

ЯЗЫКИ НАРОДОВ ЗАРУБЕЖНЫХ СТРАН (С УКАЗАНИЕМ КОНКРЕТНОГО ЯЗЫКА ИЛИ ГРУППЫ ЯЗЫКОВ) / LANGUAGES OF PEOPLES OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES (INDICATING A SPECIFIC LANGUAGE OR GROUP OF LANGUAGES)

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THE MOST COMMON WAYS OF EXPRESSING THE MEANINGS OF THE IMPERATIVE MOOD IN MODERN SPOKEN ENGLISH

Research article

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Abstract

The article considers various ways of expressing the idea of the Imperative Mood in modern spoken English. In the discourse under study, speakers most frequently resort to the following meanings of the Imperative Mood: order, recommendation, suggestion, request, prohibition. Most of them can be explicitly or implicitly expressed. One and the same way of expression can convey different meanings. The type of meaning depends on the extra linguistic context. The idea of the above-mentioned mood may be conveyed by the following means: the forms of the Imperative Mood themselves, the forms of the Indicative Mood in declarative and interrogative utterances, some modal and semi-modal verbs in declarative and interrogative utterances, nominal utterances, interjections.

Keywords: Imperative Mood, spoken English discourse, meanings of the Imperative Mood, ways of conveying the meanings of the Imperative Mood.

ОСНОВНЫЕ СПОСОБЫ ВЫРАЖЕНИЯ ЗНАЧЕНИЙ ПОВЕЛИТЕЛЬНОГО НАКЛОНЕНИЯ В СОВРЕМЕННОЙ АНГЛИЙСКОЙ УСТНОЙ РЕЧИ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются различные способы выражения значений повелительного наклонения в современном разговорном английском языке. В указанном виде дискурса чаще всего передаются следующие значения повелительного наклонения: приказ, рекомендация, предложение, просьба и запрет. Большинство из них может быть выражено как эксплицитно, так и имплицитно. Один и тот же способ выражения в различных контекстах может иметь разные значения. Значения повелительного наклонения могут эксплицитироваться при помощи следующих средств: форм повелительного наклонения, форм изъявительного наклонения в утвердительных и вопросительных высказываниях, некоторых модальных и полумодальных глаголов в утвердительных и вопросительных высказываниях, именных высказываний, междометий.

Ключевые слова: повелительное наклонение, разговорный дискурс, значения повелительного наклонения, способы передачи значений повелительного наклонения.

Introduction

The primary meaning of imperative utterances is to make a person behave in a certain way. In modern spoken English, there are explicit and implicit means of expressing the idea of the Imperative mood. Each of the means is meant to impose the speaker's will on the listener. Such speech patterns that are possible to replace by the forms of the Imperative mood can be considered the ways of conveying the meaning of the above-mentioned mood.

Different aspects of the Imperative Mood have been studied by many linguists. Some of them focus their attention on the forms of the mood [5], [6], [9], [10]. Others deal with the use of it in different types of discourse [3], [7], [8]. There are also works concentrating on other means that can render the idea of the Imperative Mood [2], [4]. The present article is an attempt at combining some of the approaches. The examples for the carried out research were taken from the TV series "Gossip Girl". All utterances that contained the phenomenon under consideration were analysed. The results of the conducted study of utterances in present day spoken English revealed that speakers most often tend to resort to the following meanings of the Imperative Mood: order, recommendation, suggestion, request, prohibition.

Main results

The meaning of order is expressed in the greatest variety of ways, the most explicit of them being the forms of the Imperative mood themselves. For example: *Get out [1]. Bring me your leader [1]. Go backstage. Try not to get underfoot [1].* To make the order sound more categorical or emotional the speaker may introduce the pronoun *you*. For example: *You shut up [1]. Now you listen to me [1]* (anger). In the spoken variety of the English language a vulgar word or phrase within an imperative utterance can help render some negative emotions usually that of anger or irritation. For example: *You stay the hell away from me [1].* An imperative utterance may start with the verb *go* before the main verb. For example: *Go find Serena's name card and put it on the correct seat [1].*

The idea of expressing order may be conveyed by the adverbs *now* and *enough*. The use of *now* emphasizes the fact that the speaker wants his order carried out immediately. For example: *Give me class schedule. Now [1]*. The adverb *enough* as a rule shows that the speaker is fed up with somebody's words or actions. For example: *Enough [1]*.

The forms of the Present Simple and the Present Continuous can be employed for expressing the idea of the Imperative mood, with the Present Continuous sounding more categorical. For example: *You're coming with me [1]*. *From now on everything goes through me [1]*. *Attorneys, you're dismissed [1]*. *Show's over (= Leave) [1]*.

