

Grammar terms beginning with the letter I

Imperative

The sentence type illustrated in English by the following distinctive sentence pattern: Come here!

The imperative commonly expresses a command. In English, an imperative usually has no expressed subject (though you is understood as its subject). The verb is in its infinitive form. In writing, an imperative sentence is often punctuated with an exclamation mark.

Do your homework!

Do sit down!

Come here!

Wash your hands!

Stop!

Get lost!

Shut up!

Note that in English, it is possible to use an imperative sentence for a function other than giving a command. For example, if you are going on a picnic, I may say 'Have a nice time', but this is not an order, only a hope.

Indirect object

The label indirect object identifies the person or people indirectly affected by the action of the verb.

Consider the following sentences.

James gave the book to Susie.

James gave Susie the book.

Susie could be classified as an indirect object in both cases, but not all contemporary linguists would agree: In the first sentence, Susie looks like the object of the preposition to. In

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the second sentence, it is the indirect object of the verb gave.

Initialism

A word constructed by taking the initial letters of the important words in a phrase. An initialism cannot be pronounced as a word; it must be spelled out letter by letter. Examples are: BBC and FBI.