Dogon imperative and hortative verbs
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This piece considers the morphology and syntax-semantics of basic deontic modal categories, imperative and hortative, and their equivalents in quoted discourse.

Imperative and **hortative** combine with negation to create four categories expressed in verbs: imperative positive ('go!'), prohibitive (=imperative negative, 'don't go!'), hortative ('let's go!'), and hortative negative ('let's not go!'). Each of these categories distinguishes an unmarked singular-addressee form from a suffixally marked **plural-addressee** form.

Unless otherwise noted, the imperative has a second person "subject" (but see below), and the hortative has a first person inclusive subject, referring to the speaker, at least one addressee, and possibly one or more other persons.

Imperative "subjects" lack full subject properties, as seen especially in their inability to bind reflexive-object anaphors in languages with transpersonal reflexive pronouns (Togo Kan, Tomo Kan). Therefore imperatives have **addressees** (since plural addressee is overtly marked) but no full-fledged **subjects** of the type found in indicative sentences. Hortatives have both 1Pl subjects (with full subject properties including reflexive binding) and singular or plural addressees.

In the broader context of verb morphology, imperatives and hortatives form a distinctive subsystem in most Dogon languages. Their plural-addressee suffix, always word-final, is usually unrelated to any (e.g. 2Pl subject) suffix used with indicative verbs. Likewise, most of the languages use a distinctive negative suffix in imperatives and hortatives, different in form from negative suffixes in indicatives. However, there are some exceptions.

The first four subsections below present the basic forms of the four main categories, including plural-addressee marking, in each Dogon language for which data are available. In general, the imperative stem is unsuffixed, and there are generally suffixes for hortative, negative, and plural-addressee. The suffixes may be agglutinated, forming maximally stem-Hort-Neg-PlAddr or the like. In some languages, the hortative must be accompanied by a clause-initial 1Pl independent pronoun in subject function.

In addition to suffixes, imperatives and hortatives may involve ablaut and/or a tone overlay on the stem. **Ablaut** is a change in the lexically basic vocalism, or (if there is no base form, as in some northwestern languages) a choice among two or more vocalism-defined stems for a given verb. In the tables below, "—" in the "ablaut" column means no structural change in vocalism, i.e. the vocalism is that of the lexical representation (often based on the perfective positive indicative), or the form (either the bare stem or a form with final high vowel) used in nonfinal position in verb chains. If stem-final ablaut only affects one or two input vowels, it is indicated in the ablaut column

by rewrite rules like *e* → *o*. In languages with systematic ablaut, so that only one or two output stem-final vowels are allowed, this is indicated by "A/O-stem," "E-stem," "I/U-stem," or "O-stem." Further details about stem-ablaut are given in the individual grammars.

The verb may also be subject to a **tone overlay** that suppresses the lexical tone melody, which is normally a lexical choice between /H/ or /LH/, in some languages better analysed as /H-onset/ versus /L-onset/. In southwestern languages with no lexical melodies, one of the available grammatically conditioned tone patterns is chosen. Especially in imperative positives, often the tone overlay is limited to prosodically light verbs, i.e. those with up to two moras, like *CvCv*, while longer stems retain lexical tone melodies. If *CvCv* stems (lexically *Cv́Cv́* versus *Cv̀Cv́*) have a tone overlay, merging them (usually as *Cv́Cv́*), this is indicated in the "tone shift" column of the imperative table as {H}, {HL}, or {L}. If the suffix is best analysed as being part of the overlay (southwestern languages), the overlay is formulated with an internal hyphen as e.g. {LH-L}. "—" indicates no tone shift (lexical tones are preserved). For more details, including tonal differences between verbs with final high vowel and those with final nonhigh vowel, consult the grammars.

Following the presentative of basic forms, some additional wrinkles are commented on.

imperative positive

The imperative stem is unsuffixed, except for plural-addressee marking. Ablaut in favor of stem-final {*a o*} is common in northwestern and southwestern languages, spotty in eastern languages. There is a broad tendency toward {H} tone overlay for prosodically light stems including *CvCv*. The contoured overlays in southwestern languages reflect the effects of preverbal subject pronominal proclitics on the tones of the verb.

