

Imperative clauses in the Ìyàgbà dialect of Yorùbá

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Abstract

Imperative clauses express commands, orders, instructions or directives. Extant studies recognise imperative clauses as sub-units of sentences on the basis of function-based criterion with little attention paid to the details about the structure, derivation and clause-mood indicating mechanism of the discourses. This present study therefore, provides a theoretically-based description of the structure, derivation and the exertion of illocutionary force of imperative clause. The theoretical orientation adopted is the Minimalist Program and Rizzi's split CP-hypothesis. The ethnographic design was used. The database comprises a structured interview guided by the Ibadan Syntactic Paradigm and the Ibadan 400 wordlist. The investigation purposively selected and interviewed five competent native speakers whose ages range between 40 and 70 from the Ìsánlú variety of Ìyàgbà. The collected data were subjected to interlinear glossing, qualitative and syntactic analyses. It is observed that the imperative clauses of Ìyàgbà can be classified into direct and indirect imperative clauses. The markers of both imperative clauses are covert. The purported markers (i.e. *jé/ki* 'let') of indirect imperative sentences are re-analysed as politeness markers that license their Determiner Phrases for politeness. The two types of imperative clauses can therefore be differentiated by [+ Politeness] and [-Politeness] for indirect and direct imperative clauses respectively. The negators employed in imperative utterances are *mó* and *ra* 'do not'. The hierarchical order of clausal structure that appropriately captures imperative discourses of Ìyàgbà is proposed as: ImpP>(PolP)>(NegP)>TP>vP>VP

Keywords: Imperative CP-hypothesis Politeness Ìyàgbà

Introduction

Imperative clauses are sub-classified on the basis of function-based criterion as the utterances that express commands, orders, instructions, or directives (Adéléyẹ 2008, Awóbùlúyì 1978, 2013, Bámgbóşé 1986, 1990 and Okùnádé 1992). They are generally characterised by the following features:

- They are overtly subjectless
- They feature imperative finite verbs
- Their finite imperative verbs have restricted tense and aspect systems
- They sound abrupt
- Their commands, orders or directives can be changed to questions or statements (Quirk and Greenbaum 2012: 212-13)

The above assertions are buttressed with the examples below:

- (1a) Séré re
Run go 'Go quickly'
- (b) Jé ọlọgbọ̀n
be' wise' 'Be wise'
- (c) Jẹun kíákíá
eat quickly 'Eat quickly'
- (d) Jẹ ounjẹ nká kíákíá
eat food the quickly 'Eat the food quickly'
- (e) Gbé ounjẹ nká hí owóo tebúrù
Carry food the on head table 'Put the food on the table'

As can be observed, all the examples in (1a – e) are imperative sentences with covert or abstract subjects. The subjects are understood to be second person short and long pronouns- 'you' (Bámgbósé 1990:186). Though they generally lack overt subjects except when it becomes necessary to differentiate between the addressees and when the addressees are plural in number, they may however have objects as (1b, d and e) demonstrate. The finite imperative verbs – *re* 'go', *jé* 'be verb', *jẹun* and *jẹ* 'eat' and *gbé* 'carry' in the above sentences trigger actions that their respective verbs commanded .

The tense of the examples in (1a–e) is expressed in non-future (present) tense system. The sentences are further observed to be abrupt. The abruptness of the orders or commands can be toned down by the introduction of the politeness marker which is identified as 'please' in English (Quirk and Greenbaum 2012: 212 – 13). The direct equivalence of 'please' in Ìyàgbà is *jòò*. The data below further exemplify:

- (2a) *Jòò* tòmí kò mí
Please fetch+water for ISG 'Please fetch water for me'
- (b) *Jòò* ra fule kò mí
Please buy beans cake for ISG 'Please buy beans cake for me'
- (c) *Jé/kí* Ólu re oko
Let Olú go farm 'Let Olú go to the farm'
- (d) Ólu re kíákíá
Olú go quickly 'Olu go quickly'

In (2a – b) above, the bluntness of the command is assumed to have been drastically reduced. The lessening of the imperative force of (2a – b) is assumed to be by the introduction of *jòò* 'please' while that of (2c) is due to the presence of *kí/jé* 'let'. Assuming the correctness of the assumption above, one may tend to propose that *jòò* 'please' and *jé/kí* 'let' are politeness markers (POLs).