Elliptical nominal utterances are not infrequently used for conveying the meaning of order. For example: *Chuck. Boundaries [1]*. There may be the adverb *now* in their structure. For example: *Bed, now [1]*. Suchlike utterances may contain gerunds. For example: *What are you doing? Less reading, more grooming [1]*.

Occasionally an order may be rendered by interjections. For example: *Get out of here. Shoo! [1]*.

A milder way of expressing an order is by an object clause preceded by the main clause *I suggest*. For example: *I suggest you get up and come with me without another word [1]*. The use of some verbs or phrases with modal meaning can either soften an order (the verb *need*) or make it more categorical. For example: *If she was (at home), you still wouldn't be welcome. You need to leave now [1]*. *I need you to tell me the truth [1]*. *I did my part. Now you're gonna do yours [1]*. *You will maintain your distance [1]*.

There are also cases when the idea of the Imperative mood, and that of an order in particular, is implicitly expressed. Then one deals with transposition. The first instance of this phenomenon is the interrogative utterance which conveys the idea of giving an order. For example: *Shouldn't you be zipping? [1]* (= zip the dress instead of giving unsolicited advice). *Why is it so hot in here?* (= do smth about the heat). An exclamatory sentence with the predicate expressed by the verb *want* can also serve the same purpose. For example: *Do you have a Lily Bass dossier? I want to see it! [1]* (= show it to me). A declarative utterance with the verb *need* and the pronoun *I* as a subject can also express a soft order. For example: *I need some time alone (Leave me) [1]*.

If the particle *not* is added the idea of prohibition comes into focus. Apart from the forms of the Imperative mood (*You don't say anything to Serena [1]*), which are not frequently used to convey the meaning, the forms of the Present Continuous, the Future Simple and the Present Simple are employed. For example: *You're not doing that [1]*. *You will do no such thing [1]*. *And if you're still hoping for a letter of recommendation, you won't argue [1]*. *As of this minute, your fashion duties are over [1]* (= don't think about working in fashion). The idea of prohibition can be expressed by a combination of an adverb or a demonstrative pronoun and the word *never* or the negative particle *not*, or by the word *no*. For example: *Never again [1]*. *Not so fast [1]*. *Not that (=Don't take the ring) [1]*. *No! [1]*. Modal verbs can also render the previously mentioned meaning. For example: *You can't be here. Columbia is mine [1]*. The form of the Subjunctive Mood can convey a mild prohibition. For example: *- I will go with you. – Actually, I'd prefer if you didn't [1]* (=Don't do it).

Such meaning of the Imperative Mood as recommendation in most cases is expressed by the forms of the mood themselves. For example: *A few simple tips to beat the heat. One – drink plenty of fluids. Two – stay out of the sun [1]*. *Blair, wake up [1]*. *Apologize. Before it's too late [1]*. The speaker may recommend the listener not to perform an action. For example: *Don't let him get away with it [1]*. *Don't waste your time appealing to Blair [1]*. A recommendation may be combined with a threat. For example: *You watch your back. No one uses Chuck Bass [1]*.

The idea of recommendation in spoken English may be rendered by the semi-modal verb *need*, the modal verb *should* and the phrase *had better*. For example: *Forget about them (the girls). You need to talk to her [1]*. *You just need to be stronger than that [1]*. *You and Amanda should leave [1]*. *Serena had better just stay away [1]*.

The same meaning of the Imperative mood can be conveyed with the help of the interrogative utterances starting with *why don't you* or *why* plus a bare Infinitive. For example: *Why don't you try telling the truth? [1]*. *Why don't you bring Eva to the fashion's night out tomorrow? [1]*. *This is your year to rule, why fight it? [1]*. A special question starting with the question word *why* and containing the predicate in the Present Continuous tense form can also convey a recommendation. For example: *Why are you taking his advice? (=Don't take it). He's old and lonely [1]*.

A recommendation bordering on reassurance is quite often expressed by the infinitive of the verb *worry* accompanied by the negative particle *not* or by the plural form of the noun *worry* preceded by *no*. For example: *Not to worry. I happen to be an expert mediator [1]*. *Not to worry, little J. this is going to be a very short conversation [1]*. *No worries [1]*. Reassurance may also be expressed by the modal phrase *be going to*. For example: *Everything's gonna be fine [1]*.

A recommendation may start with *it's time* plus the Infinitive in the function of an attribute or an attributive subordinate clause with the predicate in the Past Simple expressing the Subjunctive Mood. For example: *B, it's time to get up [1]*. *At least they own up to it. Maybe it's time you did too [1]*.