(1)   Imperative (positive)

	ablaut	tone shift	Pl-addressee
eastern			
Toro Tegu	—	—	2Pl *á* plus singular form
Bankan Tey	*e* → *o*	{H}	*-nì*
Ben Tey	{*i u*} → *a*	{H}	*-nì* (~ *-ǹ*)
Nanga	A/O-stem	{HL}	*-ndì* ~ *-nì*
Jamsay	—	{H}	*-ỳ*
Togo Kan	—	{H}	*-ỳ*
Tommo So	—	{H}	*-ɲ*
Donno So	—	{HL}	*-ʸŋ̀*
Yorno So	—	{H}	*-ỳ*
Tomo Kan	{*ɛ e*}→{*a o*}	{H}	{L}-*wɛ́*
northwestern			
Najamba	A/O-stem	{H}	*-m̀*
Tiranige	A/O-stem	{L}	*-ŷⁿ*
Dogul Dom	A/O-stem	{H}	*-ŋ*
Tebul Ure	{*ɛ ɔ*}→ *a*	{H}	*-ǹ*
Yanda Dom	A/O-stem	—	*-ǹ*
southwestern			
Bunoge			
Sg-Addr	A/O-stem	{L}	
Pl-Addr	A-stem	{LHL}	*-ỳⁿ*
Mombo			
Ampari	A/O-stem	{HL}	*-̀:*
Penange			
Sg-Addr	A/O-stem	{…LH}}	
Pl-Addr	A-stem	{L}	*-ỳⁿ*

prohibitive

The prohibitive (negative imperative) has a distinctive suffix, not the same as the usual negative suffixes on verbs (perfective negative, imperfective negative, stative negative).

(2)   Prohibitive

	ablaut	tone shift	Sg-addressee	Pl-addressee
eastern				
Toro Tegu	—	{L}	*-kú*	*á … -kú*
or:	—	—	*-ré/ŕɛ ~ -lé/lɛ́*	*á … -ŕɛ*, etc.
Bankan Tey	—	—	*-ŕɛ*	*-ŕɛ-nì*
Ben Tey	—	—	*-ŕɛ ~ -lɛ́*	*-ŕɛ-nì ~ -lɛ́-nì*
Nanga	—	—	*-rá*, *-ndá*, *-ndà:*	*-rá-ndì*, etc.
Jamsay	—	{L}	*-ý*	*-ý lây*
Togo Kan	—	—	*-lé*	*-lé-ỳ*
Tommo So	—	{L}	*-gú*	*-gí-ɲ̀*
or:	—	—	*nà:-gú*	*nà:-gí-ɲ̀*
Donno So	—	{L}	*-ẃ*	*-gí-ŋ̀*
or:	—	—	*-nǎw*	*-nàw-gì-ŋ́*
Yorno So	—	—	*-nɔ̀ŋ*	*-nɔ̀ŋ-î:*
Tomo Kan	—	{H}	*-lé*	*-lé-wɛ́*
northwestern				
Najamba	A/O-stem	—	*-là*	*-là-m*
or:	—	{L}	*-nɔ̂:*	*-nɔ̂:-m*
Tiranige	O-stem	{H}	*-là ~ -lâ*	*-lâ-y*
Dogul Dom	—	{L}	*-lá*	*-lá-ŋ*
Tebul Ure	A/O-stem	—	*-lì*	*-`l sènden*
Yanda Dom	—	—	*-là (-lá)*	*-là-n (-lá-ǹ)*
southwestern				
Bunoge	A-stem	{LH-L}	*-ndà*	*-ndà-y^n*
Mombo	??	??	??	??
Ampari	??	??	*-rù*	??
Penange	A-stem	{L}	*-ndà*	*-ndé-ỳ^n*

We observe a **L-prohibitive** suffix type beginning with {*l r nd*}, a **G/K-prohibitive** with *-gu/-ku* reducible to *-w* (as in Donno So), a **composite N-prohibitive** beginning *na/nɔ* (arguably related to the verb 'forget'), and only in Jamsay a **Y-prohibitive** (but with *la-* as part of the plural-addressee form). The Y-Prohibitive may be cognate to the quoted (indirect) imperative form in several other Dogon languages.

hortative positive

The hortative positive, as in *let's go!*, is usually structured in Dogon as a command to either a singular or a plural addressee, though the speaker is also part of the agent group. The Pl-addressee suffix may or may not resemble that used in the imperative. The "tone

shift" column refers to tones of the stem, not the suffix(es). In several languages, the hortative verb form (positive or negative) is obligatorily or at least usually accompanied by a clause-initial 1Pl pronoun (Toro Tegu *í*, Togo Kan *émé*, Tomo Kan *bè*, Tiranige *ní*, Bunoge *ŋ́*, Ampari *ǹ*).