The examination of the functions of *jòò* 'please' in discourses tends to show that the assumption of politeness marking ascribed to *jòò* 'please' may be incorrect. Consider the following data:

- (3a) Sépa
Quiet 'Be quiet'
- (b) Jòò
Please 'please'
- (c) Sépa jòò
Quiet please 'Be quiet please'
- (d) Jòò sépa
please quiet 'Please be quiet'
- (e) re wéréwéré jòò
run quickly please 'Run quickly please'
- (f) Ḿ fẹ ewó jòò
ISG want money please 'I want money please'

It is observed that *sépa* 'quiet' and *jòò* 'please' function as the imperative predicates in (3a – b). In (3c, e – f), *jòò* 'please' occurs in sentence-final positions while it occurs in the sentence-initial position in (4d). The inference deducible from the above observations is that *jòò* 'please' is not a verbal modifier or adverb as there is no singular verbal modifier that occurs in dual positions as observed above. Further proof that *jòò* 'please' is not an adverb is substantiated by the fact that an adverb- *wéréwéré* 'quickly' intervenes between the verb and *jòò* 'please' in (3e). In (3f), the implausibility of *jòò* 'please' being the conveyor of politeness in imperative clauses is further substantiated by the fact that the sentence is a declarative sentence where the notion of politeness is not expressed. It is therefore proposed that *jòò* 'please' is a sentential modifier that expresses the lexical meaning of politeness as opposed to the grammatical marking of politeness in utterances.

Another theoretical basis for disproving *jòò* 'please' as POL is borne out of the fact that it (*jòò* 'please') lacks all the characteristics of the functional categories of markers. Markers are characterised by the following features:

- They are functional categories (e.g. light verb, tense, aspect, negative, focus and interrogative markers)
- They have edge features (EFs) which must be filled at their specifiers (Specs)
- They are PROBES that trigger the movement of GOAL constituents to their Specs.

In all the examples in (3) above, *jòò* 'please' lacks the above characteristics that distinguish markers. In addition to the above, *jòò* 'please' is further ruled out as a POL in view of the fact that it is not derived as a constituent within the projection of the imperative phrase (ImpP) where it activates politeness in imperative sentences.

The functors-*jé* and *kí* 'let' are claimed to be indirect imperative markers (Bámgbóṣé 1990, Adéjùbèè 2020). A closer examination shows that they consistently tone down the abruptness of the illocutionary force of imperative clauses thereby suggesting that they are POLs. This assumption is premised on the fact that agreement relation between PROBE (POL) and GOAL displaces DP constituents of indirect imperative sentences to the Spec, PolP and also licenses them (DPs) for politeness. Admitting the above analysis, one can propose that

indirect and direct imperative clauses have covert markers and that the assumed indirect imperative markers are POLs as exemplified below:

- (4a) Jé Ólu sépa
Let Olú quiet
Let Olú be quiet
- (b) Kí Ólu re oja
Let Olú go market
'Let Olú go to the market'

As can be observed in (a – b) above, *jé* and *kí* 'let' consistently tone down the bluntness of the imperative force of their respective clauses, thus necessitating their recognition as politeness markers [POLs].

A command that is expressed in form of question is also possible as shown in the following examples;

- (5a) Sé o ró seré ra óunjẹ kò mí?
Do 2SG can run buy food for ISG
'Can you quickly buy food for me?'
- (b) Ñjẹ o ró se isẹ nká kò mí
Do 2SG can do work the for ISG
'Can you do the work for me?'

