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَيُرِيدُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عِلَّةً لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَيُرِيدُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عِلَّةً لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا وَيُرِيدُونَ بِالْآخِرَةِ عِلَّةً لِيُؤْمِنُوا بِهَا ﴿ (الأنعام: ١١٣)

"That the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter may incline there to, and that they may take pleasure therein , and that they earn what they are earning"(Pickthall, 1996:192).

## 9. الإهانة والتحقير.(Insult and Humiliating)

In a context where the addresser holds no respect for the addressee, he can display this through using an imperative sentence. The addresser sets out to belittle the addressee and degrade him.

17. بِشَرِّ النَّفْسِ الَّتِي نَفَخْنَا فِيكُمْ عَادُوا إِلَىٰ آيَاتِنَا ﴿ (النساء: ١٣٨)

(Spread word to hypocrites that they shall painful torment).(Irving,2003:100)

The imperative verb (بشر) collocates usually with good news but in this verse it is used to break the bad news of "painful torment". Thus, hypocrites are insulted and humiliated. The addresser, that is Al-mighty God, is displeased with the hypocrites and their evil state. The previous verse can also imply a threat according to Al-Tabataba'i (2008:120).

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Al-Quzweeni (1993:85) employs the term (إهانة) to refer to this use of imperative in Arabic while Matlub and Baseer(1999:127) consider (إهانة) and (تحقير) as two separate functions of the imperative and discuss them under different headings. Dr. Batahir (2008:70) uses the term (تحقير) as a function of the imperative while As-Sammara'i(2003:26) separates between (الإهانة) and (التحقير).

## 10. التخيير (Alternative/choice)

The imperative may be interpreted, according to the context, as giving the addressee a choice between two things or more (Matlub and Baseer, 1999:126). In other words, he is granted partial freedom, as in:

تزوج هنداً أو أختها. 18.

Marry Hind or her sister.

The addressee cannot choose to marry Hind and her sister at the same time, but he is free to pick either Hind or her sister to be his wife.

The meaning of (تخيير) is achieved by the use of the coordinating conjunction (أو) which expresses alternative (ibid.).

## 11. الوجوب (Obligation/Duty)

Here, the imperative occurs in a context where it implies an obligation. It is incumbent upon the addressee to fulfill the action mentioned (Ateeq, 2004:69). The addressee exercises his authority to get the addressee to perform something. The following verse illustrates this use:

19.                    ةَ وَآتُواذِقُواالزَّيْمَةَ لِلصَّلَاةِ كَعُومًا مَعَ الرَّاٰكِعِيْنَ ﴿ (البقرة:٤٣)

"Keep prayer, pay the welfare tax and worship along with those who bow their heads"(Irving,2003:7).

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## 12.الحث (Urging)

The addresser can use the imperative to urge the addressee on to behave in a certain manner or embrace a particular personal attribute socially approved of (Fayood,2004:297).

Urging can be performed between peers, like friends of persons with authority. The addressee has the freedom in the sense that he is not compelled to do what he is urged to do. In this sense, urging resembles النصح.

20. اجتهد في دراستك كي تنجح.

Study hard to pass.

In this example, the addressee is free to study hard or not(ibid.).

## 13.الأعلام (Notification)

In some contexts , according to Al-Aani (2005:55), the imperative may carry the meaning of notifying (informing).The addresser informs the addressee of something:

21.                    إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاحْرَمِ لِعِزِّي نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِأَلْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿ (طه:١٢)

"I am your lord! Take off your sandals; you are in the sacred valley of Tuwa".(Irving,2003:311).

The imperative (فاخلع نعليك) "Take off your sandals" intends to make it known for Prophet Moses the holiness and sacredness of the place he was standing in.

## 14.الخبر.(Informing)

According to Ateeq(2004:96), Arabic uses a present tense verb with لام الأمر attached to it in the function of informing as in the following verse:

22. فَلَمَّيَضْحَكُوا قَلِيلًا وَ لَمَّيَبْكُوا كَثِيرًا ﴿ (التوبة: ٨٢)

"Let them laugh a little and weep a lot".(Irving, 2003:200).

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The imperative فليضحكوا and ليبكوا are not intended to order the addressees to laugh or weep but it informs about their present state(laughing) and the outcome of this in the future (weeping) (Al-Tabataba'i,2008:243).

### 15. (السخرية) Irony

One of the meanings an imperative can be used to imply in Arabic is irony(Batahir,2007:69)

23. ذُقْ إِنَّكَ ﴿أنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ﴾ (الدخان: ٤٩)

(Taste it; you were such a powerful noble!)(Irving,2003:428).

### 16. الاعتبار أو الاتعاظ (Taking a warning or a lesson from)

Sometimes the imperative can be used to address people in general where it may imply that the addressee should take a lesson or a warning that they may face the same(Mohammed,2004:373).

24. قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكذِبِينَ ﴿ (الأنعام: ١١)

Say: Travel around the earth and see what the outcome was for those who denied [it all](Irving,2003:129).

### 17. الإباحة (Approval)

An imperative sentence can convey the giving of permission. A person with an authority permits another to do something(Al-Quzweeni,1993:81) as in:

25. جالس الحسن أو ابن سيرين

Sit with Al-Hassan or Ibin Sireen.

The addressee is completely free to sit with one of them or both.

Ateeq (2004:66) states that the permission giving the function of the imperative occurs when the addressee thinks that something is forbidden. The effect of the imperative will be contrary to this interpretation.

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## 18. التسوية (Putting on the Same Level)

It happens that a person may take one of the two things as more preferable than the other in which case the employment of an imperative helps to invalidate the misinterpretation by presenting both things on an equal footing (Ateeq, 2004:68), as in:

26. (التوبة: ٥٣) ﴿ أَنْفِ تَقُؤُوا طَوْعًا أَوْ كَرْهًا لَنْ يُقَبَّلَ مِنْكُمْ إِتَّكُمْ كُنتُمْ قَوْمًا فَاسِقِينَ ﴾

"Say: spend either willingly or unwillingly, it will never be accepted from you." (Irving, 2003:193).

## 19. الإكرام (Honoring)

This is the opposite of (تحقير) and (إهانة). The imperative can be used in a condition where it serves to give an exalted position to a person:

27. (الحجر: ٤٦) ﴿ ادْخُلُوا مِنْهَا أَسَافَةً لَمَّا بَسَّ الْأَمْرَ نَبِينَ ﴾

"Enter them safely, at peace" (ibid.:264)

In this example, the believers are exalted and rewarded for the good deeds they have performed in this world (Al-Hashimi, 2006:50).

## 20. التعجب (Astonishment)

Matlub and Baseer (1999:27) mention that the imperative can serve as a means of expressing astonishment at same happening:

28. (الإسراء: ٤٨) ﴿ انظُرْ كَيْفَ ضَرَبُوا لَكَ (لَا مِثَالَ فَضَّلُوا فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَبِيلاً ﴾

"Watch what sort of stories they make up about you. They have strayed away and are unable to find a way back." (Irving, 2003:282)

## 21. الامتنان (Thankfulness)

Batahir (2008:69) observes that an imperative is used sometimes to show thankfulness for some favour or blessing he was granted. This meaning is clearly associated with the verb اشكر (Offer thanks).

مَرَّارَ زَقَاكُمْ اللَّهُ حَالًا طَيِّبًا ﴿كُلُوا شُكْرًا وَانْعَمُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ﴾ (النحل: ١١٤). 29.

"So eat any lawful wholly something God has provided you with, and be thanked for God's favour if you have been worshipping Him."(Irving, 2003:280).

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## 22.التكوين(Subjugation)

This use occurs in the context when the addressee is completely helpless and submissive to the addresser's volition(Ateeq,2004:69).

30. كُونُوا قِرَاقِدًا خَاسِئِينَ ﴿البقرة: ٦٥﴾

"Become apes who will be chased away"(Irving,2003:72)

## 23.التسليم(Total Acceptance)

This type of meaning conveys the total acceptance of a person to what he faces(Ateeq, 2004:96).The addresser authorizes the addressee to do whatever he is planning to do. The following verse illustrates this use:

31. فَاقْضِ مَا أَنْتَ قَاضٍ ﴿طه: ٧٢﴾

"Decide anything you may decide"(Irving,2003:316).

## 24.التكذيب(Give the Lie to Someone)

This is when the addresser intends to show that the addressee's statements as untrue. The imperative serves as a means of refutation(Al-Sammara'i,2003:26):

32. أَتُوا بِالتَّورَةِ فَاقْرَأُوهَا إِن كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿آل عمران: ٩٣﴾

"Say bring the Torah and recite it if you have been truthful"(Irving,2003:62).

## 25. التحسير او التلهيف (Making Someone Regret or Grieve for Something)

The addresser can use the imperative to cause the addressee to feel sad for something that he has lost or will lose or miss(Ateeq,2004:69).

33. مت بغيضك .

Flame up with rage.

## **Analysis of the implications (Functions) in English and Arabic**

This chapter aims at investigating the similarities and differences in the implications of imperatives as presented in the previous two chapters.

English and Arabic display a number of similarities in the use of the imperative. Among those, its use for expressing permission. This function can be performed between people of equal positions or typically between a person with authority to grant the permission and another who seeks it. Obviously, permission is issued in both languages to lift some ban that have been imposed before giving the permission.

