

Research Article



Queen Arwa University Journal

مجلة جامعة الملكة أروى

QAUSRJ



Research Article Data:

PUBLISHER	Queen Arwa University
DOI	10.58963/qausrj.v29i29.314
P-ISSN	2226-5759
E-ISSN	2959-3050
Reception Date	01 July 2025
Accepted Date	25 July 2025
Published Date	31 July 2025
License ©	(CC BY 4.0)

A pragmatic Analysis of the Illocutionary Acts of Qur'anic Arabic Imperatives in Surah Luqman

Adel Ahmed Abdullah Al-Mekhlafy¹

¹ Faculty of Arts-English Language and Translation Department,
Queen Arwa University, Yemen.

2025

Abstract:

This study investigates the illocutionary speech acts of the Qur'anic imperative utterances in Surah Luqman, and examines their correspondence to the classifications of illocutionary acts proposed by Searle (1976). Since most of the Qur'anic imperative utterances indicate pragmatic meanings rather than their basic meanings, interpreting and rendering the pragmatic meanings of such Qur'anic utterances from Arabic into another language may face with problems and sometimes cause misunderstanding in the target language. 16 Qur'anic imperative utterances in 10 Qur'anic verses in Surah Luqman are the data of the present study. The collected data has been examined utilizing qualitative content analysis to determine the illocutionary acts and pragmatic functions of the Qur'anic imperatives by referencing some Qur'anic exegetical books. The present study proved that all the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman performed different illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings) beyond their basic meanings. They are challenge and incapacitation, disdain and sarcasm, continuation and excitation, advice and guidance, warning, gratitude, and giving instructions. Five of these pragmatic meanings correspond to two categories of Searle's classifications of illocutionary acts which are directive and expressive speech acts. The study concluded that situational contexts of such Qur'anic imperatives determine their illocutionary acts and these illocutionary acts are pragmatically rather than syntactically or semantically determined. Therefore, the study strongly recommends to employ Speech Act Theory in analyzing and interpreting Qur'anic imperatives, and other speech acts in the Holy Qur'an.

Citation:

Al-Mekhlafy, A. A. A. (2025). A pragmatic Analysis of the Imperative Speech Acts with Reference to Arabic Text of Surah Luqman in the Holy Qur'an. *Queen Arwa University Journal*, 29(29), 12. <https://doi.org/10.58963/qausrj.v29i29.314>

Corresponding authors:

Author: Adel Ahmed Abdullah Al-Mekhlafy
Phone: 967777152352+
Published Email: dr.adelalmekhlafy@qau.edu.ye

Organization/University/ Center:

Affiliation: Queen Arwa University
Research funder: Not found.

Research field/specialization:

Pragmatics,

QR code:

Scan QR code to visit this journal on your mobile device.

امسح الكود لزيارة موقع المجلة



Keywords:

Illocutionary acts, Qur'anic imperatives, Speech act theory, Surah Luqman



ترجمة الى العربية

تحليل تداولي للفعل الإنجازي لألفاظ الأمر القرآني في سورة لقمان

عادل أحمد عبد الله المخلافي¹ ID

¹ قسم اللغة الإنجليزية والترجمة، كلية الآداب والعلوم الانسانية، جامعة الملكة أروى اليمن

2025

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص الأفعال لإنجازية للألفاظ الأمرية المستخدمة في سورة لقمان في القرآن الكريم وعن مدى توافقها مع تقسيمات الأفعال الإنجازية المقترحة من قبل سيرل (1976). ولكون أكثر الألفاظ الأمرية في القرآن الكريم يتم استخدامها للدلالة على معان تداولية وليس لمعانيها الأساسية، فتفسير وتحليل هذه الأقوال قد يشكل معضلة بل وسوء فهم في معظم الاحيان وخاصة في عملية ترجمتها من اللغة العربية إلى اللغة المستهدفة. اشتملت بيانات الدراسة على 16 لفظاً أمرياً تم جمعها من 10 آيات قرآنية من النص العربي الأصلي لسورة لقمان. تم توظيف التحليل النوعي في هذه الدراسة لتحليل محتوى ما تم جمعه من البيانات، حيث تم الاستعانة ببعض كتب تفاسير القرآن الكريم لتحديد المعاني التداولية لهذه الألفاظ القرآنية. أثبتت الدراسة أن جميع الألفاظ القرآنية الأمرية في سورة لقمان لم تدل على معانيها الأساسية بل دلت على وظائف ومعاني تداولية مختلفة. شملت هذه الأفعال الإنجازية (المعاني التداولية): التحدي والاعجاز، التهكم والسخرية، الاستمرار والتحفيز، النصح والإرشاد، التحذير، الامتنان، التأديب والتهذيب. توافق خمسة من هذه الأفعال مع اثنين من تقسيمات الأفعال الإنجازية المقترحة من قبل سيرل (1976) وخاصة التوجيهية والتعبيرية. كما أظهرت النتائج أن سياق النص القرآني للألفاظ القرآنية الأمرية هو من يحدد معانيها التداولية وليس طابعها المفرداتي أو النحوي. وعليه فإن الدراسة الحالية توصي باستخدام نظرية الأفعال الكلامية في تحليل وتفسير الامر القرآني وغيره من الألفاظ القرآنية.