The examples in (5a – b) seem to express interrogative notions. The contexts of the speeches will determine the interpretation of the sentences as to whether they express interrogative or imperative illocutionary force. In (5) above, the speech contexts involving a superordinate and subordinate interlocutors will determine the seemingly interrogative sentences as imperative ones.

The imperative clauses can also have a negative form. The negators that are employed in the imperative clauses are: *mó* and *ra* 'do not' as demonstrated below:

- (6a) Mó re
NEG go
'Do not go'
- (b) Ra re
NEG go
'Do not go'

The exemplifications above reveal that the negators in negative imperative clauses are *mó* and *ra* 'do not'. Like Standard Yorùbá (SY) which uses *má* or *máše* 'do not', Ìyàgbà too has two negators (NEG) for imperative clauses.

The study describes the imperative constructions of Ìyàgbà – a dialect of North Eastern Yorùbá spoken in about 75 communities of Mòpà-Mùrò, Yàgbà East and Yàgbà West Local Government Areas of Kogi State. Though there is a slight variation among the speakers across the geographical spread of the speech community, there is ample evidence of mutual intelligibility among them. To ensure consistency in analysis therefore, Ìsánlú variety of the

dialect was used because Ìsánlú community is considered to be the nucleus of Ìyàgbà where the dialect is predominantly spoken.

Aim and objectives of the study

The study presents the empirical and theoretical descriptions of imperative clauses within the perspective of the MP. It specifically attempts to:

- describe imperative clauses and their various types.
- account for the derivation and exertion of the illocutionary force of imperative clauses.
- propose the clausal architecture of imperative sentences of the dialect.

Research questions

The study is guided by the following questions

- What are the forms of imperative clauses and how are they differentiated?
- How are imperative clauses derived and indicated for clausal mood?
- What is the hierarchy of projection of imperative clauses?

Theoretical framework

The theoretical orientation adopted in this study is the Minimalist Program (MP) and Rizzi's split CP-hypothesis. MP is derived from the work of Chomsky (1993, 1995 and 1998). It is "a research agenda" that is undergoing persistent modification and development (Adger 2003: ii; Haegeman and Lohndal 2011; Hornstein, Nunes and Grohmann 2005:290). The fundamental goal of MP is to facilitate the acquisition of natural language by reducing the descriptive apparatus to the barest minimum. The components of MP are: the lexicon, syntactic or computational component and the interfacial levels: the Phonetic Form (PF) and the Logical Form (LF). The operations that derive syntactic structures include: Select, Merge, Copy and Move. Rizzi's split – CP hypothesis is developed by Rizzi (1997, 2001, and 2004). The hypothesis proposes the decomposition of the singular CP into multiple arrays of projections within the C-layer. The Force Phrase of the C-layer accounts for the illocutionary forces of interrogative, imperative and declarative sentences.

MP and split-CP analysis are considered appropriate for the description of imperative clauses of Ìyàgbà. MP is adopted to provide a descriptive account of the derivation of the syntactic structure of imperative utterances through the operations of Select, Merge, Copy and Move while the split-CP analysis is employed to account for the projection of ForceP at the Pre-IP periphery where illocutionary forces of declaration, imperativeness and interrogation are exerted on sentences.

Literature review

Yorùbá linguists tend to unanimously agree that imperative sentences are a sub-class of sentences classified on the criterion of functionalism (Awóbùlúyì 1978:111, 2013:197; Adéléyẹ 2008:101; Bámgbóşé 1986:42-3, 1990:187 and Okùnadé 1992:118). Awóbùlúyì (2013:197-202) classifies imperative sentences into: direct imperative sentences, imperative sentences of plea, imperative sentences of phatic communion and imperative sentences of advice. The examples indicated under the sentences that express plea can be accommodated under the sub-class of the phatic communion while the examples of the imperative sentences that express plea lack the syntactic features of imperative clauses.

