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Imperative Mood in Banyumasan Javanese: A Contrastive Analysis with English from a Parallel Novel Corpus

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Abstract This study presents a contrastive analysis of Ahmad Tohari's novel *Ronggeng Dhukuh Paruk* and its English translation, *The Dancer*. Framed within Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), it examines the structural and morphological markers of the imperative mood in a parallel corpus of English and Banyumasan Javanese (JB), an under-documented dialect of Javanese. Data were collected through document analysis, including uninvolved conversation techniques and note-taking techniques. Data analysis employed referential and translational identity methods, supplemented by distributional analysis involving deletion and inversion techniques. The findings reveal that the examined JB corpus employs three predicator types: base verbs, passive verbs marked by *di-/de-*, and verbs suffixed with *-na/-a*, and exhibits five structural patterns. In contrast, the English corpus uses only base verbs and two patterns (positive and negative). JB's structurally distinctive features include passive-based and subject-retaining imperatives, both of which are absent in the English corpus. These findings contribute to typological studies of Western Austronesian mood systems and provide empirical data for refining descriptions of Javanese clause structure.

Keywords: *Imperative, Mood, Banyumasan Javanese, Contrastive analysis, Systemic functional grammar*

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1. Introduction

Banyumasan Javanese (JB) is spoken by approximately 12–15 million people in the western part of Central Java, Indonesia. Despite its large speaker population, JB remains one of the least documented major dialects of Javanese, particularly in terms of its grammatical structure. Among the features that distinguish JB from other Javanese varieties, and from typologically distant languages like English, is the imperative mood, which exhibits structural patterns that challenge universal assumptions about how commands are grammatically encoded.

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The comparative study of mood systems across languages provides insights into the semiotic organization of human languages. Translated texts, as realizations of similar meanings in different linguistic systems, offer a valuable window for such comparison. Previous researchers have successfully employed parallel corpora to investigate cross-linguistic differences in transitivity (Khristianto, 2015, 2018; Sun & Zhao, 2012), modality (Lian & Jiang, 2014; Mao et al., 2014), thematic structure (Lavid et al., 2009), and the translation of imperative mood forms across languages (Sigacheva & Ereemeva, 2025). In a broader context, a similar comparative approach has been applied to analyze the translation of imperative tone in Chinese and English advertising (Cui & Zhao, 2014), while methodological precedents for parallel corpus analysis have been established through detailed examination of subtitles in game localization (Khoshsaligheh et al., 2024). While these studies demonstrate the utility of parallel corpora for contrastive analysis, they do not focus on the structural and morphological markers of the imperative mood from a Systemic Functional Grammar perspective. Critically, no SFL-based contrastive study of the imperative mood has been conducted for any Austronesian language. Prior studies of imperatives in Austronesian languages, such as Siau (Gaghenggang, 2014) and Northern Amis (Storch & Dixon, 2022), have instead relied on structural, typological, or speech act frameworks, not SFL mood analysis.

The predominance of non-SFL frameworks observed in the broader Austronesian context is similarly reflected in the existing body of research on Javanese. Existing studies on Javanese imperatives have primarily employed formal (non-functional) structural or pragmatic approaches across various dialects, including Eastern Javanese (Nuryani, 2014; Purnami, 2016), Malang Javanese (Waqori, 2018), Solo Javanese (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019), and Banyumas Javanese (Rahadini & Suwarna, 2014). These studies have identified imperative markers such as specific suffixes *-a, -na, -ana, -en, -ake, -ke, -i,* and the confix *ka-/-na,* as well as the role of intonation and lexicon. However, recent studies on the pragmatic dimension of directives have shown a shift toward analyzing media interaction (Aini et al., 2023) and mobile gaming communication (Budiarta et al., 2024). These studies shed light on how speakers manage social relationships through directive speech acts in specific contexts, addressing questions about how politeness and social dynamics influence the use of directives. Building on this work, the present study complements pragmatic research by focusing on the grammatical apparatus itself: the clause structures and verbal morphology that express imperative meaning in JB, independently of particular politeness strategies. Thus, this study fills a descriptive gap concerning the functional resources that JB provides for forming imperatives. Moreover, in the context of JB, its structure differs from that of typologically distant languages such as English, especially when examined from a Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) perspective. Furthermore, previous SFL-based contrastive work on Javanese has focused on transitivity and modality (Khristianto, 2015), leaving a crucial site for cross-linguistic structural variation, namely the imperative mood largely unexplored.