الكلمات المفتاحية

الألفاظ الأمرية، الفعل الإنجازي، سورة لقمان، نظرية الفعل الكلامي

1. Introduction

Pragmatics, as a new branch in linguistics field, deals with the study of language use in interpersonal communication. It is defined as “the study of the relationships between linguistic forms and the user of those forms” (Yule, 2022). Additionally, pragmatics explores how the text is structured by the intentions, previous knowledge, beliefs and expectations of the text’s sender, in addition to the situation itself. (Mey, 2004), in this regard, says: “Pragmatics is essentially about the users of language in a real-life situation, and about the conditions that enable those users to employ linguistic techniques and materials effectively and appropriately”.

Pragmatics, at any rate, is concerned with studying language meaning in context, the meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener. Unlike semantics which deals with the conventional meaning of words and sentences depending on the logical and functional relations between them, pragmatics deals with the study of the hidden/invisible meaning, and is more concerned with the contextual meaning. It is through pragmatics we can realize the intended meanings and investigate the speakers’ purposes and intentions when they speak in different situations. In a broader context, pragmatics has recently been employed in investigating particular topics related to linguistics and Qur’anic studies fields. Undoubtedly, employing pragmatics in these fields has played an important role in throwing light upon speech acts and the importance of context in linguistic and Qur’anic studies alike.

One of the main aspects in the field of pragmatics is speech act theory. It is one of the most influential theories which has recently a great echo in research. In the recent years, a number of researchers have employed this theory in analyzing different discourses in all languages including the Qur’anic Arabic discourse. As pragmatics is relatively a new branch in linguistics field, speech act theory, as one of pragmatic theories, is still new to be employed in linguistics field and translation studies, specifically in analyzing and interpreting the Holy Qur’an meanings. Apparently, applying speech act theory to different languages and types of speech has lately gained popularity among many linguists and scholars. However, studying speech acts in the

Holy Qur'an is a relatively recent scholarly topic. This study, thus, attempts to explore the different illocutionary speech acts performed by the Qur'anic imperative utterances, specifically in Surah Luqman,

The British philosopher John Austin ([Austin, 1962](#)) is considered to be the first linguist to talk about speech acts in a clear and innovative way. In his philosophy of speech acts, there are three acts that can be realized by a speaker when using a language which are: locutionary act "act of speaking", illocutionary acts "act in speaking", and perlocutionary acts "act by speaking". Illocutionary acts, as speech act theory mainly focuses on, refer to different pragmatic functions of utterances including imperatives which, as a subcategory of requestive performatives, may convey different illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings) rather than their basic meanings.

Accordingly, it is through the illocutionary acts that we can realize the real intended meanings/pragmatic meanings of performative utterances including the Qur'anic imperative utterances. This, will certainly help both readers and translators of the Holy Qur'an understand the pragmatic meanings of the Qur'anic imperatives, especially for non-Arab Muslims and non-Muslims.

Qur'anic imperatives, as the main focus of the current study, are part of the rhetorical language and intricate style of the Holy Qur'an discourse which makes the task of understanding and translating Qur'anic imperatives is more challenging. As a result of this, interpreting such Qur'anic utterances could be hard to achieve, and may cause incorrect implementations and sometimes misunderstanding since most of them go beyond their basic meanings to indicate different pragmatic meanings. Regarding this fact, a serious problem may pose in translating such Qur'anic utterances into another language in case their pragmatic meanings might not be understood or rendered accurately by the translators as in the original Qur'anic text.

For this reason, translating and interpreting Qur'anic Arabic imperatives requires having a full account of their pragmatic meanings by Holy Qur'an translators. The present study, therefore, is meant to identify all Qur'anic utterances in Surah Luqman and analyze their divergent illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings), in addition to examine their correspondence level to the illocutionary act's

classifications proposed by ([Searle, 1976](#)). To achieve the aforementioned objectives, this paper makes an attempt to answer the following two questions:

1. What are the Qur'anic imperative utterances in Surah Luqman and the different illocutionary acts they perform?
2. To what extent the illocutionary acts that Qur'anic imperatives perform in Surah Luqman correspond to the illocutionary acts classifications proposed by ([Searle, 1976](#)) ?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Speech Act Theory

Speech act theory, as one the most influential theories in pragmatics study, is utilized as a theoretical framework for the current study. It refers to actions that are carried out through language. The concept "speech act", is defined by ([Austin, 1962](#)), as "the actions performed in saying something". In a similar way, ([Yule, 2022](#)), says speech act is "an action which is performed via utterances". From her part, ([Aitchison, 2010](#)) defines it as "an utterance that behaves somewhat like action".

([Searle, 1976](#)), as one of Austin's students, is most memorable for his developing Austin's thoughts and ideas about speech acts into a more systematic linguistic theory. One of his chief contributions to speech acts theory is his developing this theory into a more comprehensive and systematic one by introducing a systematic classification of linguistic functions through the division of illocutionary acts into five principal categories as follows:

Assertives: Speech acts in this category state the speaker's beliefs regarding the veracity of a situation. In his words, ([Searle, 2014](#)) says representatives: "commit the speaker [...] to something's being the case". This category involves reporting, denying, asserting, suggesting, stating, denying, complaining, boasting, claiming, confessing, notifying, predicting etc.