Bámgbóşé (1990:186-7) identifies two major types of imperative sentences to be direct and indirect. He further adds that indirect imperative clauses are marked by *kí*. This study reclassifies all the types of imperative clauses of Awóbùlúyì (2013) namely: direct imperative sentences, imperative sentences of plea, imperative sentences of phatic communion and imperative sentences of advice into two which are direct and indirect imperative sentences.

Direct imperative clauses

Direct imperative clauses are mainly for the issuance of order, directive or commands. Generally, the interlocutors in the speech act of imperative clauses are the first person and the second person. The first person is the speaker while the second person is the addressee. Direct imperative sentences are usually void of overt subjects. Third person cannot be a silent subject of direct imperative command. Inclusive in the sub-classes of direct imperative clauses is phatic communion.

Phatic imperative sentences differ from the form that expresses directives or commands on the semantic basis that it is used to exchange pleasantries, greetings and goodwill. Consider:

- (7a) Ọọ
Hello
'Hello'
- (b) Káàárò
Fold+ morning
'Good morning'
- (c) Ó dàbò
EXPL bye
'Farewell/Goodbye'
- (d) È rọra
2SG careful
'Take care'

In the above examples, the imperative marker is covert in (7). It is also observed that (7c-d) have expletive pronoun (EXPL) and 2PL respectively.

Indirect imperative clauses

Indirect imperative sentences are utterances that express command in a mild manner. The abruptness of the imperative force of indirect imperative clauses is assumed to be toned down (Quirk and Greenbaum 2012:213). The purported markers of the indirect imperative clauses- *kí/ jé* ‘let’ of Bámgbósé (1990:187) which is presently re-analysed as politeness markers (POLs), tones down imperative force. Consider the exemplifications below:

- (8a) Ké tètè re
POL+2PL quickly go
‘You go quickly’
- (b) Jé Ólu seré re
POL Olú run go
‘Let Olú quickly go’

As can be observed from (8a-b) above, *ké* (which is the contraction of the POL-*kí* and 2PL-*é* and *jé* are the conveyers of politeness. It can be observed that Ìyàgbà does not instantiate *jé kí* ‘let’ as a continuous string in a clause. Rather, they are used separately in sentences. Indirect imperative clauses have the forms of reported imperative and supplicatory imperative clauses

Reported imperative clauses

Reported imperative sentences are akin to the indirect speeches used in the contexts of reporting the order or instruction of a third person and they are composed of two clauses. The matrix clause expresses report about the third person while the lower clause expresses the directive. The directive can be a quoted statement. Consider the following exemplifications:

- (9a) Olùkò páṣẹ ‘kí akékò sépa’
Teacher command POL student quiet
‘The teacher commanded ‘let the students keep quiet’
- (b) Olúwa páṣẹ ‘jé ìmólè gha’
Lord command POL light exist
‘The Lord commanded, ‘let there be light’
- (c) Olúwa páṣẹ ‘kí ìmólè gha’
Lord commanded POL light exist
The Lord commanded ‘let there be light’
- (10a) Olùkò páṣẹ pé akékò sépa
Teacher command COMP student quiet
‘The teacher commanded that students should keep quiet’
- (b) *Olùkò páṣẹ pé jé kí akékò sépa
Teacher command COMP let let student quiet
‘The teacher commanded that let the students be quiet’

- (11) Olùkó páṣẹ pé 'kí/jé akékò sépa'
 Teacher command COMP POL student quiet
 'The teacher commands 'let the students keep quiet'

All the above well-formed sentences in (9a-c) and (10a) are assumed to be reported imperative clauses. The POLs of the embedded clauses are: *kí* and *jé* 'let'. As (12b) reveals, *pé* COMP, *jé* and *kí* 'let' cannot be combined (in a continuous string) to derive reported indirect command in Ìyàgbà. Either of them may co-occur or combine with *pé* COMP in the reported utterance of the embedded clause as in (11). As can further be observed, the subjects of the matrix clauses are third persons whose commands are conveyed by the lower clauses.