To address these gaps, this study investigates three research questions: (1) What structural patterns characterize imperative mood clauses in JB? (2) What morphological markers distinguish the imperative mood from the declarative mood in JB? (3) How do JB imperative structures compare with those of English? By addressing these research questions, this study contributes to the linguistic literature in three ways. First, it provides the first systematic SFL-based description of JB imperative mood, establishing an empirical baseline for future research on this dialect. Second, by identifying passive-based and subject-retaining imperatives as structurally prominent features of JB, it challenges cross-linguistic assumptions regarding universal imperative prototypes, specifically, the presupposition that imperatives inherently lack overt subjects and are restricted to base verb forms (Aikhenvald, 2010). Third, it demonstrates the utility of parallel translated texts for contrastive mood analysis, offering a methodological contribution applicable to other under-documented language varieties.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG) (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), which views language as a system of meaning-making organized around three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The explanatory power of SFG extends across all three metafunctions. For instance, in a recent study of Arabic news and editorial texts, Arummi et al. (2026) demonstrated how the conjunction *fa* serves a textual function by organizing arguments (internal)

and sequencing events (external), thereby mitigating textual incoherence. Focusing specifically on the interpersonal metafunction, Risdianto et al. (2024) employed the SFL Appraisal framework to analyze how Indonesian news media construct ideology. Their analysis of attitude, engagement, and graduation in news texts about the state capital relocation reveals how lexical choices, alongside grammatical mood patterns, are used to align readers and disseminate ideological positions. Furthermore, recent studies have productively employed frameworks based on Halliday's (1985) SFG to analyze interpersonal meaning in literary and educational contexts. For example, Li (2025) analyzed undergraduate essays about literature and discovered that more proficient writers utilize Appreciation and Engagement resources to interpret potential meanings, while also using Graduation resources to convey subtle nuances. Similarly, Van (2025) demonstrates how abstract qualities of literary interpretation, such as theme, can be seen in students' specific language choices. These findings demonstrate how lexical choices and grammatical mood patterns are used to align readers and disseminate ideological positions. In children's literature, Ashraf et al. (2026) investigated the interpersonal portrayal of characters in English textbooks for grades 5–8, using pronouns, mood, and modality as analytical points. The study revealed patterns of inclusion and marginalization that reflect dominant ideologies and underlying power structures.

While these studies demonstrate the breadth of SFL applications across metafunctions, the present study focuses specifically on the interpersonal metafunction, as it is the primary locus of mood realization, including the imperative. More specifically, the interpersonal metafunction, concerned with social relations and speaker attitudes, is primarily realized through the Mood system. The application of SFL mood analysis to parallel texts has been demonstrated in recent studies of religious and literary translation; for instance, Otay et al. (2025) analyzed the distribution of declarative, imperative, and interrogative moods across two English translations of Quranic narratives, revealing translator-specific tendencies in rendering imperative force that align with the theoretical framework employed here. In SFL, the Mood element of a clause consists of two elements: Subject and Finite. The Finite typically encodes tense (in languages that grammaticalize it), modality, or polarity. However, because Javanese (like Indonesian) does not grammaticalize tense, the elements forming the Mood in JB consist of the Subject plus Modality/Polarity (Santosa, 2021). This structural flexibility of subjects in Javanese has historical precedents. Erawati and Sulibra (2022) demonstrate that Old Javanese exhibited considerable variation in the grammatical roles and positions of subjects across clause types, suggesting a long-standing typological tendency in Javanese to treat subjects as optional or pragmatically conditioned rather than grammatically obligatory. This tendency is directly relevant to the imperative mood, which typically lacks an overt subject in its unmarked form. Together with passive-based imperatives, this structural possibility constitutes a typological feature that distinguishes JB from English.

The imperative mood is characterized, in its unmarked form, by the absence of a Mood element. A typical imperative consists only of a Residue, with the Predicator serving as its nuclear constituent (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). For example, the declarative clause *You go home* has a Mood (Subject *you* + Finite [implied present]) and a Residue (Predicator *go* + Complement *home*). Its imperative counterpart, *Go home!*, has no Mood; it consists only of the Residue. However, as this study will show, JB permits marked imperative structures where Mood elements appear, particularly with the second-person subject *ko* ('you'). This structural possibility constitutes a typological feature that distinguishes JB from English.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employs a qualitative contrastive research design situated within the framework of SFL. The primary analytical focus is on mood structure as the realization of interpersonal meaning, following the model developed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). The contrastive dimension allows for systematic comparison between the imperative mood systems of JB and English using parallel textual data.