Directives: Speech acts in this category are used by the speaker to prompt the hearer to perform a future action. In his words, ([Searle, 2014](#)), says directives "attempts [...] by the speaker to get the hearer to do something". Orders, daring, challenge,

warning, advising, instructing, inviting, requests are all examples of this category.

Commissives: Speech acts in this category express the speaker's intentions and are performed only by the speaker. By commissives, the speaker is committing himself/herself to perform a future action. In his words, (Searle, 2014). says commissives "commit the speaker [...] to some future course of action". This category involves promising, offering, pledging, refusing, threatening etc.

Expressives: This category of speech acts expresses the speaker's psychological condition or emotions.(Searle, 2014) points out that expressives "express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional contents". Apologizing, praising, greeting, insulting, congratulating, complaining, thanking, gratitude, condolence, and blaming are some examples of this category.

Declarations: The speaker in this category should possess a certain institutional authority or a position in a particular circumstance. It refers to a role of authority that the speaker must play in order to express that role in speech including naming, appointing, christening, dismissing, resigning, and declaring. In his words, (Searle, 2014). says a successful declaration "brings about some alteration in the status or condition of the referred- to object[s]".

Imperatives, as a subcategory of requestive performatives, are classified in speech act theory as a type of directives by which the speaker gets the addressee to perform something in a certain way. As a type of directive speech acts, imperatives can be direct or indirect; they can be used to convey their basic meanings as a direct speech act of command, or as indirect speech act to convey certain functions and different meanings other than their basic meanings.

However, it is worth noted that each imperative utterance should not be interpreted as a direct speech act of command since most of them do not perform commands speech act. In addition to this, one should take into consideration that an imperative utterance which is utilized to perform its basic function of command could be utilized to convey various functions. As a matter of fact, to determine the number of such different functions or

indirect speech acts performed by imperatives is not an easy task since they vary according to the situations, the speaker's intentions, and the relative authority of speaker and addressee. (Jary & Kissine, 2014). urges that "a full understanding of the meaning of imperatives requires an account of what imperatives encode and how this interacts with considerations such as the situation of utterance and the speaker's intentions".

In Arabic, imperative, as a branch of request composition, is defined as a form/utterance by which the speaker commands the addressee to perform a certain present or future action where the speaker, in some cases, should have a superior status than the addressee to do that certain action. In addition to this, Arabic imperatives could have certain purposes and different functions to indicate different secondary meanings rather than their primary meanings.

Accordingly, when the imperative form diverges from its basic meaning to convey other meaning, the resulted meaning is pragmatically called the secondary meaning (pragmatic meaning). Such a meaning is also called a rhetorical meaning since it serves some certain purposes in the addresser's mind other than command. For this reason, rhetorical or secondary meanings of imperatives are classified as an indirect speech act. The current study points out that the secondary meaning (pragmatic meaning) of Qur'anic imperatives dose not only convey the directive speech acts, but it may also convey expressive speech acts and other functions.

For Arab rhetoricians, they have conducted many studies to examine the secondary meanings (pragmatic meanings) of Arabic imperatives. One of them is (Al-Suyuti, 2008) who listed more than 20 secondary meanings of Arabic imperative. For Qur'anic imperatives which are of great deal in the *Holy Qur'an*, they are widely used to indicate different pragmatic meanings such as exclamation, advising, praying, inviting, permitting, scorn, disdain, threatening, warning, rebuking, giving instructions, refusing, thankful, formation, wish, encouragement, challenge, etc.

2.2. Previous Related Studies

Having highlighted the basic concepts of speech act theory and imperative, it is crucial to review some previous related studies that have examined the speech acts of Qur'anic performatives in general, and Qur'anic imperative speech acts in particular. The following reviews briefly such related studies in terms of their focus and conclusions.

Performative utterances have been the subject of study by many scholars. In her study, ([Mawadda, 2016](#)). investigated the illocutionary speech acts and pragmatic functions performed by Qur'anic commissives. The data of this study have been collected from the English translation of Surah Yusuf. This study also examined the politeness strategies utilized in the English translation of this surah based on Brown and Livenson theory in terms of politeness strategies. The study revealed that six types of commissive utterances are used in Surah Yusuf, namely, threatening, volunteering, warning, refusing, offering and promising. Furthermore, four politeness strategies are employed: bald on record, positive politeness, negative politeness and bold off record.

An example of the studies that have examined the different meanings performed by Arabic imperatives in the *Holy Qur'an* is the study of ([Amin & Safa, 2017](#)). The researchers selected 10 Qur'anic imperative verses randomly from different surahs to examine pragmatically the different types of directive imperative speech acts used in the *Holy Qur'an* and their pragmatic functions. This study concluded that there are four types of directive speech acts: explicit imperative speech acts, implicit declarative speech acts and literal and non-literal speech acts. Furthermore, seven pragmatic functions which are commanding, prohibiting, advising, reminding, inviting, praying, and showing hopes occurred.

The popularity of speech act theory encouraged many scholars to examine selected Qur'anic verses and selected surahs of the *Holy Qur'an* in light of it. ([Al-Saidi et al., 2019](#)), for example, examined the illocutionary speech acts and pragmatic functions performed in two Qur'anic short surahs which are Ad-Dhuha and Asharah. It also shed light on whether such illocutionary acts occurred as direct or indirect speech acts. The results of this

study proved that illocutionary speech acts in the above surahs performed only directive and commissive speech acts. For directives, they all occurred as direct speech acts, while commissives as indirect speech acts. Moreover, only two pragmatic functions occurred which are ordering and promising.