As far as the request function is concerned, both languages display employment of the imperative for making a request. Requests are carried out mainly between equals. The point about making any request whether in Arabic or English is to get the addressee to do something for the addresser. The addressee is not obliged to fulfill the addresser's desire.

Advice is another function of the imperative in Arabic and English. With this use, the addressee is not expected to perform any act but he is merely showing what's good for him. The addresser has only to give the advice, the addressee is free to take or not.

Instructions can be one of the implications of the Arabic and English imperative. It is similar to the advice function in that the benefit goes to the addressee.

The wish function is treated in a seemingly different way in the two languages. In Arabic, the imperative-for-wish is used in contexts where the thing wished is not



possible to get. In both languages, the fulfillment of the wish is for the benefit of the addressee.

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Challenge in English has no straightforward equivalent in Arabic. Nevertheless, traces of such function can be found in the Arabic imperative of التعجيز. Likelihood of someone being incapable of doing something prescribed by the addressee is in itself the essence of presenting someone with a challenge. A challenge is usually designed with the preconception that the addressee will not be able to do it. Hence the similarity between the two languages.

The employment of the imperative to convey the meaning of supplication is found in both English and Arabic where it is conditioned that the supplication must be produced from lower position person to another in a higher one with authority(power) to answer the supplication.

The imperative denotes threat in English and Arabic where the addresser wants to show his displeasure with the addressee by issuing a threat to make him do something to his advantage.

The use of the imperative to express insult in English has its equivalent in Arabic when the imperative is utilized to imply تحقير and إهانة (insult and Humiliation). The addresser seeks to degrade and insult the addressee by way of the authority he possesses.

Urging or exhorting is one of the typical functions to which the imperative is put to in the two languages. The addresser is motivated by a desire to induce an action from the addresser. The action can be beneficial to both the addresser and the addressee or one of them.

The English use of the imperative to express instructions shows some resemblance to the Arabic function of التأديب for both are intended to tell the addressee how to do something or behave in a certain manner.

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الاعتبار or الاعتاظ can be considered a form of issuing a warning. The point behind using an imperative in Arabic in a context of اعتاظ and اعتبار is to give an implicit warning. Ignoring the implicit warning can be in the addressee's disadvantage as it is the case in English.

Generating an irony is one of the many purposes of using the imperative in English and Arabic, when the addresser seeks, through the imperative, to say something that is not for the addressee's benefit.

In English, the employment of the imperative in advertisement aims at seeking the addressee's attention which is the exact purpose of the functions of الأخبار and الإعلام in Arabic.

English has no equivalents for the Arabic imperative functions of الإباحة (Approval), الامتنان (astonishment), التعجب (honoring), الإكرام (Putting on the same level), التسوية (thankfulness), التكوين (subjugation), التسليم (Total Acceptance), التكذيب (giving the lie to someone), الوجوب (obligation), التخيير (choice) and التحسير أو التلهيف (making someone regret). Arabic on the other hand shows no similarities to English as far as the functions, suggestions, invitation, offer, promise, prohibition, condition, defiance and plea are concerned.

## **Conclusion**

*It has been found that the principle governing imperatives in English and Arabic is basically the same. The implications surveyed reflect that linguists and rhetoricians, Arab and Western share the view that the semantic characterization of the imperatives have been possibly been prescriptions imposed on the addressee by the addresser.*

*The Analysis of the imperatives in both languages show that imperatives may correlate with different functions depending on important situational factors such as context and the relationship between the addresser and the addressee.*

*The analysis shows that there are no strict one –to one similarities between the implications of the imperatives in English and their equivalents in Arabic. In addition, English has no equivalents for the Arabic imperative functions of الإباحة (Approval), التسوية (Putting on the same level), الإكرام (honoring), التعجب (astonishment), الامتنان (thankfulness), التكوين (subjugation), التسليم (Total Acceptance), التكبذب (giving the lie to someone), الوجوب (obligation), التخبير (choice) and التلهيف أو التلهيف (making someone regret). Arabic on the other hand shows no similarities to English as far as the functions, suggestions, invitation, offer, promise, prohibition, condition , defiance and plea are concerned.*

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## الخلاصة

يهدف هذا البحث إلى إلقاء الضوء على المضامين الدلالية (المعاني) لفعل الأمر في اللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية. وتشير بالمضامين البلاغية إلى وظائف (معاني) فعل الأمر في كلا اللغتين. قسم البحث إلى أربعة أجزاء: تناول الجزء الأول منها وصفاً للمضامين الدلالية لفعل الأمر في اللغة الإنجليزية بينما تناول الثاني المضامين الخاصة بفعل الأمر في اللغة العربية. كرس الجزء الثالث للتشابهات والاختلافات بين مضامين فعل الأمر في اللغتين. أما نتائج البحث فقد لخصت في الجزء الأخير.