3.2. Data Source

The primary data source is the novel *Ronggeng Dhukuh Paruk* in two versions: the original (Tohari, 2006), comprising 312 pages published by Yayasan Swarahati (Purwokerto), and its English translation,

The Dancer (Tohari, 2012), comprising 478 pages published by Lontar (Jakarta). This parallel text was selected for four main reasons. First, it represents naturalistic, connected discourse rather than elicited or constructed sentences, thus preserving authentic imperative usage. Second, the JB version consists of an original composition in the Banyumasan dialect, ensuring that the linguistic features are genuinely representative of JB. Third, the English translation maintains close semantic alignment with the JB original while allowing structural comparison across two typologically distinct languages. Fourth, the narrative genre provides a wide range of imperative types, which include direct commands, requests, and prohibitions, occurring in natural discourse contexts, which enhances the ecological validity of the analysis.

3.3. Procedure

3.3.1. Data Collection

Data were collected through document analysis of the novel *Ronggeng Dhukuh Paruk* and its English translation, *The Dancer*. All imperative clauses were identified through systematic reading and extracted using a note-taking procedure. Data collection followed the document analysis method (*metode simak*) as described in Sudaryanto (2016) and Zaim (2018), employing two complementary techniques. The first technique is reading/listening without participation (*simak bebas libat cakap*), in which the researchers read both texts in their entirety and identified all clauses with imperative speech function based on contextual cues such as directive force, response-eliciting function, and the presence of overt imperative markers. The second technique is note-taking (*teknik catat*), whereby each identified imperative clause was extracted from the text together with approximately three preceding and three following clauses to preserve co-textual information. Each extracted clause was then coded for its clause type and entered into a structured spreadsheet database for subsequent analysis.

Inclusion criteria were applied to ensure data relevance and analytical consistency. A clause was included in the corpus if it (a) functioned as a directive or command in its immediate discourse context; (b) contained a verbal predicator; and (c) could be independently analyzed for its mood structure. Conversely, three types of clauses were excluded: formulaic expressions, elliptical responses lacking any verbal element, and reported imperatives occurring within quotative frames. The example of a formulaic expression excluded from analysis is "*Matur nuwun*" ["Thank you"], which is a fixed polite formula rather than a productive imperative clause. An example of an elliptical response excluded for lacking a verbal predicator is "*Ya*" ["Yes"], uttered in reply to a question. Finally, a reported imperative excluded because it is embedded within a quotative frame is "... *sing ngomong nek kowe kudu teka*" ["... who said that you must come"].

The methodological approach of combining document analysis with distributional analysis follows established practices in Javanese discourse studies. Nardiati et al. (2025) similarly employed listening methods and direct element techniques to identify linguistic markers of semantic relations in Javanese announcement discourse, validating the use of these techniques for morphosyntactic analysis of Javanese. The final corpus comprises 180 imperative clauses in JB and 163 imperative clauses in English. The numerical discrepancy between the two language versions arises from translation strategies commonly employed in literary translation, including omission (an imperative becomes a declarative). For example, the JB imperative "*Delengna baen*" ["You'll see"] translates to the English declarative "You'll see", which lacks the imperative mood. Therefore, this clause is not counted as an imperative in English. This illustrates how the same speech function can be expressed through different mood structures across languages, which in turn directly affects clause counts. However, these discrepancies do not affect structural comparisons, because the analysis focuses on the presence or absence of grammatical patterns in each language (e.g., whether passive imperatives occur in JB at all), rather than on frequency equivalence.

3.3.2. Data Analysis

The analysis proceeded in three sequential phases, each building on the results of the previous phase.

Phase 1. Structural identification: Each JB imperative clause was analyzed for its mood structure following the SFL model (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014), with the adaptation proposed by Santosa (2021) for tenseless languages such as Javanese. This phase involved identifying the Mood and Residue

constituents of each clause. Within these constituents, the functions of Subject, Finite/Polarity, Predicator, Complement, and Adjunct (where present) were specified.

Phase 2. Morphological analysis: Verbs occupying the Predicator position in imperative clauses were subjected to morphological analysis using immediate constituent analysis (Sudaryanto, 2016). The analysis focused on affixation patterns, including the presence of prefixes *di-* and *de-* (passive markers), suffixes *-na* and *-a*, and any combinations thereof. Each affix was examined for its contribution to the imperative meaning and its distribution across different verb types. To determine the semantic functions of the suffix *-na* (benefactive, causative, and intentionality), a three-step procedure was followed. First, the primary author, who is a native speaker of JB, proposed an initial functional classification based on contrastive pairs (e.g., "*weh"* meaning "give" vs. *wehna* meaning "give for someone's benefit"). Second, two additional native JB speakers (both raised in the Banyumas region and daily users of the dialect) were asked to judge the meaning difference between each base verb and its suffixed counterpart in imperative contexts. Each judge was presented with the verb pairs in isolation and in short imperative clauses. Third, any disagreements were resolved through discussion. Furthermore, the distribution of the passive prefixes *de-* and *di-* across phonetic environments was examined by coding the initial sound of the verb stem following each prefix in all 19 passive imperative clauses in the corpus.

