

**An Analysis of Imperative Speech Acts in Indonesian Language Captions on Instagram @solarchapter (A Pragmatic Study)**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to analyze the use of imperative speech acts in the captions of the Instagram account @solarchapter. Through a pragmatic analysis, the research explores the functions and meanings of imperative speech acts in directing, advising, or requesting actions from the audience. A qualitative descriptive method with a pragmatic approach was employed in this study. Data were collected from several captions posted on the Instagram account @solarchapter. The findings reveal that imperative speech acts are effectively used to engage followers and prompt specific actions. Moreover, the study highlights that imperatives in Instagram captions serve not only as commands but also as invitations, requests, and suggestions. These functions are adapted to the informal yet persuasive nature of social media communication. By combining directive language with contextual sensitivity, the captions successfully encourage interaction and participation. This research provides valuable insights into the strategic use of imperative speech acts in digital and social media communication. It emphasizes the importance of language adaptation to the interactive and informal dynamics of platforms like Instagram. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of linguistic practices in digital environments and offer practical implications for enhancing communication strategies in social media contexts.

**Keywords:** Speech Act; Instagram; Caption

## INTRODUCTION

In the digital era, social media has emerged as one of the most influential communication platforms. Instagram is widely utilized not only for sharing images but also for conveying messages, shaping public perception, and influencing actions and thoughts. Captions on Instagram are essential features that allow users to express ideas, emotions, and instructions. Language plays a pivotal role in engaging audiences, especially using imperative speech acts.

Speech acts are a fundamental area of study in pragmatics, particularly in the context of written and verbal communication. Imperative speech acts, as a subset of directive acts, are used to prompt or command an audience to perform specific actions. These acts are prevalent in social media campaigns, where they are employed to encourage participation, disseminate information, or rally support for specific causes. The Instagram account *@solarchapter* exemplifies this by using imperative speech acts in its captions to inspire audience involvement in environmental awareness and renewable energy initiatives.

The functions of imperative speech acts in Instagram captions are multifaceted. Besides directing actions, they foster emotional engagement and motivate audiences to actively participate in the issues presented. As Saifudin (2018) notes, understanding speech acts necessitates an awareness of the surrounding context, which serves as a framework for interpreting their intent and impact. In the context of *@solarchapter*, imperative speech acts are adapted to the informal and interactive nature of social media, enhancing their effectiveness in encouraging user engagement.

Social media platforms like Instagram have transformed the way individuals and organizations communicate. The ability to connect with a global audience in real-time has made platforms like Instagram indispensable for campaigns aimed at raising awareness, influencing behavior, and mobilizing support. Captions are a critical tool in this context, enabling users to convey complex messages succinctly and persuasively. The integration of visual content with text further amplifies the impact, making language an essential component of effective communication on Instagram.

Imperative speech acts are particularly relevant in campaigns addressing global issues such as environmental sustainability. By prompting actions like “join,” “share,” or “support,” these acts effectively translate awareness into tangible efforts. Research by Holmes and Wilson (2020) highlights that imperative, when used strategically, can serve as powerful drivers of engagement, especially when aligned with the values and interests of the audience. This aligns with the practices of *@solarchapter*, which leverages imperatives to mobilize its followers toward specific environmental causes.

The role of context cannot be overstated in understanding the use and effectiveness of imperative speech acts. As Van Dijk (2020) asserts, context shapes not only the interpretation of speech acts but also their impact on the audience. On Instagram, the informal and interactive nature of the platform necessitates a conversational tone that resonates with the audience's expectations. This interplay between context and language makes imperative speech acts a compelling subject for study in digital communication.

Furthermore, the integration of imperative speech acts with persuasive elements, such as emotional appeals and calls to action, enhances their efficacy. These elements create a sense of urgency and importance, compelling audiences to engage with the content and participate in the initiatives being promoted. In the case of @solarchapter, the combination of imperatives with visually compelling content and socially relevant messages has proven effective in driving both awareness and action.

This research examines the use of imperative speech acts in Instagram captions from @solarchapter, focusing on their forms, functions, and impacts. The findings aim to contribute to the fields of digital communication and linguistic studies, providing insights into the strategic use of language to drive action and foster connections in social media environments. By exploring how language is used to influence and mobilize audiences in a digital context, this study highlights the evolving role of communication in addressing global challenges.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Pragmatics**

Speech acts in pragmatics are a significant focus of language studies, particularly in oral and written communication. Speech act theory, pioneered by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), categorizes speech acts into various types, including directive acts, which encompass imperative speech acts. According to Wibowo (2016), pragmatics examines the use of language actions, often shaped by the context of communication and the cultural background influencing a speaker's intent. Speech acts manifest in seven main types: assertive, performative, verdictive, expressive, directive, commissive, and phatic acts. Assertive acts convey opinions or facts to inform an audience. Directive acts are aimed at prompting action from the listener. Commissive acts bind the speaker to perform a promised action. Expressive acts reflect emotions or responses to events. Phatic acts establish social interaction. Performatives enact the content of the utterance. Verdictive acts provide judgment or evaluation (Putu, 2015). Yule (2014) explains that imperative pragmatics focuses on the relationships between linguistic forms and their usage in context, beyond syntax and semantics.