The illocutionary speech acts of Qur'anic imperatives and prohibitives was investigated by ([Kader & Ahmed, 2022](#)). The collected data were the imperative and prohibitive utterances used in Surah Yusuf in the *Holy Qur'an*. The study utilized ([Austin, 1962](#); [Searle, 1976](#)) speech acts theory to examine the different types of speech acts performed in Surah Yusuf. The results revealed that 38 imperatives occurred in Surah Yusuf performing eight pragmatic functions, namely, commands, requests, consultation, plea, entreaty (petition), honouring, supplication, and advice and guidance. In addition, six prohibitives performing three pragmatic functions which are advice and guidance, consultation and threatening.

The illocutionary speech acts of interrogations in the *Holy Qur'an* is another subject that ([Al-Mekhlafy & Al-Ghrafy, 2023](#)). studied in Surah As-Saffat. This study utilized the taxonomy of speech acts suggested by ([Searle, 1976](#)). to examine the illocutionary acts that Qur'anic interrogations performed in this surah. The study proved that 28 Qur'anic interrogative utterances in this surah were used to indicate different pragmatic meanings which are exclamation, affirmation, disdain, disaffirmation, offering, warning, consulting, negation, threatening, rebuke, and advice. Some of these pragmatic meanings corresponded to three categories of Searle's illocutionary acts classifications which are assertive, directive and commissive speech acts.

In a recent paper, ([Mahfudhoh et al., 2024](#)). investigated the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman. This study aimed to reveal the structure and meaning of the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman. The researchers used content analysis method with semantic and syntactic approaches to study the structure and meaning of the Qur'anic imperatives in this surah. This study revealed that the structure of the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman is found in the form of: direct imperative verb, verb of command nominal substitute, and present verb accompanied by the letter (L) /the L of

command/. Furthermore, this study showed that the Qur'anic imperatives used in Surah Luqman performed the meanings of command, honour, and prohibition. Unlike the present study, this study did not examine in depth the pragmatic meanings performed by the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman based on speech act theory.

3. Methodology

This paper is based on both Qur'anic and pragmatic studies; it is a qualitative and descriptive study. It is basically based on "content analysis". The primary source of data for this study is the Qur'anic Arabic imperatives found in the Arabic text of Surah Luqman in the Holy Qur'an. The collected data are 16 Qur'anic imperative utterances in 10 Qur'anic verses collected from the original Qur'anic text of Surah Luqman. The various illocutionary acts and pragmatic functions of the Qur'anic imperatives in this surah have been collected based on their situational contexts and the different opinions of some classical and contemporary interpreters of the Holy Qur'an including (Al-Sharawi, 1992; Az-Zamakhshary, 2020; Ibn Ashoor, 2020; Ibn Uthimeen, 2015).

Then, for the sake of data analysis, Searle's (Searle, 1976) taxonomy model of speech acts, which includes five groups of illocutionary speech acts—assertive, directive, commissive, expressive, and declaration—is used to examine the gathered illocutionary acts and their pragmatic functions.

4. Data Analysis

Based on their situational contexts in the original Qur'anic text of Surah Luqman, the illocutionary acts performed by the Qur'anic imperatives in this surah have been carefully examined and analyzed. The following discusses each of the illocutionary acts that Qur'anic imperatives performed in Surah Luqman, with one example for each.

1. **Challenge and Incapacitation (التحدي والتعجيز):** The imperative form in Arabic may convey challenge and incapacitation meaning. This is when the speaker requests the addressee to do something or perform an action beyond his/her ability to show the weakness and incapacity of the addressee. In other words, whenever the speaker

commands the addressee to perform something beyond his/her ability, imperative utterance convey challenging rather than commands speech act. This meaning is shown in the following Qur'anic imperative in Surah Luqman:

﴿هَذَا خَلْقُ اللَّهِ فَأَرُونِي مَاذَا خَلَقَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ دُونِهِ ۗ بَلِ الظَّالِمُونَ فِي ضَلَالٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾ (سورة لقمان، الآية 11).

"[All] this is God's creation: **show Me**, then, what others than He may have created! Nay, but the evildoers¹¹ are obviously lost in error!" (Asad, 2007).

Allah is the speaker in this verse, He is using the imperative verb "فَأَرُونِي", "then show Me" not for its basic meaning, but for a rhetorical purpose to indicate the meaning of challenge and incapacitation. Here, Allah is mainly used this imperative verb to challenge the disbelievers of Mecca (the addressees) rather than to command them to do something. In the preceding verse in this surah, Allah mentioned that He created the heavens without pillars, set mountains in the earth, scattered all kinds of animals in the earth, and other things, and directly in this verse challenges the disbelievers of Mecca to show Him what the idols whom they worshipped beside Him have created. Verily, this imperative form is not used for its basic meaning of command because Allah is sure that the addressees are unable to do what He requested them. Undoubtedly, what they worshipped created nothing and could not create anything which clearly shows their weakness and incapacity. Obviously, the illocutionary act behind this Qur'anic imperative is challenging speech act since Allah asks the disbelievers of Mecca to do something nobody can do. With regard to the situational context of this verse and most Qur'anic exegesis books, challenge and incapacitation (التحدي والتعجيز) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

In Searle's speech act taxonomy, the pragmatic meaning of challenge and incapacitation, as performed in this Qur'anic imperative, corresponds to his directive speech act.