Phase 3. Contrastive analysis: Each JB imperative clause was compared with its parallel clause in the English version of the novel. This comparison employed referential and translational identity methods (Zaim, 2018), which systematically align clauses that share the same referential content across languages, allowing the analyst to identify structural correspondences as well as systematic divergences in the realization of the imperative mood.

Finally, to ensure the reliability and validity of the analytical outcomes, three validation procedures were implemented. First, a deletion test was applied to candidate imperative markers, whereby a putative marker (such as the suffix *-na* or the subject *ko*) was removed to observe whether the clause retained its imperative meaning. This test helped distinguish obligatory markers from optional or emphatic elements. Second, an inversion test was conducted, in which clause constituents were systematically reordered to determine whether changes in constituent position affected the mood interpretation. This test helped identify structural constraints specific to the imperative mood. Third, peer debriefing was carried out with two independent analysts, both PhDs in linguistics. These analysts coded a random sample of 37 clauses (20% of the JB corpus) using the same analytical framework. Inter-rater agreement for structural classification was calculated at 89.2%, indicating a high level of analytical consistency.

4. Results

In the analyzed parallel corpus, English has only two structural variations of the imperative: those using the base form of the verb (V1 or infinitive) and prohibitive imperatives introduced by don't. The English language also has embedded imperatives, which are declarative clauses that convey imperative meaning (e.g., "You'll see," "You had better"). Therefore, these are not counted as imperative data in the English corpus. In contrast, JB has five distinct structural patterns, as shown in Table 1: base verb imperatives (active, no subject); imperatives with the suffix *-na/-a* (no subject); active imperatives with an overt second-person subject *ko*; passive imperatives without an overt subject; and passive imperatives with an overt subject. This implies that the imperative structure of JB exhibits greater diversity than that of English. To maintain a controlled analytical scope, this study focuses solely on the mentioned positive imperative constructions and does not address prohibitive types in either language. Table 1 presents the distribution of imperative types in the JB corpus.

Table 1
Markers of the Imperative Mood in JB (N=180) vs. English (N=163)

Imperative Type (JB)	N	%
Base verb (active, no subject)	88	49%
Verb + *-na*/*-a* (no subject)	62	34%
Active verb with subject (*ko*)	11	6%

Passive verb, no subject	12	7%
Passive verb with subject	7	4%
Total	180	100%
Imperative Type (English)	**N**	**%**
Positive (base verb)	142	87%
Negative (don't + base verb)	21	13%
Total	163	100%

For comparison, the English parallel corpus contains no passive, suffix-based, or subject-retaining imperatives. All 163 imperative clauses in the English corpus use base verb forms: 142 are positive imperatives (87%), and 21 are negative imperatives introduced by don't (13%). While English grammar theoretically has first-person inclusive imperative via *let's* constructions (e.g., Let's go!) and emphatic formulations via the auxiliary *do* (e.g., Do come in!), these structures did not occur in the corpus. This absence is highly attributable to the specific narrative genre of the source of the text, where directives are addressed to specific second-person addressees rather than to a group including the speaker or with added emphasis. All imperative clauses in the corpus use base verb forms, including the negative "don't". This is consistent with English's structural restrictions, which generally do not permit passive imperatives (e.g., "Be killed!") and allow overt subjects only in marked, emphatic contexts (e.g., "You be quiet!"), which are absent from this corpus. In the following subsections, each identified type of imperative mood is discussed, with reference to its counterpart in the English version, and analyzed from the perspective of functional grammar.

4.1. Imperative with Base Verb (Active, No Subject)

The imperative type using base verbs is the conventional form of the imperative. This form can be found in Indonesian, Javanese, and English and likely applies to most languages within the Austronesian family. The basic form of the imperative mood is a verb serving as the Predicator positioned at the absolute clause-initial position. For example, the declarative mood clause *Dia pergi* ['He/She goes'] can be transformed into an imperative by isolating its Predicator: *Pergi!* ['Go!']. Table 2 presents several examples of imperative clauses using base verbs.

Table 2
Imperative Clause with Base Verb

Imperative JB	**English Imperative**
"Srin, teplak pipimu sing tengen. Ana lemude."	*Srin, slap that mosquito on your right cheek.*
"Njikot cawik loro,"	*"Get me two glasses."*
Nganah bali.	*Yeah, now go home!*
"Ayuh lawan inyong, Dower bocah Pecikalan!"	*"Come out and face me!"*
"Njajal nembang, kaya biasane."	*"Sing something, like you always do."*

Example (1) illustrates the structure:

(1)	*Srin*	*teplak*	*pipimu sing tengen*
	Srin	slap	your right cheek
	Vocative	Predicator (P)	Complement (Comp.)
	Residue		

It is evident that the imperatives in both languages share the same structure. The clause begins with a vocative followed by the Predicator (P) in the form of a base verb. In terms of Mood structure, such a clause consists solely of the Residue; it has no Mood. The constituents forming the Mood are the Subject and Modality/Polarity, neither of which is present.