(3)　　Hortative positive

	ablaut	tone shift	Sg-addressee	Pl-addressee
eastern				
Toro Tegu[1]	—	—	*í …-é/ɛ́*	*á í …-é/ɛ́*
Bankan Tey	—	—	*-ý*	*-ý-nì*
Ben Tey	—	{L}	*-ḿ*	*-mây^n*
Nanga	—	—	*-má*	*-mày^n*
Jamsay	—	{L}	*-ḿ*	*-mây^n*
Togo Kan	—	—	*émé …-má*	*émé …-má-ỳ*
Tommo So	—	{H}	*-mɔ́*	*-mɔ́-ɲ̀*
Donno So	—	{H}	*-mɔ/-ma/-mɛ*	*-mɔ-ŋ̀*, etc.
Yorno So	—	—	*-mɔ̀*	*-mɔ̀-y*
Tomo Kan	—	—	*bè …-ma*	*bè …-ma-wé*
northwestern				
Najamba	A/O-stem	{L}/{LH}	{L}*-ý*	{LH}*-ỳ*
Tiranige	E/I-stem	{HL}	*ní …-ỳ^n*	*ní …-yày^n, -y^{n}y^{n}à*
Dogul Dom	—	{L}	*-má*	*-má-ŋ*
Tebul Ure	A/O-stem	—	*-mɔ́*	*-mɔ́-ǹ*
Yanda Dom	—	—	*-mà (-mâ)*	*-mà-ǹ (-má-ǹ)*
southwestern				
Bunoge	E/I-stem	{LH-L}	*ŋ́ …-ỳ^n*	??
Mombo	??	??	??	??
Ampari	??	??	*ǹ …-yà*	*ǹ …-yà*
Penange				
'go'	E/I-stem	{HL}	*ŋ̀ …-yà*	*ŋ̀ …-y^n-yà*
others	E/I-stem	{HL}	*ŋ̀ …-y^n-yà*	*ŋ̀ …-y^n-yà*

We observe a predominance of an M-hortative with some languages preferring a Y-hortative (the Toro Tegu forms do not clearly belong to either). The Y-hortatives have likely cognates in quoted imperatives (optatives), discussed later.

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[1] Monosyllabic *Co-* becomes *Cu-y^{n}e/ɛ*, *Ce-/Cɛ-* become *Ci-y^{n}e/ɛ*, while *Ca-* becomes *Ca-y^{n}ɛ́*.

hortative negative

This is the 'let's not go!' construction. It is of course not very common in texts, and it was not always elicitable. Morphologically it usually consists of the combination of hortative (positive) and prohibitive suffixes, in either order.

(4)   Hortative negative

	ablaut	tone	Sg-addressee	Pl-addressee
eastern				
Toro Tegu	[prohibitive verb form, preceded by 1Pl *í*]			
Bankan Tey	[prohibitive verb form, preceded by 1Pl *í: yà*]			
Ben Tey	—	—	*-rɛ̀-ḿ*	*-rɛ̀-mây^n*
Nanga	—	—	*-rá-má*	*-rá-mày^n*
Jamsay	—	{L}	*-ý lá-m*	*-ý lá-mây^n*
Togo Kan	—	—	*-m-lé*	*-m-lé-ỳ*
Tommo So	—	{H}	*-mɔ̀-gú*	*-mɔ̀-gí-ɲ̀*
Donno So	—	—	*-ǹnì*	—
Yorno So	—	—	—	*-mɔ̀-nɔ̀ŋ-î:*
Tomo Kan	{ɛ e}→{a o}	{L}	*-míní*	*-míní-wɛ́*
northwestern				
Najamba	A/O-stem	—	*-là-ý*	*-lá-ỳ*
or:	—	{L}	*-nɔ̂:-ỳ*	??
Tiranige	O-stem	{L}	*-lây^n*	*-láy^{n}y^{n}à*
Dogul Dom	—/O-stem	{H}/{L}	{H}*-nní*	{L}*-nní-yá*
Tebul Ure	A/O-stem	—	*-mɔ̂-l*	*mɔ̂-l sèndèn*
Yanda Dom	—	—	*-mè-là* (*-lá*)	*-mè-là-ǹ* (*-lá-ǹ*)
southwestern				
Bunoge	??	??	??	??
Mombo	??	??	??	??
Ampari	??	??	??	??
Penange			*-nd-éy^n*	??

linear position of pronominal object in imperatives (Toro Tegu)

Direct objects normally have the same linear position and (if applicable) accusative case-marking in imperative clauses as in other main clauses.