2. **Disdain and Sarcasm (التهمك والسخرية):** The imperative form in Arabic may convey disdain and sarcasm meaning. This function occurs in situations where the addresser wants to show

his/her disdain for the addressee with regard to the intended action. Here, the speaker aims to indicate that he/she does not care about the addressee and he/she is not paying any attention to him/her. This meaning is shown through the following Qur'anic imperative utterance in Surah Luqman.

﴿وَإِذَا تُلِيٰ عَلَيْهِ آيَاتُنَا وَوَلَّىٰ مُسْتَكْبِرًا كَأَن لَّمْ يَسْمَعْهَا كَأَنَّ فِي أُذُنَيْهِ وَقْرًا ۚ فَبَشِّرْهُ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 7).

“For, whenever Our messages are conveyed to such a one, he turns away in his arrogance as though he had not heard them - as though there were deafness in his ears: **give him**, then, the tiding of grievous suffering [in the life to come]” (Asad, 2007).

The imperative verb in this verse is “فَبَشِّرْهُ”, “give him tidings”. Allah (the speaker) used this Qur'anic imperative verb addressing Prophet Muhammed ((PBUH) to deliver His message to one of the disbelievers of Mecca called Al-nazr Bin Al-harth who used to arrogantly turns away when the Qur'anic verses were recited as if he had not heard them, or as though there was a deafness in his ears. Allah's message to that disbeliever is getting a painful chastisement on the Day of Resurrection due to his disbelief that the *Holy Qur'an* was said by Allah. According to (Majma' al-Lugha, 2011) the word “فَبَشِّرْهُ”, (give him tidings) is connected with “happy joyful news”, it is originally used in Arabic with something happy to please the good doers not the bad ones, but Allah used it here not for such a purpose. In the *Holy Qur'an*, this imperative verb is used with two different illocutionary acts; when Allah addresses the believers, it indicates its original meaning which is Allah's promise of giving them good tidings (rewards) in the afterlife, but if the addressees are the disbelievers, it indicates the meaning of Allah's disdain and sarcasm for them by giving them the tidings of a painful chastisement in the Hereafter, which is the case in this particular verse. According to the above situational context, and some Qur'anic exegesis books, disdain and sarcasm. (التهمك والسخرية) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

However, the pragmatic meaning of this Qur'anic imperative, as used in this verse, does not correspond to any of the categories that proposed in Searle's speech acts taxonomy.

3. Continuation and Excitation (الاستمرار والتحفيز): The imperative form in Arabic may be used to indicate the meaning of continuation and

excitation. This function occurs in situations where the speaker excites the addressee to continue doing something. The Qur'anic imperative utterance in Surah Luqman in the following example indicates this meaning.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ وَآخِشُوا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَن ۖ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَن ۖ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 33).

“O MEN! **Be conscious of your Sustainer**, and stand in awe of the Day on which no parent will be of any avail to his child, nor a child will in the least avail his parent! Verily, God's promise [of resurrection] is true indeed: let not, then, the life of this world delude you, and let not [your own] deceptive thoughts about God delude you!” (Asad, 2007).

In this verse, Allah (the speaker) used the imperative verb “اتَّقُوا” (fear your Lord) to excite people to continue fearing Him more through keep practicing their prayers, doing what pleases Him and restrain themselves from doing bad deeds. In Arabic, such an imperative verb is used to imply a request of continuation by the speaker to keep the addressee doing or performing a particular action that he/she previously did. In this verse, Allah employs this imperative verb to excite people and believers to fear Him through keep practicing their duties, increasing their good deeds and decreasing their misdeeds. Such an imperative verb may be used in some Qur'anic verses to convey a different pragmatic meaning which is threatening speech act, especially when Allah addresses the disbelievers. According to the situational context of this verse and some Qur'anic exegetical books, continuation and excitation (الاستمرار والتحفيز) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

As far as Searle's speech act taxonomy is concerned, the pragmatic meaning of continuation and excitation, as performed by this Qur'anic imperative, does not correspond to any of his illocutionary act categories.

4. Advice and Guidance (الارشاد والنصح):

Advice and guidance is one of the secondary meanings that Arabic imperative may indicate. This function relates to situations where the speaker requests or orders the addressee to behave in the right manner for his/her own benefits. The following Qur'anic imperative utterance in Surah Luqman conveys this secondary meaning.

﴿يَا بُيَّيْ أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ وَأْمُرْ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ عَلَىٰ مَا أَصَابَكَ ۚ إِنَّ ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُورِ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 17).

"O my dear son! Be constant in prayer, and **enjoin the doing of what is right and forbid the doing of what is wrong, and bear in patience whatever (ill) may befall thee:** this, behold, is something to set one's heart upon!" (Asad, 2007).

