



## ENGLISH IMPERATIVE MOOD USAGE AND FOLLOWERS' COMPREHENSION ANALYSIS IN MOCHI CREATIVE'S INSTAGRAM ADVERTISEMENTS

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### Abstract

This article explores Instagram as a promotional medium and the English Imperative Mood in Mochi Creative advertisements on Instagram. This descriptive qualitative study uses the Purposive Sampling method and uses instruments such as Content Analysis (for the expression and accuracy of the English Imperative Mood used) and interviews with informants and the resource person (owner of Mochi Creative). The results show the use of Instagram because it is one of the well-known social media commonly used by the younger generation, yet more expressive with pictures and videos, especially the trend of short videos and good Instagram feed design. English usage in the advertisements is mainly to target a wider market and to get an international impression for Mochi Creative. The English Imperative Moods used, such as "Just Like & Share This Post Now", "Book Yours Now", "Get Your Postcard Design", "Book Now", and "Message Us", are appropriate by using action verbs without writing errors. Mochi Creative's followers could comprehend the advertisements measured by four levels of understanding and the informants could reach the fourth level which meant having full comprehension. For visual persuasion according to Aristotle, Mochi Creative's advertisement has three elements of Ethos (trust), Pathos (interest), and Logos (providing facts).

**Keywords:** *English language, research articles, imperative mood, Instagram, visual persuasion*

### 1.1 Introduction

Communication has been used in the world of advertisement for persuading people to invite them to buy or use products or services, and persuasion eventually affected the mood of the people. In English, there are several grammar moods, and one of them is the Imperative Mood. The usage of Imperative Mood has also been used in advertising to engage with its viewers to act for a certain purpose the marketer expected to do (the next action a marketer wants its reader to take). Most marketers prefer the use of the English language for the Imperative Mood to engage with the general audience (not segmented) as argued by Nederstigt & Hilberink-Schulpen (2018) which stated that foreign languages are

frequently used in international advertising. English, specifically, is incredibly fashionable in non-English speaking countries.

The study on Mochi Creative was conducted because it was the most suitable sample of an Instagram business account that uses English Imperative Mood in advertisements to advertise the service to the public in Indonesia with one of the focuses in Imperative Mood, hence the interest to analyze it further. Several research problems suited for the study were identified as follows.

1. Why does Mochi Creative use Instagram as the social media platform for the business?

2. Why does Mochi Creative use English for the advertisements?
3. What expression or phrase is used in the English Imperative Mood on Instagram advertisement?
4. Is the usage of the English Imperative Mood on Instagram advertisement correct?
5. Do the followers of Mochi Creative comprehend the English Imperative Mood advertisements?

This study is expected to be an insight or a guideline for personal brands, business owners or founders, and even individuals to enrich their knowledge about English Imperative Mood usage in advertisements, especially through the online platform such as Instagram. This study can also function as a reference for future researchers relating to the same topic information and hopefully improved results from future researchers could be the output.

## 2.1 Literature Review

There are some theories of experts about imperative mood, levels of comprehension, English for business purposes, Instagram as an advertising platform, and visual persuasion, that were used in the study.

Yeibo (2011) claims that Imperative Mood functions as commands. Furthermore, Osu Writing Center College of Arts and Sciences Oklahoma State (n.d.) states that Imperative Mood expresses a command or a request statement and it has a direct command tone but not a mild suggestion. As a mood explaining commands, the type of word used is mainly verb. Imperative Mood is always formed in the present tense. Imperative Mood starts from the word (verb itself), a clause, or a sentence. The verb used expresses a direct action as a persuasion for the other person to do a certain act the speaker intended. For the positive statement, Imperative Mood uses bare infinitive and can use "do + not" followed by the bare infinitive to express prohibition. The imperative mood does not

require a subject in the expression. (Lexico, n.d.).

Comprehension as defined in the Oxford dictionary (n.d.) is the ability to understand. It can mean to be familiar with a situation, facts, etc. as stated in the Cambridge dictionary. Kočiský et al. (2018) also mentioned that reading comprehension entails the integration of information and reasoning relating to the events, entities, and their relationship of them across a full document. There are four levels of comprehension based on Mt Sac Levels of Comprehension:

1. Literal Comprehension (readers understand the level of stated facts in the text. There are data, specifics, dates, traits, and settings provided in the text, and the majority of the comprehension is based on the text only)
2. Inferential Comprehension (readers can make predictions based on the facts provided and can understand the sequence or thought process of the text and can understand the trait or characteristic and the setting in the text)
3. Evaluative Comprehension (readers understand well enough to analyze, judge, evaluate, and make criticism and be able to explain and support the judgment clearly. Readers become more critical at this level.)
4. Appreciative Comprehension (readers can respond to the text based on the author's use of language, reaction to the author's ideas and language, values and imagery as well as style of text, and author's purpose. Readers can understand the author's point of view, purpose, tone, assumption, and others based on the text. Readers can determine the message the author is trying to convey the readers and can conclude the hidden message behind the statement, quotes, reasons, and more)

Rao (2019) argues that English is widely used in many environments as

globalization in the areas of business, commerce, management, and marketing. English is known as the real global language to connect people and businesses internationally. This situation brought the importance of learning English since the increase of the mobile international community, and because English is recognized as the official language for the business and scientific world. Talking about Business English, it is stated by the Oxford Business English Dictionary as cited by Rao that Business English is used in the areas of accounting, commerce, e-commerce, economics, finance, HR, insurance, IT, law, manufacturing, marketing, production, property, the stock exchange, (international) trade, and transport.

As inferred from Kumar and Nanda (2019), Instagram is a social network to share photos and videos with the ability to edit with many filters, tags, and location information. The fact that Instagram is a personal platform for every individual, advertisement through Instagram has more range and scope to target the market directly to each individual. Knowing that more than one billion people are using Instagram every month (Hootsuite, 2021), the possibility and advantages of advertisement are arguably limitless. Advertising through Instagram has a minimal cost and a wider audience, which eventually pushes companies to pursue the Instagram platform as a platform to place advertisements. The advantage of using Instagram is that it is based on the photo and video-sharing social networks. This can mean that companies can promote much more easily using visual aspects with an emphasis on an appealing design and copywriting. Companies can inform the product or service much more easily because it is shown in a visual format, rather than audio or text format which is not as appealing as a visual format. Discussing advertisements, Oxford Dictionary stated that an advertisement is a notice, picture, or film telling people about a product, job, or

service. It can be in newspapers, television, and online advertisement. Online advertisement is currently a developing advertisement type. The current modern era and globalization make the existence of online advertisement the next revolutionary kind of advertisement and it is inevitable.

Advertisement nowadays is not far from the usage of English for an international target market besides the use of the native language. Almost all companies worldwide with different native languages use English in their marketing and advertising plans. Advertisements come in many forms, but the most common ones are pictures and text. Talking about an advertisement, it means the purpose is to persuade people, and it involves the effect on the moods of people to attract them to buy or use the products or services. Companies use Imperative Mood for the most part, such as *Sign Up Now*, *Register Now*, *Claim Your Coupon Now*, *Buy Now*, and others. It is solely to persuade people to do the intended action from the advertisers, hence the usage of Imperative Mood in advertisements, combined with the use of the English language, and it can target a much wider market.

As for Visual Persuasion, images have been used extensively in advertisements in the modern era. Images are one of the leading aspects to persuade consumers and other people in marketing nowadays. Jain (2018) believes it is very convenient to receive a message and to understand an advertisement in the form of images in TV commercials, magazine advertisements, or other kinds of advertisements. It is further stated that Visual Persuasion imitates the image of a physical world by becoming the substitute for the object of desire or emotions relating to the products. It remarks that persuasion itself is a core function of communication, to influence the beliefs, desires, and actions as the purpose. It remarks that persuasion has the dependency on an element which is infotainment (factual information and emotional appeal) needed to shift the

perception of a consumer into a designated act. It is also stated that a persuasive consumer on the other hand must react based on the message delivered from a visual aspect. Lamichhane (2017) categorized persuasive appeals based on a famous Greek Philosopher Aristotle. It consists of Ethos, Pathos, and Logos:

1. Ethos – An Appeal to Credibility (Trust)
2. Pathos – An Appeal to Emotion
3. Logos – An Appeal to Reason (Providing Facts)

Lamichhane (2017) further states that with advertisers using all three persuasive appeals, the advertisers have fulfilled the major objective to persuade the consumers. In one case, a brand might manipulate the feelings of the consumer and their way of thinking to persuade them to buy or use the product or service. The components of three persuasive appeals work together simultaneously in advertising and marketing. It is to be remembered that not all companies use all three appeal components at the same time to form advertisements.

### 3.1 Methodology

In this study, this study used descriptive with the qualitative approach as the guide for the tools, techniques, and solutions for the research process thoroughly. This study used the qualitative method since it is identifying the social or human problems in correlation with the human individuals about a certain phenomenon. The phenomenon is the use of imperative mood in advertisements and how the reader comprehends the mood usage. The study used the descriptive method because there is a consideration and attention of Instagram user opinions and attitudes towards the Imperative Mood in an Instagram business account advertisement. The method can also help to discover the functions of the imperative mood in the advertisement. This makes the descriptive method the suitable method for this study.