In Toro Tegu, however, a pronominal direct object (for 1st/2nd as well as 3rd person categories) often though not always follows the verb in singular-subject imperative clauses (5a), whereas in other clause types the object must precede the verb (5b). Object postposing is not possible in plural-addressee imperatives (1c).

(5)   a.   *téwá*   *m̀ᵇí*
              shake-Imprt   **1SgO**
              'Hit-2Sg me!' (Toro Tegu)

   b.   *ú*   *ǹ*   *téw-wɔ̀šì*
              2SgS   **1SgO**   shake-Perf
              'You-Sg hit me.' (Toro Tegu)

   c.   *á*   *ǹ*   *téwá*
              2PlS   **1SgO**   shake-Imprt
              'Hit-2Pl me!' (Toro Tegu)

   d.   *ǹ*   *téw-s-ɔ̌:*
              1SgO   hit-Perf2-3SgS
              'He/She hit me.' (Toro Tegu)

It is difficult to interpret this object-postposing in (5a). One is tempted to say that it is a device to avoid clause-initial position or object pronouns, and this would help explain the difference between (5a) and (5c) in particular. However, if we replace the clause-initial 2Sg subject morpheme in (5b) with a 3Sg subject morpheme, which follows the verb, we see that pronominal objects can occur clause-initially (5d).

        Comparison of (5a) with the Spanish type *sacude-me!* 'shake me!' is suggestive. In addition, there are numerous languages where the second person subject of imperatives appears to be structurally absent, allowing a direct object to acquire subject-like case-marking (as in some Uto-Aztecan languages) and/or linear position.

non-1Pl subject hortatives

In at least some Dogon languages, the hortative verb form is sometimes used with a subject other than 1Pl.

        In Ben Tey, the singular-addressee hortative form (or a homonym) can be combined with an overt or implicit 1Sg pronoun (6). The effect is to ask the addressee to allow the speaker to act ('let me VERB!').

(6)   *[ú*   *mâ:]*   *bàrù-ḿ*
        [2Sg   Dat]   help-Hort
        'Let me help you-Sg!' (Ben Tey)

In Togo Kan, a similar sense occurs with a 3Sg nonhuman subject in (7a). A colloquial translation would be '…bring it on!' By contrast, with a 2Sg subject the sense is that the speaker allows the addressee to act (7b).

(7)　　a.　　*[pèré　yɔ́　kɔ̀　dè]　[kó　^{L}ɲà-mà]*
　　　　　　[other　Exist　be.NonhS　if]　[NonhS　^{L}go-**Hort**]
　　　　　　'If there is another (tale), may it go (=proceed)!'

　　　　b.　　*[ú　kè]　ɲá-má*
　　　　　　[2Sg　Topic]　go-Hort
　　　　　　'You-Sg may go (now).'

paired-hortative compounds (Toro Tegu)

An interesting twist on hortatives in Toro Tegu is that two juxtaposed hortative forms from different verbs create an unusual compound verbal noun denoting back-and-forth actions. This hortative compound can be followed by the 'do' verb to constitute a predicate.

(8)　　*èsà-àrá　[yⁿɛ̌:→　yèr-é→]　á　kà-là*
　　　　chicken-male　[go.to.Hort　come-Hort]　Impf　do-Impf
　　　　'Rooster was going back and forth.' (Toro Tegu)
　　　　(lit. "rooster is/was doing let's-go [and] let's-come")

In some examples, like this one, the two verbs denote (semantically) reverse actions, leaving the agent in the same position as before. There are also examples like *[[fly-Hort] [land-Hort] do]* = 'keep flying (short distances) and landing', where the motion episodes cumulate rather than reversing each other.

imperatives and hortatives in greetings

Some Dogon greetings that are keyed to particular times of day include morphologically imperative or hortative verb forms, but with retrospective rather than prospective temporal reference. For example, the 'good morning!' greeting is literally "spend the night!", where one might have expected a polar interrogative in perfective form ("Did you spend the night well?").

quoted imperatives and blessings/imprecations

In Dogon indirect discourse,an original indicative sentence is often sharply divided into two or, if there is a clause-final emphatic particle, three sections (9).