The context of this verse is part of Luqman's wise speech addressing his son. Here, the speaker is not ordering the addressee, rather he is giving him advice and guidance to behave in the right way in life. This Qur'anic verse has four Arabic imperative verbs; the first one is "أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ", (Be constant in prayer) which indicates steadiness and continuation speech act, while the other three verbs "وَانْهَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأَصْبِرْ وَأْمُرْ", (enjoin), (forbid) and (be patient) indicate the meaning of advice and guidance. Here, Luqman is advising his son to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil, and should be patient since whoever enjoins good and forbids evil, will inevitably encounter harm and annoyance from people. By using these imperative verbs which include basic religious principles in life, Luqman is expressing his experience in life to his son who still needs sincere advice and guidance to be obedient to Allah, so that he may attain the pleasure of Allah and His Paradise. Luqman here is not only advising his son, but also the whole humanity to do its duty in relation to such basic religious principles in life to avoid Allah's curse, and in case of not doing such religious principles wrongdoing and corruption will spread out in life. Based on the situational context of this verse and some of the Qur'anic exegetical books, advice and guidance (الارشاد والنصح) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

The pragmatic meaning of advice and guidance, as performed by this Qur'anic imperative utterance, corresponds to Searle's directive speech act.

5. **Warning (التحذير):** One of the secondary meanings that Arabic imperative form can perform is warning. This function is stated by the speaker to warn the addressee about something to avoid its consequences. The Qur'anic imperative utterance in Surah Luqman in the following example points out this secondary meaning.

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ ۖ وَأَحْشُوا يَوْمًا لَا يَجْزِي وَالِدٌ عَنْ وَلَدِهِ وَلَا مَوْلُودٌ هُوَ جَازٍ عَنِ وَالِدِهِ شَيْئًا ۚ إِنَّ وَعْدَ اللَّهِ حَقٌّ ۚ فَلَا تَغُرَّنَّكُمُ الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا وَلَا يَغُرَّنَّكُم بِاللَّهِ الْغُرُورُ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 33).

"O MEN! Be conscious of your Sustainer, **and stand in awe of the Day** on which no parent will be of any avail to his child, nor a child will in the least avail his parent! Verily, God's promise [of resurrection] is true indeed: let not, then, the life of this world delude you, and let not [your own] deceptive thoughts about God delude you!". (Assad,2007:854)

Allah in this verse used the imperative verb "وَأَحْشُوا", (and stand in awe of), to warn mankind in general, and people of Mecca in particular. Here, Allah warns the addressees about the Day of Resurrection on which no parent will be helpful to help his child with anything, and nor a child to help his parent in relation to Allah's chastisement. In other words, on such a day everyone will be worried only about himself, and no one will carry the burden of another. Allah used the above imperative verb not to command people to fear the day of Hereafter itself, but to warn them of committing bad deeds because doing them entails severe punishment on Day of Resurrection. With reference to the above situational context and most Qur'anic exegesis books (Tafsir), warning (التحذير) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

In Searle's speech act taxonomy, the pragmatic meaning of warning corresponds to his directive speech act.

6. **Gratitude الامتنان:** the imperative form in Arabic may sometimes indicate the meaning of gratitude. This is when the speaker requests the addressee to express his/her gratitude with regard to the thing under concern. The following Qur'anic imperative utterance is extracted from Surah Luqman to show this pragmatic meaning.

﴿وَوَصَّيْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حَمَلَتْهُ أُمُّهُ وَهَنَا عَلَىٰ وَهْنٍ وَفِصَالُهُ فِي عَامَيْنِ أَنِ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ إِلَيَّ الْمَصِيرُ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 14).

"And [God says:] 'We have enjoined upon man goodness towards his parents: his mother bore him by bearing strain upon strain, and his utter dependence on her lasted two years: (hence, O man,) **be grateful towards Me and towards thy parents,** (and remember that] with Me is all journeys' end'" (Asad, 2007).

In this verse, Allah used the imperative form –

“أَنْ اشْكُرْ لِي وَلِوَالِدَيْكَ” (be thankful towards Me and towards your parents). The reference of this verse is the companion of Prophet Muhammed ((PBUH): Sa'd Ibn Abi Waqqas (concerning his parents) that he should be dutiful to them. Here, Allah used the above imperative form to remind us to be grateful towards Him for His endless blessings that He has granted us including the gift of having parents, without them we would not be. Then to be grateful towards our parents for their great sacrifice they have made for us by treating them with respect and being obedient to them. In the *Holy Qur'an*, whenever Allah's gifts and blessings are stated, imperative verbs might be utilized as an implicit request for the addressee to express gratitude. According to the situational context of this verse and most of the Qur'anic exegetical books, gratitude (الامتنان) is the illocutionary act (pragmatic meaning) of this Qur'anic imperative utterance.

In Searle's speech act taxonomy, the pragmatic meaning of gratitude, as performed in this Qur'anic imperative utterance, corresponds to his expressive speech act.

7. Giving Instruction (التأديب/ التهذيب): One of the main secondary meanings of the imperative form in Arabic is giving instructions. This is when the speaker requests the addressee to do a specific manner or behaviour in an organized or successive way in the form of instructions. Here, the speaker instructs the addressee how his/her manner or behaviour is to be done. The following Qur'anic imperative utterance is extracted from Surah Luqman to show this secondary meaning.

﴿وَأَقْصِدْ فِي مَشْيِكَ وَاعْضُضْ مِنْ صَوْتِكَ ۚ إِنَّ أَنْكَرَ الْأَصْوَاتِ لَصَوْتُ الْحَمِيرِ﴾. (سورة لقمان، الآية 19).