The study was done in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, Indonesia at an unspecified location. It is due to the source of research samples coming from a social media platform called Instagram. The study analyzed an Instagram business account that used the Imperative Mood and the data were collected from the Instagram account. The interview was done via WhatsApp chat or Instagram direct message considering the current pandemic of COVID-19 in Pontianak. The subject of this research was the owner of Mochi Creative the resource person who had been asked for permission to conduct a study on the business. As for the informants, 10 active followers as the informants were chosen. The study used Non-Probability Sampling with the Purposive Sampling method. The criteria of the informants are as followed.

1. Age starting from 17 years old (minimum age requirement for using social media) until 50 years old (approximate age for a business person to use Mochi Creative's services).
2. Instagram followers who have viewed or engaged with Mochi Creative's advertisement (at least one) containing the use of English Imperative Mood, specifically the ones who followed Mochi Creative and liked the English Imperative Mood Instagram advertisement photo(s).
3. Possessing the ability to read and understand the English language.

The Content Analysis was prepared as the first instrument of study and analyzed five English Imperative Mood advertisements from Mochi Creative. Content analysis is used to evaluate patterns within a piece of content or across multiple pieces of content or sources of communication. the content analysis approach was applied in this study to describe the English Imperative Mood usage. It is furthermore continued with the finding of the resource person and informants that fulfilled the requirements of

informants. The permission to do an Analysis of Mochi Creative's advertisements on Instagram and to interview the resource person, which is the owner of Mochi Creative, and asked the permission of the informants to be interviewed was asked. The interview is the second instrument used for the study.

The interview was conducted to determine whether the informants comprehend the advertisements based on the visual persuasion aspect and four levels of comprehension. It was furthermore continued with the interview of the resource person about the usage and purpose of English Imperative Mood in Mochi Creative's Instagram advertisement posts. After the interview process, the process of translating, editing, and transcribing the interviews into this study was done. The information from the interviews was analyzed. Finally, the discussions and conclusions of this study can be composed. To respect the privacy of the resource person and the informants, it is proper to refer to them by their respective initials. Privacy rest assured to the resource person and informants to establish trust and can conduct the interview without any hesitancy or skepticism to yield the maximum result of the answers from the interviewees. Confidentiality is also done to avoid any improper use of the information without the consent of the resource person and the informants.

Ultimately, the technique of data analysis is divided into three steps, which are Data Reduction (means to summarize, the choice of main aspects, the focus on important matters, the finding of theme and pattern, and eliminating irrelevant and unrelated data), Data Display (used to describe the data in the study for the process of understanding the data, therefore a proper data display should be presented in a simple and comprehensible manner by the reader), and Conclusion Drawing or Verification (to verify and construct the conclusion).

#### 4.1 Finding and Discussion

Based on the result of the interview conducted with the resource person who is also the owner of Mochi Creative, the owner decided to use Instagram as the platform for advertising because Instagram is one of the most popular social media commonly used by younger generations and Instagram is more expressible with photos and videos, including the short video trend and Instagram feed design that is great are the demand currently. Perceiving from previous studies conducted by Santoso et al. (2017), and Agnes (2016) relating to social media, paired with the result with the owner or the resource person above, it can be concluded that social media is beneficial for communication tools and important as a way to be connected, and Instagram is suitable for advertising since the platform has visual features and tools that compliment company's needs to promote the products, and the popularity of Instagram among younger generations and is more expressible with photos and videos. As Imperative Mood functions as the command to persuade people to do a desired action by the advertiser, the owner mainly used it to reach a wider target market (not only in Indonesia), and the English language is a worldwide language commonly used and also to get a more international impression as well.

The English Imperative Mood expressions used in the Instagram advertisements are as followed.

1. "Just Like & Share This Post Now!" – (*Hanya Menyukai & Menyebarkan Postingan Ini Sekarang!*)
2. "Book Yours Now" – (*Pesan Milikmu Sekarang*)
3. "Get Your Postcard Design" – (*Dapatkan Desain Kartu Ucapanmu*)
4. "Book Now" – (*Pesan Sekarang Juga*)
5. "Message Us" – (*Kirimkan Pesan ke Kami*).

It was identified that the usage of the expressions was accurate as there were no incorrect spellings and using the action verb

was imperative with the intention to persuade or command the readers.