Declarative utterances with the predicates in the Present Simple or the Past Simple can also convey a recommendation. For example: *If the heat's still too much, there's always a cold shower [1]* (= take a cold shower). *You didn't sign for any of this [1]* (= don't do this).

One of the meanings the Imperative mood expresses in the spoken English is that of request. Very often the forms of the Imperative mood are used. For example: *Please, let me go with you [1]*. *Tell me everything [1]*. – *Aren't I fired? – Don't be so dramatic [1]*. *Please, don't go [1]*. It should be noted that some of the utterances can express such meaning of the Imperative mood as order. The meaning depends on the extra linguistic situation.

Interrogative utterances beginning with such modal verbs as *would*, *could*, *can* may express the previously mentioned meaning. For example: *Would you take care of this right away? [1]*. *Would you mind putting this in the back for me? [1]*. *Would you be so kind as to untie me? [1]* (the latter example sounds very polite). *Could you just spare me the dramatics for one day? [1]*. *I'm sorry. Can you hold on a moment? [1]*. A request can have a tinge of mockery or sarcasm if it's really an order made in the form of request. Usually the speaker makes it sound extremely polite. For example: *Now if you don't mind, would you direct us to the keymaster and then get me some cashews [1]*.

The idea of request is also conveyed by declarative utterances with compound verbal modal predicates. For example: *Now if everyone will just get a candle, I'm sure the power will be back in a minute [1]. Maybe your father and his date could bring us some sandwiches and some coffee [1]. Now if you'll excuse me [1].* An utterance containing the forms of the Subjunctive Mood can also express a request. For example: *I'm at this party that would be a lot more fun if you were here (=Come here) [1].*

The same meaning of the Imperative mood is observed in interrogative utterances beginning with *so*. The whole utterance may be represented by this word only or it can be a more extended one. For example: *So? [1]* (= say something). *So when do I have to meet her?* (= introduce me to her). A noun preceded by *no* can be perceived as an elliptical variation of an imperative utterance. For example: *No offence [1].*

The next meaning of the Imperative mood is that of suggestion. This meaning is usually rendered by the form of the Imperative mood that starts with *Let* plus a pronoun in the Objective case. For example: *Let me lend you my phone [1]. Let me talk to them and see if I can make some progress [1]. Let's not ask too much of the bat, shall we? [1].*

Quite often a suggestion occurs in declarative and interrogative utterances containing such modal and semi-modal verbs as *should, could, can, have to*. For example: *There are some things we should talk about (Let's talk about the things) [1]. I wondered if we could have a drink [1]* (the suggestion coming in an object clause after the main one *I wonder* sounds more tentative and polite). *Relax, gorgeous. We can discuss this tomorrow over lunch [1]. Come on. We have to get out of here [1]. Don't you think we should be friends [1]. Should we talk about this? [1]. Can we talk later? [1].*

Some types of interrogative utterances express suggestion. In particular, general questions with the verb *to want*. For example: *Do you want to do something later? (Let's do something later) [1]. Wanna dance? (=Let's dance) [1].* Special questions with the suggestion in an object clause: *What do you say we just forget thinking and follow our hearts? [1].* Questions with *why don't we* in the initial position: *Why don't we talk later? [1].* Nominal elliptical questions: *Okay. Tomorrow night? [1].*

Suggestion can be expressed by affirmative utterances with the predicate in the Present Simple, the Future Simple, the Past Continuous. Most explicitly the idea is expressed after the main clause *I suggest*. For example: *Come on. We tell everybody once, and then it's done [1]. We'll talk later when I pick you up. [1].* If the predicate is in the Present Continuous, the idea of suggestion is less conspicuous. For example: *The tea's getting cold [1]. (= Let's have the tea). Dad left money for dinner. So I was thinking Indian (=Let's order Indian food) [1].*

Conclusion

In modern spoken English, the speaker often explicitly or implicitly expresses his will, which he means to impose on the listener. The most common meanings of the Imperative Mood are order, recommendation, suggestion, request, prohibition, with the meaning of order being the first in frequency. The same meaning that of order can be conveyed by the greatest variety of ways. Least often, speakers resort to the meaning of prohibition. There is a variety of ways of expressing the above stated meanings: all of them are rendered by the forms of the Imperative Mood themselves and can be rendered by modal and semi-modal verbs capable of expressing this or that meaning in declarative and interrogative utterances. Some forms of the Indicative Mood in declarative and interrogative utterances, nominal utterances, interjections may also be employed for expressing the previously mentioned meanings.

Конфликт интересов

Не указан.

Рецензия

Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Review

All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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