## **Social Media**

Social media platforms are tools that allow users to create and share content through internet-based applications such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Istiqomah and Nugraha (2018) highlight that social media serves as a communication medium, facilitating relationships, businesses, information sharing, and the exchange of ideas. These platforms simplify human interaction by enabling seamless connectivity. In this study, Instagram is used as the social media platform to analyze speech acts, particularly within its caption feature.

## **Instagram**

Instagram is a social media platform that facilitates the dissemination of messages, information, expressions, and news. Its ability to rapidly and effectively share information makes it a popular choice for users. Instagram captions play a crucial role in communication. According to Hartini (2017), a caption is a sentence accompanying a photo uploaded to Instagram, functioning as a form of status or a medium to convey meaning. Captions provide emphasis and serve as a source of information for the reader. To comprehend the meaning—whether explicit or implied—pragmatic knowledge is essential. Captions thus represent a unique form of linguistic expression on Instagram, blending textual and visual communication.

## **@solarchapter**

Among the many accounts on Instagram, @solarchapter stands out as a platform combining visual content with meaningful messages in its captions. These captions serve not only as descriptions or explanations of the images, but also as rich communication tools filled with pragmatic speech acts. The account uses its captions strategically to engage audiences and encourage active participation in social and environmental initiatives.

## **METHOD**

### **Design and Sample**

This research employed a qualitative research method, which is characterized by its reliance on naturally occurring data and its descriptive nature. According to Sugiyono (2018), qualitative methods aim to explore and interpret phenomena in their natural context. The sample for this study consisted of linguistic phenomena observed on the Instagram account @solarchapter, particularly the written captions. These captions serve as textual representations of communication and were selected as the primary focus of analysis due to their relevance to the research objectives.

### **Instrument and Procedures**

The primary instrument in this research was the researcher themselves. In qualitative research, the researcher is considered the central tool for data collection and analysis, as they actively engage in the observation, documentation, and interpretation processes. To collect data, the researcher used documentation techniques, which included systematically reviewing and capturing screenshots of captions posted on the Instagram account @solarchapter. Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the selected captions were relevant and aligned with the research goals. This approach allowed the researcher to focus on specific posts that demonstrated linguistic phenomena or patterns significant to the study.

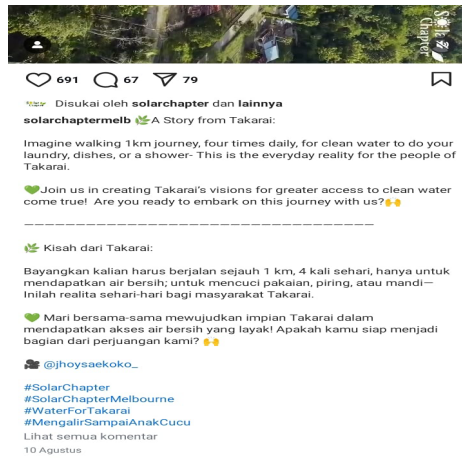
### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis process involved several steps to uncover meaningful insights from the collected captions. First, the researcher identified linguistic phenomena within the captions on the Instagram account @solarchapter. These phenomena included specific language use, stylistic choices, and communicative strategies employed in the captions. Next, the researcher determined the object of study by focusing on the written captions as the unit of analysis. This step was critical in narrowing the scope and ensuring the analysis was targeted and comprehensive. Finally, the researcher analyzed the captions to interpret the underlying linguistic and communicative aspects, contributing to a deeper understanding of the language use on social media platforms.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This study identifies the types of speech acts present in captions posted by @solarchapter, focusing on illocutionary acts such as assertives, expressives, and directives. The analysis includes data on the purpose and audience engagement with each caption.

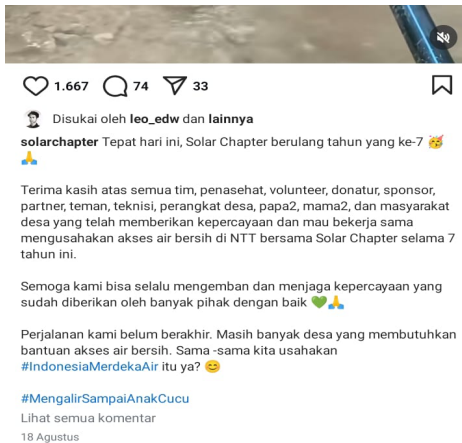
The first caption, posted on August 10, 2024, represents an assertive speech act. It informs the public about the dream of Takarai village to achieve access to clean water. By asserting the ongoing efforts and their importance, this caption aims to raise awareness and support. The post, captured via screenshot on September 9, 2024, had received 691 likes and 67 comments, indicating moderate audience engagement.



Picture 1. Data 1

Source: Posted by @solarchapter on Saturday, August 10, 2024

The second caption, posted on August 18, 2024, combines expressive and assertive speech acts. The post expresses gratitude to various stakeholders, including advisors, volunteers, and the local community, for their collaboration in addressing clean water issues in NTT. The expressive nature of the caption strengthens relationships with its audience, while the assertive aspect underscores the project's progress. By September 9, 2024, the caption had garnered significant engagement, with 1,667 likes and 74 comments.