The inference to be drawn from the foregoing is that *jé* and *kí* are politeness markers. The *kí* 'let' as a POL differs from *kí*¹COMP which is a variant of *pé* COMP in the SY. The POL can combine with the sentential modifier that occupies either the sentence-initial or the sentence-final position whereas it is not possible with *pé/kí* COMP. Consider:

- (12a) Jòṛò jé/kí Ólu re
 Please POL Olú go
 'Please, let Olú go'
- (b) Kí Ólu re jòṛò
 POL Olú go please
 'Let Olú go please'
- (13a) *Pé Ólu re jòṛò
 That Olú go please
 *'That Olú go please'
- (b) *Jòṛò pé Ólu re
 Please COMP Olu go
 *'Please that Olu go'

In (12a-b), *jòṛò* 'please' co-occurs with POL either at the sentence-initial or sentence-final position of the indirect imperative clauses. The same derivational operation is invoked in

(i¹The SY has *kí* 'that' which interchanges with *pé* 'that'. Consider the exemplifications below:

- a) Olùkó gbà kí n máa lọ
 Teacher admit COMP 1SG FUT go
 'Teacher agreed that I should be going'
- (b) Olùkó gbà pé mo máa lọ
 Teacher admit COMP ISG FUT go
 'The teacher agreed that I will be going'
- (c) *Olùkó gbà pé kí n máa lọ
 Teacher admit COMP COMP 1SG FUT go
 *Teacher agreed that that I will be going

The variant of *kí* COMP in the above sentences is not a POL. It is accurately rendered as *pé* 'that' in Ìyàgbà dialect. Unlike *kí* POL, *kí* COMP-'that' above cannot co-occur with *pé* COMP in SY. The COMPs above do not express commands.

(13a-b) and the resultant structures are ill-formed. This observation suggests that *pe* COMP differs from *jé* and *kí* ‘let’.

Supplicatory imperative clauses

The liturgical supplication, the traditional prayer or even the orthodox prayers are often couched in the form or sense of commands. The politeness markers- *kí* or *jé* ‘let’ feature in such utterances as shown below:

- (14a) *Jé/kí* eku á pókiki nti eku
 POL rat FUT cry like rat
 ‘Let rat rant like rat’
- (b) *Kí* ayé híṣṣn
 POL earth good
 ‘Let the town be peaceful’
- (c) *Kí* ayé tòrò
 POL earth rest
 ‘Let the the earth be restful’
- (d) *Kí* ilù rojú
 POL town see +eye
 ‘Let the town be at peace’
- (e) *Kí* aboyún múnú soyún
 POL pregnant take+belly do+pregnancy
 ‘Let women conceive’
- (f) *Kí* ó máyìn pṣnmṣ
 POL HTS take+ back back+child
 ‘Let her nurse her child’

In each of the examples in (14a) – (f) the POLs are *jé* and *kí*. The above type of imperative clauses shares structural similarity with the indirect imperative clauses and they are as such subsumed therein.

The structure and derivation of imperative clauses

The word order of direct imperative sentences proceeds from the verb head as exemplified below:

- (15) $\left. \begin{array}{l} V \\ VO \\ VOAdv \\ VOPP \\ VAdv \end{array} \right\}$

The derivation of the above clauses can be subjected to a unified analysis as illustrated with the last example on the table above. Consider the exemplification below:

- (16) ImpP [Spec θ Imp⁰ [TP [Spec θ T¹ [VP re wéréwéré]]]]
 go quickly

The derivation above is initiated at the VP shell. The abstract DP moves to the Spec, TP to value its phi-features against local T⁰. The illocutionary force of a clause in the imperative mood is exerted on the structure.