As explained by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), the Mood element serves as the core constituent of the clause, functioning as the grammatical manifestation of verbal interaction. In the English system,

Mood is structurally constituted by the Subject and the Finite (S+F), with the latter encoding Tense, Modality, or Polarity. Conversely, because Javanese does not grammaticalize tense, the Mood elements in JB are adaptively formed by the Subject combined with Modality/Polarity (Santosa, 2021).

Both languages exhibit an identical imperative structure using the base form of the verb without any Mood element, consisting only of the Predicator. This construction is referred to as the "unmarked positive" imperative type, as it is the typical form in English. Its primary characteristic is that it contains no Mood element (Subject + Modality/Polarity), leaving the Predicator to serve as the main marker of the imperative mood. This type also constitutes the most frequent form of the imperative mood in the JB corpus (47% of the corpus). As seen in the analysis of Example (2), the structure in both JB and English consists of a Predicator and a Complement.

(2) Jav. *Njikot* *cawik loro*
Eng. trans. *Get* *me two glasses*
P Comp. (Client + Goal)

In terms of verb type, this structure applies to both transitive and intransitive verbs (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019). In Javanese, the imperative mood is sometimes marked by imperative indicators such as *ayuh* ['let's/come on'] and *(n)jajal* ['try'], which are also found in the Solo-Yogyakarta (Eastern) dialect of Javanese, with the words *ayo* ['let's/come on'], *sumangga* ['please', polite], *mangga* ['please', go ahead], and *coba* ['try'] (Nuryani, 2014). JB also possesses the imperative indicator *mangga* ['please'] in a more polite variant, or even *sumangga* ['please', highly polite] in the *krama inggil* (high respect) register. These imperative indicators are merely additive and do not determine whether a structure is of imperative mood or otherwise. Even if such words are omitted, the imperative meaning remains intact.

4.2. Imperative with Verb Suffixed *-na*/*-a* (No Subject)

This type is structurally identical to the base verb imperative, with the Predicator serving as the imperative device, and no Mood elements present. What distinguishes this type is the morphological form of the verb, which is not a base verb but rather a verb with the addition of the suffix *-na* or *-a*. The same findings have been identified by Nuryani (2014) using data from the Eastern dialect of Javanese, which possesses more than two allomorphs of the suffix *-na*, such as *-ana*, as well as another suffix with a similar function, *-en*, as in the word *gawanen* ['just bring'].

Table 3
Imperatives with Verbs Suffixed -na

Imperative with suffix *-na*	**English Imperative Version**
"Wehna sing lewih akeh angger pancon ko sugih,"	*"Give him more, if you're so rich!"*
"Rasus, rungokna.	*Rasus. Listen, they're fighting over there.*
"Delengna baen."	*You'll see.**
Delengna!	*"You, people. Open your eyes.*
Critakna, Rasus. Critakna.	*Tell me, Rasus.*
inyong petna godhong mbawang baen.	*But if you want, you could get me some mango leaves.*
Ari pancen ko kabeh padha arep modar, modara!	*You wanna die, go ahead and die!*
"Ayuh, bocah bagus, padha njagonga maning kaya maune."	*I want you to sit quietly for a while*

*The English version uses a declarative clause (*You'll see*) to convey directive meaning; this is not counted as an imperative in the English corpus.

Example (3) illustrates the structure:

(3) *Rasus* *rungokna*
Voc. P (suffixed verb)
Residue

This imperative structure exhibits structural parallelism between JB and English, as each language employs the Predicator as the primary element, consisting only of the Residue without Mood. This indicates that, in addition to base verbs, JB sometimes requires affixed verbs to function in the imperative mood. For example, the verb *rungokna* [‘listen’] is derived from the base verb *krungu* [‘to hear’], as this base form does not inherently carry imperative meaning.

Furthermore, a fundamental typological departure between the two languages is illustrated in the cross-linguistic alignment of Example (4).

(4)	*inyong*	*petna*	*godhong mbawang*	*baen*
	I	get (imp.)	mango leaves	just
	S	P	Comp.	Adv.
	Mood	Residue		

In the JB clause, the explicit Subject *inyong* [‘I’] functions as the Patient (indirect object) of the activity expressed by the Predicate. The second person (addressee) in this clause is implied but not overt. This differs from the English clause, in which the second person *you* is mentioned as the Subject and a modal *could* appears. Consequently, the English structure is not an imperative but a modulated declarative—a declarative mood interspersed with a Modal element conveying the meaning of a command (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014).