Picture 2. Data 2

Source: Posted by @solarchapter on Sunday, August 18, 2024

The third caption, posted on September 13, 2023, primarily exhibits an assertive speech act by informing the audience about the impact of clean water projects, which have benefited over 4,500 individuals across five villages in NTT. The caption highlights the positive outcomes, emphasizing the achievements of the initiative. It received 457 likes and 14 comments, as recorded on September 9, 2024, reflecting moderate interest from followers.



Picture 3. Data 3

Source: Posted by @solarchapter on Wednesday, September 13, 2023

The fourth caption, posted on May 20, 2024, demonstrates a directive speech act. It motivates the audience to work collaboratively in overcoming the clean water crisis, appealing directly to their sense of responsibility and collective effort. The caption's directive nature aligns with its motivational tone, inspiring action. By the screenshot date, September 9, 2024, it had achieved high engagement, with 14.6k likes and 95 comments.



Picture 4. Data 4

Source: Posted by @solarchapter on Monday, May 20, 2024

The fifth caption, posted on June 20, 2024, combines directive and commissive speech acts. It calls on enthusiastic individuals to join the organization as project coordinators, a directive aimed at recruitment. Simultaneously, the caption conveys a commitment to empowering skilled professionals within its initiatives. The caption received 284 likes and 4 comments as of September 9, 2024, indicating a niche but targeted engagement.



*Picture 5. Data 5*

*Source: Posted by @solarchapter on Monday, June 20, 2024*

These findings reveal that @solarchapter employs diverse speech acts in its captions, tailoring its communication strategies to engage, inform, and motivate its audience effectively. The varying levels of engagement across captions highlight differences in audience responsiveness to specific types of speech acts and topics.

This study identifies the dominant speech acts in @solarchapter's Instagram captions, focusing on assertive, expressive, directive, and commissive acts. These findings align with and expand upon previous research on the use of speech acts in social media communication. For example, Fitriani et al. (2018) highlighted the prevalence of assertive and directive speech acts in corporate social media campaigns, emphasizing their role in informing and persuading audiences. Similarly, Kurniawan and Lestari (2020) found that expressive acts are effective in fostering emotional connections and strengthening relationships with audiences, particularly in nonprofit contexts.

One of the novel findings of this study is the strategic combination of speech acts in a single caption, such as the use of directives and commissives in recruitment posts. Unlike earlier studies that examined speech acts in isolation (Santoso, 2016), this research demonstrates how overlapping speech acts can enhance the versatility and impact of Instagram captions. For instance, the directive act of motivating individuals to apply for a role simultaneously conveys a commissive act of the organization's commitment to community empowerment. This duality underscores the adaptability of speech acts in achieving multifaceted communication goals.

Another significant insight is the effectiveness of expressive speech acts in captions expressing gratitude. These posts garnered higher audience engagement, consistent with previous studies by Wijaya (2022) and Rahmadani (2019), which showed that



audiences are more likely to interact with posts that convey appreciation or acknowledgment. This suggests that such acts not only strengthen social bonds but also enhance the visibility and reach of the organization's initiatives.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it focuses exclusively on the Instagram account @solarchapter, limiting the generalizability of findings to other social media platforms or organizations. Second, the analysis is confined to captions related to clean water projects, leaving out other types of posts that may involve different speech act dynamics. Third, while audience engagement metrics (likes and comments) were considered, deeper qualitative insights into audience perceptions or reactions were not explored.

The research implications are multifaceted. For social media practitioners, the findings underscore the importance of using varied and strategic speech acts to achieve specific communication objectives. Nonprofit organizations can leverage expressive acts to strengthen relationships with their audience, while directive and commissive acts can be used to mobilize action and commitment. Academically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on speech acts in digital communication, highlighting their adaptability in diverse contexts.

Future research should address the limitations of this study by examining speech acts across multiple platforms and exploring audience perceptions through interviews or surveys. Additionally, longitudinal studies could investigate how the use of speech acts evolves over time and its correlation with changing audience engagement patterns. By addressing these gaps, scholars can further illuminate the role of speech acts in shaping effective social media communication.

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the strategic use of various speech acts in the Instagram captions of @solarchapter, including assertive, expressive, directive, and commissive acts, to achieve specific communication objectives. Assertive acts are primarily used to inform and raise awareness, expressive acts to foster emotional connections and gratitude, directive acts to motivate action, and commissive acts to express organizational commitments. The study also underscores the importance of combining different speech acts within a single caption to enhance versatility and audience engagement. Notably, expressive speech acts, particularly those conveying gratitude, were found to generate higher audience interaction, underscoring their effectiveness in strengthening relationships with followers. These findings align with and extend previous research on speech acts in digital communication, demonstrating their adaptability and effectiveness in nonprofit social media contexts. However, the study is limited in scope, focusing solely on Instagram and captions related to clean water projects. This narrow focus restricts the generalizability of the results to other social media platforms or organizational contexts.

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