(9)   subject/vocative _ verb phrase _ (emphatic particle)

The slots marked by "_" are occupied in several Dogon languages by quotative markers. In some languages, the same Quot[ative] particle appears in both slots, while others have rqo distinct quotative subject (QuotS) and postverbal quotative (Quot) particles.

      When the subject of an original indicative sentence was also the original addressee but is not a participant in the current speech event, indicatives like '(X said to Y), Y didn't come yesterday' can be formulated as in (10a) and original questions like '(X said to (=asked) Y), did Y come yesterday?" can be formulated as in (10b), if Y is named Seydou.

(10)   a. [Seydou   Quot(S)]   [yesterday   come-Perf   Quot]
        b. [Seydou   Quot(S)]   [yesterday   come-Perf   or?   Quot]

The analytical problem is that "Seydou" in (10a) and especially in the question (10b) can be taken as either the original subject or as a quoted vocative (i.e. the addressee).

      Commands and exhortations can of course be quoted ('I told him to leave'). The ambivalence between (embedded) subject and (embedded) addressee is even more of an issue with quoted imperatives, since imperatives have second person addressees and, at some level, subjects (or agents). Consider (11), meaning '(He/She) told Seydou to come.'

(11)   [Seydou   (Quot(S)]   [come!   Quot]

We now consider the form of the verb in a **quoted imperative** ('X told Y to VP'), whose original addressee (and agent) could correspond to any referent in the current speech event. This construction usually extends to **imprecations** of the 'may God VERB Y'. Such imprecations can be construed as defective quoted imperatives, with some overt quotative marking stripped away.

      Three distinct morphosyntactic patterns occur in Dogon languages. In the most widespread type, quoted imperatives and imprecations have a verb form identical to the main-clause singular-addressee imperative. The usual plural-addressee suffix is disallowed in most of these languages, presumably because the original addressee appears overtly in clause-initial position. However, plural-addressee marking does occur in Najamba.

      In the second type, a distinct verb form, here labeled **QuotImprt**, is used in quoted imperatives and imprecations, and not elsewhere. This is elsewhere referred to as "optative" (McPherson) or "third-person hortative" (Heath). Curly brackets {…} indicate tone overlays on the verb stem. Among the eastern languages, a distinct QuotImprt form is a specialty of the genetic subgroup containing Ben Tey, Nanga, and Bankan Tey.

However, probably cognate forms occur in north- and southwestern languages, always involving a stem-final high vowel and/or a suffix *-y* or *-y^n*.

In the third type, found in Najamba, quoted imperatives use the imperative stem, but imprecations (with 3Sg or 3Pl subject) have distinct suffixed forms.

(12) | language | | form of verb used in… | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | quoted imperatives | | imprecations |
| eastern | | | | |
| Toro Tegu | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| Bankan Tey | | | | |
| Ben Tey | | QuotImprt: {H}*-y* | QImprt: | {H}*-y* |
| Nanga | | QuotImprt: *-y* | QImprt: | *-y* |
| Jamsay | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| Togo Kan | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| Tommo So | | =imperative | | =imperative[2] |
| Donno So | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| Yorno So | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| Tomo Kan | | ?? | | ?? |
| northwestern | | | | |
| Najamba | | =imperative | 3Hort: | *-ná* (Sg), *-wó:* (Pl) |
| Tiranige | | QuotImprt -∅ ~ *-y^n* | QuotImprt | -∅ ~ *-y^n* |
| Dogul Dom | | ?? | | ?? |
| Tebul Ure | | QuotImprt *-y | QuotImprt | *-y |
| Yanda Dom | | =imperative | | =imperative |
| southwestern | | | | |
| Bunoge | | QuotImprt U-stem | | ?? |
| Mombo | | ?? | | ?? |
| Ampari | | ?? | | ?? |
| Penange | | QuotImprt *-y^n* | QuotImprt | *-y^n* |

quoted hortatives

In most of the languages, a quoted hortative ('he said, let's go!') has the same verb form as a main-clause hortative.

In Nanga, the main-clause hortative is *-má* for singular addressee and -mày^n for the more common plural addressee. Quoted hortatives have *-ŋ́* regardless of original

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[2] McPherson states that the positive "optative" is identical segmentally to the positive imperative, but may differ tonally. There is no difference between prohibitive and optative negative.

addressee number, followed by (irregularly L-toned) quotative particle *wà*. Etymologically *-ŋ́* is probably just a reduced form of *-mày^n via *-m, with the original L-tone realized on the quotative particle.