Not all suffixes *-na* share the same meaning and function. Table 4 categorizes the semantic functions of the suffix in the data.

Table 4
Semantic Functions of Suffix -na/-a in JB Imperatives

Base verb	Suffixed form	Semantic change	Function	Example
weh [‘give’]	*wehna*	Benefactive	request action for another’s benefit	‘give (to someone)’
Krungu [‘hear’]	*rungokna*	Stative → intentional	change from unintentional to intentional	‘listen’
modar [‘be dead’]	*modara*	Stative → causative	cause a change of state	‘kill/drop dead’
pet [‘pick’]	*petna*	Benefactive	request action for another’s benefit	‘pick (for someone)’
deleng [‘see/look’]	*delengna*	Emphatic	no semantic change; emphasis only	‘look!’
njagong [‘sit’]	*njagonga*	Emphatic	no semantic change; emphasis only	‘Sit down!’

The words *wehna* [‘give’], *rungokna* [‘listen’], and *critakna* [‘tell’] are similar to *modara* [‘drop dead’] in that the suffixes *-na* and *-a* both function as imperative morphemes or convert base verbs into imperative verbs. Without the suffix *-na*, these verbs cannot serve as Predicators in an imperative mood clause:

**Aweh duwit sing akeh* (not imperative)
**Krungu brita radio* (not imperative)

The above clauses read as declarative moods lacking a Subject element. In terms of meaning, the suffix *-na* conveys performing an action denoted by the base verb for the benefit of another person, as in the words *weh* [‘give’], *pet* [‘pick’], and *crita* [‘tell’]. The word *pet* [‘pick’] can function as an imperative without suffix *Pet baen godhonge!* [‘Pick the leaves!’], but the meaning differs; it requests the performance of the action without the meaning ‘for another person.’

With the verb *rungokna* [‘listen’], the suffix changes the meaning of the verb from a static/state action to an intentional action. The static meaning ‘to hear’ [*krungu*] changes to ‘to listen’ [*ngrungokna*], intentional, with the imperative form *rungokna* [‘listen’]. The imperative verb *rungokna* can be replaced by its passive form, *dirungokna* [‘to be listened to’], with an equivalent meaning. The function of

changing from stative to intentional is also evident from the suffix *-a* in the word *modara* [‘die’], derived from the stative verb *modar* [‘dead’]. *Modar* is a coarse variant of *mati* [‘dead’]. However, *modara* is not identical to *modarna*. The word *modarna* [‘kill’] means ‘to cause someone to die’ or is equivalent to the imperative verb ‘kill.’ Both *modarna* and *rungokna* can be replaced by their passive forms (*dimodarna*, *dirungokna*), which can be used in either passive declarative clauses or imperative clauses, with a difference in structure.

For the verbs *delengna* [‘look’], *njagonga* [‘sit down’], and *petna* [‘pick for someone’], the suffixes do not determine the imperative nature. The words *ndeleng* [‘look’] and *njagong* [‘sit’] can be used as imperative verbs with the same meaning. The suffixes on these two verbs may simply function as emphasis. The distribution of the suffix -na/-a across different verb types reveals that it serves a dual function depending on the lexical semantics of the base verb. For stative or unintentional verbs such as krungu [‘hear’] → rungokna [‘listen’] and modar [‘be dead’] → modara [‘drop dead/kill’], the suffix is obligatory to transform the verb from a non-volitional state into a volitional, directive act. Without the suffix, these base forms cannot serve as Predicators in imperative clauses (e.g., Krungu brita radio! is not interpreted as a command). In such cases, the suffix functions as a true morphological marker of the imperative mood. However, for inherently dynamic and volitional verbs such as ndeleng [‘look’] and njagong [‘sit’], the base forms already carry imperative force. For these verbs, the addition of -na/-a is optional and primarily serves to add emphasis, politeness, or a benefactive nuance rather than to mark the mood itself. This lexical conditioning explains why the suffix does not uniformly determine the imperative nature across all verbs. Consequently, while -na/-a is a robust morphological marker of the imperative for a significant subset of JB verbs (statives/intentionality-changing), it functions as an optional emphatic or pragmatic marker for others. This duality does not invalidate the overall claim of morphological marking; rather, it refines it by specifying the lexical contexts in which the suffix is grammaticalized as a mood marker.