The indirect imperative sentences have POLs that can alter the word structure above as exemplified below. Consider:

- (17a) Jé Ólu ré
 POL Olú go
 ‘Let Olú go’

- (b) Kí Olú ré
 POL Olú go
 ‘Let Olú go’

Rather than beginning with verbs, the word order begins with POLs and DPs as demonstrated in the examples above. In (18a), another structural possibility of indirect imperative clauses whose C-layer is composed of *pé* COMP and POL *kí* ‘let’ is revealed. *Pé* COMP nominalises the clause while (18b) has *kí* POL only.

- (18a) Pé kí ekú á pókíkí nti eku
 COMP POL rat FUT cry like rat
 ‘That rat may rant like rat’

- (b) Kí eku á pókíkí ntí eku
 COMP rat FUT cry like rat
 ‘That rat may rant like rat’

Pé ‘COMP’ in above sentences interchanges with *kí* ‘COMP’. While *pe* ‘COMP’ co-occurs with *ki* ‘POL’, *kí* ‘COMP’ cannot co-occur with neither *kí* nor *jé* ‘POL’.

The derivation of imperative clauses is illustrated using (11a) which is re-numbered as (19) for ease of reference below:

- (19) ImpP [Spec θ Imp⁰ θ [TP [Spec, TP olúkó T θ [VP <olúkó> pàşẹ [CP [Spec, C⁰ pé [ImpP [Spec θ Imp⁰ θ [PolP [Spec <akékò> Pol⁰ ki [TP <akékò>...]]]]]]]]]]]]

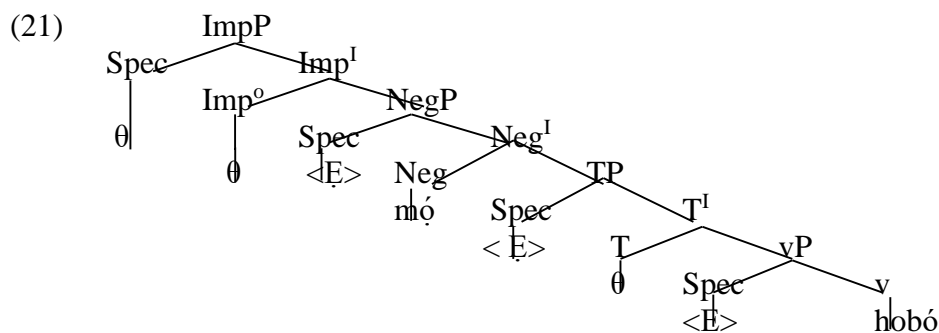
The above simplified schema illustrates the derivation of the above sentence. The sentence has two projections of ForcePs. The lower clause is specified for imperative force while the higher clause is specified for declarative mood. The verb of the lower clause *sépa* ‘quiet’ merges with the DP- *akékò* ‘student’ resulting in vP- *akékò sépa* ‘student quiet’. The vP merges with light T¹ whose T attracts the DP to its Spec, TP to value the phi-features of the DP and to satisfy the EPP requirement. The TP further merges with Pol¹ whose functional head-Pol attracts *imólè* ‘light’ to its Spec to license it for politeness on the assumption that

the agreement relation between Pol⁰ (the PROBE) and DP-*akékò* ‘student’(the GOAL) activates politeness in indirect imperative clauses. The resultant PolP merges again with the ImpP for the exertion of the imperative force to the structure. The ImpP in turn merges recursively with the VP, vP and TP of the higher clause. The DP –*olùkó* ‘teacher’ is attracted to the Spec,TP where its phi-features are valued. The ForceP of the matrix clause projects to exert a declarative force on the matrix clause.