Associating with the literature review, Mochi Creative has used English for its Business Purposes. As stated by Rao (2019), English is widely used in many environments as globalization in the areas of business, commerce, management, and marketing. English is known as the real global language to connect people and businesses internationally, and the statement is coherent with the resource person's interview result. Mochi Creative also used Imperative Mood in the advertisements which functions as a command. On the whole, the advertisements' structures were precise with the usage of the action verb.

All of the informants have understood the function of Imperative Mood as the command to persuade people to do a desired action by the advertiser. The only problem found was the informant did not know the term for the function was "Imperative Mood". The informants' answers regarding English Imperative Mood usage in advertisements of Mochi Creative and in general, is the informant "C" responded that the informant personally thought that it is suitable for the function of the imperative itself, and did not see any problem with it. The informant highlighted words for command so as not to be interpreted incorrectly as anger, especially with the usage of exclamation marks. The informant "AP" stated that the advertisements of Mochi Creative were okay in the meaning of not forcing too much, so the caption is very professional. The informant also thought that the usage was also to catch more consumers outside Indonesia so the target market could be wider. The informant "M" remarked that it is used to attract attention and persuade people from the universal group of people. The informant "VF" highlighted that English Imperative Mood is used so not only Indonesian people that would understand it. The informant "F" thought that maybe the target market is not only

Indonesian people, so the business would use the English language for the Imperative Mood. The informant "N" remarked that nowadays, the target market is not only in Indonesia so it is important to use the English language, especially Imperative Mood. The informant "R" responded that the usage of the English Imperative Mood was quite proper. The informant "ES", "E" and "T" provided the same answers that the usage of English Imperative Mood is to target the international market and the usage was already accurate.

Most of the informants provided similar results regarding the comprehension of Visual Persuasion. Mochi Creative's English Imperative Mood advertisements showed a fact of an annual event based on the fact that in February, there was a celebration for Chinese New Year. Also, testimonies from customers so Mochi Creative presented the fact that the brochure was real and made by the Mochi Creative team. Mochi Creative also provided promo events on certain days, and with real editing results, mainly design portfolios and real evidence of the result of the service with one of the businesses on Instagram which used the service and as the evidence that the quality was good (Visual Persuasion – *Logos*). All of the informants agreed that the advertisements appeal to the informants emotionally for various reasons, one of them being the interesting, unique, good, and attractive design. The design was considered minimalistic, bright, and stylish. Other than the design, the appeal came from the solid, clear words and was suitable for the information needed by the readers (Visual Persuasion – *Pathos*). Lastly, all of the informants trusted Mochi Creative as a brand due to various reasons, especially with Mochi Creative's quality of service and good results design if the informant wants to make posters, banners, and others, the informants would use the service (Visual Persuasion – *Ethos*).

*“From the design and the brand of Mochi, I would still use them as a reference, so I do trust them.”* (Informant “C”)

*“Looking from the posts, if I want a service to make posters or banners, I think I would use their service.”* (Informant “AP”)

*“If the design is that good, I trust them.”* (Informant “VF”)

Based on the Four Levels of Comprehension, all of the informants can tell the meaning of the advertisements in the Indonesian language with no problem (Literal Comprehension). All of the informants can make predictions about the impact of the advertisements to persuade the readers to be interested in using the service, some of the informants would still match their needs for the service to be fully impacted and order from Mochi Creative (Inferential Comprehension). Most of the informants agreed that the advertisements are acceptable and appropriate. The advertisements were already good and all the important information was clear (concise) with no offensive words or too much forcing. The design is also unique. Informant “AP” highlighted a grammatical mistake in the post caption (not in the advertisement picture) which was “Almost at its end” and it should be “Almost at its end”. Some suggestions from the informants were the refinement of grammatical mistakes in captions, and posting more knowledge about branding, marketing, and designing, also Mochi Creative should give more promos, not only on certain days, but unique promos such as door prizes, games, and others (Evaluative Comprehension). All the informants could determine the purpose, tone, and assumption of the advertisements which was leaning towards persuasiveness so that the readers were persuaded to use the service as the purpose and the assumption. The assumption from the advertiser was to make sure the readers are interested to use the service, and the expected assumption

from the readers was to be “hypnotized” to buy the service. One of the informants expressed more sensitivity to the advertisements by being able to hear the words inside the head like in advertisements in general with a suggesting tone (Appreciative Comprehension).