4.3. Imperative with Active Verb and Overt Subject (*ko*)

An imperative structure containing a Subject element is also found in English, referred to as the “marked person imperative” (imperative with a marked subject), as in *You take the bag!* (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). As the term “marked” suggests, this structure is unconventional and indeed highly uncommon in English imperatives. Based on data exploration, not a single English imperative mood in the corpus exhibited an imperative structure beginning with the second-person *you*. This stands in stark contrast to the facts observed in JB.

Table 5
Imperatives with Subject in JB

JB	English Version
Ko bali baen	*And you had better go home too.*
Ya, siki ko bali nganah	*Yeah, now go home!*
Ningen ko aja kementhus	*Well, don’t get too cocky.*

(5)	*Ko*	*bali*	*baen*	
	you	go home	just	
	S	P	Adv.	
	Mood	Residue		
(6)	*Ningen*	*ko*	*aja*	*kementhus*
	But	you	do not	be arrogant
	Conj.	S	Pol. (-)	P
		Mood	Residue	

The JB clauses (5, 6) each exhibit an imperative interspersed with a Subject, specifically the second person as the target of address, *ko* (‘you,’ singular). Both are formed by a complete Mood structure consisting of a Subject followed by Polarity (+), or by *aja* (‘do not’) for Polarity (−). This imperative

mood becomes clearly evident when compared with the English version (6), which conveys the same meaning in the form of a negative imperative.

The presence of a second-person Subject in these imperative clauses is a variation of the conventional imperative structure. No new meaning is produced by including this Subject. In the English version, these clauses use a conventional imperative structure, a "typical imperative", except for the first sentence. In English, the first sentence appears as a declarative clause carrying a proposal meaning, or as an interpersonal metaphor. Its structure is declarative, but it carries directive meaning. If the Subject in the JB imperative is omitted, the meaning remains identical and intact: *Bali baen!* ['just go home'], *Siki bali nganah!* ['go home now'], and *Ningen aja kementhus!* ['But don't be arrogant']. These three imperatives, without the Subject element, already constitute perfect imperative moods, with no loss of meaning whatsoever. Thus, the addition of the Subject can be considered a mere variation, and this structure is conventional in JB (10% of the corpus).

Nevertheless, the command meaning of the imperative structure with a Subject only emerges with a second-person Subject. To demonstrate this, consider the following sentences:

a) *Inyong arep ngibing maning.* ['I want to dance again'] – declarative
a1) *Ko ngibing maning ngesuk!* ['You dance again tomorrow'] – imperative
a2) *Rasus ngibing maning ngesuk.* ['Rasus dances again tomorrow') – declarative
e) *Ya. Siki Ko bali nganah!* ['Yes, now you go home'] – imperative
e1) *Inyong bali siki.* ['I am going home now'] – declarative
e2) *Rasus ngesuk bali.* ['Rasus will go home tomorrow'] – declarative

Upon close examination, the determining factor for a sentence to be interpreted as an imperative is the second-person Subject *ko* ['you']. Sentence (a), originally declarative, becomes imperative when the first-person Subject *inyong* ['I'] is replaced with the second-person Subject *ko* in sentence (a1), while sentence (a2) remains declarative with a third-person Subject (*Rasus*). The opposite modification is observed in sentence (e): when its Subject is changed from second person to first person (e1) and to third person (e2), the sentence becomes declarative.

The above JB imperative structure is not the only type. JB also possesses imperatives that are identical to the English version, consisting of a verb without an overt Subject, with an implied second-person addressee:

g) *Ngomong baen ya.* ['Just say it'/'Admit it']
h) *Wis, ora usah nggolet alesan sing ora-ora* ['Enough, no need to look for strange excuses' / 'Don't make up excuses']
i) *Critakna, Rasus. Critakna* ['Tell me, Rasus. Convey it to me']

These JB imperative sentences are structurally equivalent to their English counterparts. However, JB can package imperatives using other structures that are not possible in English. Furthermore, even if the JB imperative sentences above are supplemented with a second-person Subject (such as *ko*, *rika*, *kon* 'you'), their speech function does not change and remains natural in JB:

j) *Rika ngomong baen ya* ['You just go ahead and speak']
k) *Wis, ko ora usah nggolet alesan sing ora-ora* ['Enough, you don't need to look for all kinds of excuses']

It appears that verb forms with the suffix *-na* are not conventional or natural when following the Subject *ko* ('you'), as they carry the meaning of 'a command to perform the action denoted by the base verb.' For example, *tabokna* ['slap'], *gawakna* ['bring'], *rungokna* ['listen']. Thus, the suffix morpheme serves a determining function in the formation of imperative sentences in JB.