Beside affirmative imperative sentences, Ìyàgbà also manifests negative imperative sentences which are instances of commanding someone not to carry out a certain instruction or an action as exemplified in the data below:

- (20a) Mò ré ója
 NEG go market
 ‘Do not go to the market’
- (b) Mò pókiki lí sòòsì
 NEG shout in church
 Do not make a noise in the church
- (c) Mò lu iyàò rẹ
 Neg beat wife 2SG
 Do not beat your wife
- (d) È mọ hobó
 2PL NEG lie
 ‘You should not tell a lie’

All the examples in (20a) – (d) are negative imperative clauses. They share all the properties of direct imperative sentences including the absence of an overt subject with the exception of (20d) which is licensed for overt 2PL subject. The structure of the sentence can also be described using (20d) as a sample that is represented in tree diagram as shown below:



From the above diagram, the vP – *È hobó* ‘You lie’ externally merges with the TP, the NegP and finally the ImpP. The DP – *È* ‘2PL’ of the Spec, vP moves to Spec, TP to value its Case feature against the T functional head. The Neg⁰ attracts the DP – *È* ‘2PL’ to its Spec in order to license it (the DP) for Neg features. The ImpP finally projects to exert imperative illocutionary force on the sentence.

The indirect version of the above form of negative imperative clause is also attestable as buttressed by the example:

(22a) Kẹ́ mọ́ hobó
 POL+2PL NEG lie
 ‘Do not lie’

(b) ImpP [Spec θ [Imp θ [Spec E [Pol ké [NegP [Spec<E> [Neg mọ́ [VP<E> hobó]]]]]]]]]]

The differences observable between the clausal architecture of (21) and (22) include the presence of an additional PolP in (22) and its absence in (21). The PolP within the C-layer interfaces between the ImpP and NegP and licenses the DP constituent for politeness.

In both types of direct and indirect imperative constructions, the covert Imp⁰ exerts the imperative force on the clauses. The difference between direct and indirect imperative constructions is the instantiation of additional politeness that interfaces between ImpP and I-layer. The clausal structure of imperative clauses is proposed as:

ImpP> (PolP>) (NegP>)TP>vP>VP.

Conclusion

The study investigated the imperative clauses in Ìyàgbà dialect of Kogi State, Nigeria from the perspectives of MP and CP-split analysis by engaging five competent native speakers from Ísánlú axis of Ìyàgbà. Through the analysis of the data collected, the following findings were made:

- The imperative clauses of Ìyàgbà can be broadly divided into two namely- direct and indirect imperative sentences. The two clauses can be differentiated by [+Politeness] for indirect imperative sentences and [-Politeness] for direct imperative types.
- The purported markers of indirect imperative clauses-*ki/jé* ‘let’ are re-analysed as politeness markers (POLs) based on empirical and theoretical facts.
- The presumed politeness marker is re-analysed as a clausal modifier whose lexical meaning of politeness does not ascribe any grammatical function of politeness to it.
- The negators in imperative discourses are: *mọ́* and *ra* ‘do not’
- The hierarchical order of projection of imperative clauses is proposed as: ImpP>PolP>(NegP)>TP>vP>VP

The illocutionary force specification of the imperative sentences is at the instance of the Imp projection.

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Abbreviations

1SG	First person singular short pronoun
2PL LONG PRN	Second person plural long pronoun
2PL	Second person plural short pronoun
2SG LONG PRN	Second person singular long pronoun
2SG	Second person singular short pronoun
C-layer	Complementiser layer
COMP/C	Complementiser
CP	Complementiser Phrase
DP	Determiner Phrase
EF	Edge Feature
EXPL	Expletive pronoun
ForceP	Force Phrase
HTS	High tone syllable
I-layer	Inflectional layer
Imp ⁰	imperative head
ImpP	Imperative phrase
POL	Politeness marker
MP	Minimalist program

NEG	Negator/Negative marker
NegP	Negative Phrase
Pol ⁰	Politeness head
PolP	Politeness Phrase
Spec	Specifier
SY	Standard Yorùbá
T	Tense
TP	Tense Phrase
V	Verb
V Adv	Verb + Adverb
VO	Verb + Object
VO Adv	Verb + Object + Adverb
VO PP	Verb + Object + Prepositional Phrase
VP	Lexical Verb Phrase
vP	Light/affixal verb Phrase