“Hence, **be modest** in thy bearing, **and lower** thy voice: for, behold, the ugliest of all voices is the [loud] voice of asses”. (Asad, 2007).

In this verse, Luqman (the speaker) used two imperative verbs to give his son moral lessons related to good manners and behaviour in life. The first one “وَأَقْصِدْ”, (Be moderate), is used by Luqman to reform his son's style of walking, he instructed him to walk in a moderate manner which means to walk neither slowly and lazy nor excessively fast, somewhere in between these two extremes because walking haughtily causes pride and arrogance. The second one “وَاعْضُضْ”, (and lower), is used by Luqman to reform his son's ethic of speaking, he instructed

him to lower his voice when he is talking with others and do not be sharp-tongued. Luqman used these two imperative verbs to instruct and teach his son how to behave in an organized or successive way in life in relation to his behavior and treatment with other people. With reference to the situational context of this verse and most of the Qur'anic exegetical books, giving instructions (التأديب/ التهذيب) is the illocutionary act pragmatic (meaning) of these Qur'anic imperative utterances.

The pragmatic meaning of giving instructions, as used in this Qur'anic imperative, corresponds to Searle's directive speech act.

5. Discussion and Findings

Based on the analysis of the present study, it has been revealed that 10 Qur'anic imperative verses comprising 16 Arabic imperative verbs in Surah Luqman performed seven different pragmatic meanings. Six out of 10 Qur'anic imperative verses comprised only one imperative verb, while the other four comprised more than one imperative verb. The validated and accurate illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings) of the Qur'anic imperative utterances in Surah Luqman are displayed in Table (1) below, along with their frequency of occurrence.

Table 1: Illocutionary acts performed by the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman and their frequency of occurrence

Act No	Illocutionary Act	Frequency	Qur'anic Verse No
1	Challenge and Incapacitation	1	11
2	Disdain and Sarcasm	1	7
3	Continuation and Excitation	2	12, 33
4	Advice and Guidance	7	15, 17, 21, 33
5	Warning	1	33
6	Gratitude	2	14, 25
7	Giving instructions	2	19
Total			16

From the above table, it is therefore clear that the illocutionary act of advice and guidance is the most frequent and dominant illocutionary act performed in this Qur'anic surah as it occurred seven times. The illocutionary acts of continuation and excitation, gratitude, and giving instructions are the second dominant pragmatic meanings performed in this surah as occurred two times each. Lastly, challenge and incapacitation, disdain and sarcasm, and warning illocutionary speech acts occurred one time each.

When it comes to the correspondence of the above-mentioned illocutionary acts to Searle's classifications of illocutionary acts, this study has found that only five out of seven performed illocutionary acts corresponded to two categories out of five in Searle's taxonomy. Four illocutionary acts in six Qur'anic imperative verses corresponded to directive speech acts in Searle's taxonomy, and only one illocutionary act in two Qur'anic imperative verses corresponded to his expressives. As for the other two illocutionary acts, they did not correspond to any of his illocutionary act's classifications in two Qur'anic imperative verses. In a sense, we may come to realize that no one of the illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings) of the Qur'anic imperative utterances in Surah Luqman corresponded to Searle's assertive, commissive and declarative speech acts.

Accordingly, only five different pragmatic functions were performed by two of Searle's classifications of speech acts, namely, directive and expressive speech acts. Pragmatic functions performed by directives included the indirect speech acts of challenge and incapacitation, advice and guidance, warning, and giving instructions. As for expressives, only the indirect speech act of gratitude occurred. According to Searle's classification of speech acts, Table (2) below displays the illocutionary acts' frequencies of occurrence as well as their pragmatic functions in Surah Luqman.

Table 2 : Illocutionary acts and their pragmatic functions frequencies of occurrence in Surah Luqman according to Searle's speech acts taxonomy

Searle's categories of illocutionary speech acts	Frequency	Pragmatic functions	Frequency	Qur'anic Verse No
Directives	11	Challenge and incapacitation	1	11
		advice and guidance	7	15, 17, 21, 33
		warning	1	33
		Giving instructions	2	19
Expressives	2	gratitude	2	14, 25

The above table makes it evident that directive speech acts were more frequently than expressives. Stated differently, directive speech acts occurred much higher than expressive ones. This might be attributed the nature of the surah's main themes, which encompass valuable lessons on faith, morality, and practical life advice. Such themes emphasize the importance of gratitude to Allah, obedience to parents, avoiding idolatry, and being mindful of the consequences of one's actions.

6. Conclusions

Qur'anic imperatives, as a subcategory of requests in the *Holy Qur'an*, have already been studied from a semantic and syntactic perspective; these studies concentrated on the content and structure of the Qur'anic imperatives. Though such conducted studies have helped understand Qur'anic imperatives from different perspectives, they are insufficient since they do not show how such Qur'anic imperatives indicate various pragmatic meanings. The different pragmatic meanings performed in the Qur'anic imperatives utilized in surah Luqman are pragmatically investigated in this study. The study's findings are consistent with (Amin & Safa, 2017; Kader & Ahmed, 2022) who highlighted that most imperative utterances in the *Holy Qur'an* convey indirect speech acts rather than command.