Referring to a study conducted by Yuniawan et al. (2020), which analyzed Imperative Mood on Instagram, it can be concluded that Imperative Mood plays an important role as to create awareness among the people reading it. Based on the studies conducted by Cahyani et al. (2020), Yeibo (2011), and Amosssou and Imorou (2021), which analyzed the Imperative Mood only, and resulted in identical information provided by the resource person that Imperative Mood can show and give action hints in detail, with emphasizing in action clauses and act.

## 5.1 Conclusion

Based on the findings of English Imperative Mood Usage and Followers’ Comprehension Analysis in Mochi Creative’s Instagram Advertisements, the conclusion of the findings is as follows.

1. The resource person used Instagram because it is one of the most popular social media commonly used by younger generations and Instagram is more expressible with photos and videos together, especially the short video trend and great Instagram feed design are in demand.
2. English Imperative Mood is used mainly to reach a wider target market (not only in Indonesia) and the English language is a worldwide language commonly used and also to get a more international impression, according to the resource person. The resource person would still use English Imperative Mood in the future for Mochi Creative advertisements and only recommend the business owners who target wider and international customers.
3. The expressions used were

- a. “Just Like & Share This Post Now!” – (*Hanya Menyukai & Menyebarkan Postingan Ini Sekarang!*)
  - b. “Book Yours Now” – (*Pesan Milikmu Sekarang*)
  - c. “Get Your Postcard Design” – (*Dapatkan Desain Kartu Ucapanmu*)
  - d. “Book Now” – (*Pesan Sekarang Juga*)
  - e. “Message Us” – (*Kirimkan Pesan ke Kami*)
4. The English Imperative Mood expressions were all accurate with the use of action verbs with no incorrect spellings.
  5. Regarding the comprehension of the followers who were the informants of the study, the followers’ comprehension was analyzed with Visual Persuasion from Aristotle (*Ethos, Pathos, Logos*) and Four Levels of Comprehension (Literal, Inferential, Evaluative, Appreciative). From the interview with the informants, it can be concluded that all of the informants comprehended the advertisements. The informants have got several benefits such as knowledge and interest in branding, marketing, as well as design. The informants would like to act immediately after seeing the advertisements but most of the informants would match with the needs first, possibly budget as well. As for Visual Persuasion, Mochi Creative has fulfilled *Ethos* (trust), *Pathos* (appeal), and *Logos* (providing facts). For Four Levels of Comprehension, all the informants could comprehend in literal (can tell the meaning), inferential (can predict what the expression could impact them), evaluative (can determine whether it is acceptable or appropriate and can provide some suggestions where necessary), and

appreciative (can determine the purpose, tone, and assumption).

Based on the analysis of this study, a few suggestions for Mochi Creative, business owners, and future researchers are provided.

1. For future researchers  
Given that not all candidates for the respondents were interested in advertisements or liked the Instagram posts, it is highly recommended that the next writers investigate the most relevant Instagram feeds that support your research questions, arguments, and purposes. Analyzing and perceiving popular and necessary advertisements that reach a large number of consumers could help broader informants with different backgrounds and perceptions. As a result, future researchers will be able to conduct their studies without fear of reaching unrelated conclusions. Furthermore, because of its efficiency, future researchers should use is preferable for future researchers to use Focused Group Discussion (FGD) to analyze qualitative data. However, to avoid biased responses with FGD, it is recommended that answer-cross-checking be performed to observe the consistency of respondents’ arguments. It is possible to conclude a conclusion unless their responses are consistent. FGD can also lead to the informants being shy and do not provide as much information, so future researchers need to engage more with each informant for time efficiency and getting the most information from the informants.  
The number of informants in this study is enough to conduct the interview, but it is believed that getting more informants could lead to wider answers, hence can represent more rather than using 10 informants. Challenges might occur when too many informants are involved such as

biased opinions, and too many different perspectives to complicate the conclusion. More tests for the informants to truly test their abilities in English could be done as well to determine their ability in English. Specific criteria can be set for different purposes as well, such as if the next writers would like to analyze only a few groups of people.

2. For Mochi Creative and business owners

In addition, according to the study's findings, when purchasing a product, consumers will consider their needs as well as their financial resources. As a result, it is advisable for entrepreneurs who want to sell their wares through advertisements to improve the visuals of posters and feeds as well as to adapt to what consumers require most in today's era. People complain that what is required should be the foundation of a business in business. Entrepreneurs can also set a reasonable, non-expensive price and compare it to the prices of other entrepreneurs' competitors. After the merchandise sells out because it is less expensive and has captured the attention of customers, entrepreneurs gradually raise the price based on quality. English Imperative Mood can be used by business owners depending on the target market, if the target market is international and broad, then business owners can use it to improve their marketing.

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