One conclusion drawn from the current study is that all of illocutionary acts performed by the

Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman performed indirect speech acts where the speakers used them to serve some special purposes other than command. With reference to speech act theory, the study's findings proved that all imperative utterances used in Surah Luqman convey both directive and expressive speech acts.

As the present study investigated the various pragmatic meanings of the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman, it is generally important to note that understanding the pragmatic meanings of Qur'anic imperatives could be hard to achieve and may, in some cases, cost a great effort and a long time of investigation to understand their pragmatic meanings. For those who are interested in translating the *Holy Qur'an* meanings, they are strongly recommended to consult classical and contemporary books of Qur'anic exegesis before translating Qur'anic Arabic imperatives.

This study came to the conclusion that knowing the lexical meaning or structure of the Qur'anic imperatives is not enough to realize and understand the illocutionary acts (pragmatic meanings) of such Qur'anic utterances. In other words, semantic meaning or syntactic form alone is not enough to fully understand the pragmatic meanings of Qur'anic imperatives; rather, situational contexts of such utterances must be taken into account. Therefore, such Qur'anic utterances are pragmatically determined rather than semantically or syntactically. To this end, this study strongly highlights the importance of employing the pragmatic theory of speech acts in further analyzing and interpreting Qur'anic imperatives in other surahs of the *Holy Qur'an*.

Finally, as this study only provides a pragmatic analysis of the speech act of Qur'anic Arabic imperatives used in Surah Luqman and does not shed light on the illocutionary speech acts performed by all request's speech acts in this surah, other types of requests speech act used in Surah Luqman or other Qur'anic surahs are worth suggesting to be examined from the same or a different perspective.

7. References

Aitchison, J. (2010). *Aitchison's linguistics*. Teach Yourself .

Al-Mekhlafy, A. A. A., & Al-Ghrafy, A. M. G. (2023). A pragmatic Analysis of the Interrogative Illocutionary Acts with Reference to Arabic Text of Surah As- Saffat in the Holy Qur'an. *Arab Journal*

of Sciences & Research Publishing, 9(1), 71-85. <https://doi.org/10.26389/ajsrp.F281222>

- Al-Saidi, S., Badr, H., & Fenjan, S. (2019). A pragmatic analysis of speech acts in short surahs of the Holy Qur'an. *Journal of Arts, Literature, Humanities and Social Sciences*, 36, 194-209 .
- Al-Sharawi, M. (1992). *Tafsir Al-Sharawi*. Al-Jil Publishing House .
- Al-Suyuti, J. (2008). *Al-Itqan fi 'Ulum al-Qur'an*. Dar al-Ma'rifah .
- Amin, N., & Safa, A. (2017). Pragmatic analysis: Arabic directive imperative speech acts used in al-Qur'an. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 6(1), 652-955 .
- Asad, M. (2007). The Message of the Qur'an. <http://arthursclassiconovels.com/arthurs/koran/koran-asad10.html>
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Clarendon Press .
- Az-Zamakhshary, J. A. M. (2020). *Al-Kashaf*. Dar al-Lubab .
- Ibn Ashoor, M. a.-T. (2020). *Tafsiru al-Tahrir wa-al-Tanwir*. Sahnoon Publishing House .
- Ibn Uthimeen, M. i. S. (2015). *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-Karim: Surah Luqman*. Ibn Uthimeen Charitable Foundation .
- Jary, M., & Kissine, M. (2014). *Imperatives*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511998126>
- Kader, T., & Ahmed, H. (2022). An analysis of the pragmatic functions of the imperative and prohibitive verbs with reference to speech acts theory in Surah Yusuf. *IUG Journal of Humanities Research*, 30(3), 368-384 .
- Mahfudhoh, M., Syarif, H., & Cahya, B. (2024). Imperative sentences in Surah Luqman: A study of structure and meaning. *Journal of Arabic Language and Literature Education* .384-133 ,(2)5 ,
- Majma' al-Lugha, a.-'. (2011). *Al-Mu'jam al-Waseet: Arabic-Arabic Dictionary*. Dar Kutub al-Ilmiyah & Maktabat al-Shuruq al-Dawliyya .
- Mawadda, Z. U. (2016). *Commissive utterances in the translation of the Holy Qur'an* Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta .[

Mey, J. L. (2004). *Pragmatics: An introduction*. Basil Blackwell Publishers .

Searle, J. R. (1976). *A taxonomy of speech acts*. Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047404500006837>

Searle, J. R. (2014). *A classification of illocutionary acts*. Cambridge University Press .

Yule, G. (2022). *Pragmatics*. Oxford University Press .

Index of Tables

Table 1: *Illocutionary acts performed by the Qur'anic imperatives in Surah Luqman and their frequency of occurrence..... 9*

Table 2 : *Illocutionary acts and their pragmatic functions frequencies of occurrence in Surah Luqman according to Searle's speech acts taxonomy..... 10*

Contents

2	المُلخَص
INTRODUCTION	1.
2	
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	3
2.1. SPEECH ACT THEORY	3
2.2. PREVIOUS RELATED STUDIES	5
3. METHODOLOGY	6
4. DATA ANALYSIS	6
5. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS	9
6. CONCLUSIONS	10
7. REFERENCES	11
INDEX OF TABLES	12
CONTENTS	12