4.4. Passive Imperative without Overt Subject

Another type of imperative clause in JB is the imperative mood employing passive verbs, marked by the prefix *di-* or its allomorph *de-*. In JB, the prefix *de-* appears to be the primary allomorph, as evidenced by its wider distribution across diverse articulatory environments. The prefix *di-* occurs only

before the vowel /e/ in *dikemutan* [‘to be remembered/reminded’] and before /ə/ in *diengon* [‘to be herded/grazed’], whereas the prefix *de-* appears before /i/, /a/, and /e/. Nevertheless, both share the same function and meaning. This passive imperative finding is also attested in the Eastern dialect of Javanese, marked by various affixes, including the suffixes *-en*, *-na*, and the prefix *di-* (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019).

Table 6
Passive Imperatives without Subject in JB

Passive Imperative JB	English Version
Ora apa-apa. [Gari deteplak baen.]	*That’s all right. [Go on, kill it.]*
[Dekemutan], Srinthil esih enom pisan.	*[Remember that] Srintil is still very young*
[Diemut-emut] sing temenan.	*[Think] carefully.*

Example (7) shows the structure:

(7)	*Gari*	*deteplak*	*baen*
	just	slap (passive)	please
		P (passive verb)	

The verbs in JB are all in the passive form, indicated by the prefix *de-* or *di-*. Meanwhile, the English counterparts are consistently realized by base verbs. English does not possess an imperative structure employing passive verbs. In terms of structure, the passive imperative shares similarities with the declarative passive structure and is sometimes accompanied by imperative indicators such as *jajal* [‘try’], *gari* [‘just’], and possibly also preceded by *ayuh* [‘let’s/come on’] or *mangga* [‘please’], as in *mangga desambi!* [‘Please, taste it’].

The absence of passive imperatives in English follows from the structural requirements of its passive voice, which necessitates the auxiliary *be.* For instance, “*Be killed!* is ungrammatical as a passive imperative because *be* introduces a Finite element that creates a Mood structure, and the imperative mood, in its unmarked form, disallows Mood. JB passive imperatives circumvent this constraint because the language lacks tense auxiliaries; thus, the passive prefix attaches directly to the verb stem without introducing a separate Finite element.

This kind of imperative appears to be derived from a passive structure. The imperatives tend to be elided from their corresponding declarative clauses of the passive variant, as shown in Example (8).

(8)	Source declarative	*Lemude gari deteplak baen*
		[‘The mosquito just be slapped please’]
	Imperative	*Gari deteplak baen*
		[‘Just slap it (passive) please’]

4.5. Passive Imperative with Overt Subject

A final type of imperative clause in JB is realized in a declarative structure of passive voice. Similar to the passive forms of verbs in Section 4.4, the verbs in this variant are also marked by the prefix *di-* or its allomorph *de-*. However, they are used in a complete declarative structure with the presence of Subject and Polarity. The Subject *inyong* [‘I’] and *wedhusmu* [‘your goat’] are seen in the clauses displayed in Table 7. Their polarity is mostly positive, as indicated by a zero marker. A negative polarity is found in a clause, marked by the adjunct *aja* (similar in meaning to *don’t*).

The negative marker ‘*aja*’ is a clear indication that the clause is indeed an imperative. Otherwise, the clause would take other negative polarity markers, either *ora* [‘not’] or *dudu* [‘not’]. Both are used as negative markers in declarative and interrogative structures in JB. The former is used for clauses with a verb predicator in an action process, and in a relational process when the attribute is an adjective or an adverb; the latter is used only in a relational process with the attribute of a noun. Another imperative feature is also evident from the use of the adjunct *jajal* [‘try’].

Table 7
Passive Imperatives with Subject in JB

Passive Imperative JB	**English Version**
Rasus, jajal inyong decritani prekara keris kae.	*Rasus, please tell me about the keris.*
Inyong aja deganggu.	*Don't bother me.*
Inyong debatiri.	*keep me company.*
...wedhusmu diengon.	*... look after your goats.*

Examples (9) and (10) exhibit different imperative structures. English consistently demonstrates a monotonous structure, with the Predicator (P) as the primary element forming the imperative, such that the clause contains only the Residue. Even in the negative imperative (prohibition), although a Finite element *don't* appears, it lacks a Subject and therefore does not form a complete Mood.

(9)	*Rasus*	*jajal*	*inyong*	*decritani*	*prekara keris kae*
	Rasus	try	me	told about (passive)	that keris
	Voc		S	P (passive)	Comp.
	Residue		Mood	Residue	

(10)	*Inyong*	*aja*	*deganggu*
	S	Pol. (-)	P (passive)
	Mood	Residue	

By contrast, JB exhibits a structure similar to the declarative mood, featuring the presence of Subject + Polarity, including in the negative imperative *aja deganggu* ['do not disturb']. Another characteristic of this declarative-like imperative is the use of a passive verb as the Predicator (e.g., *decritani* ['to be told/recounted']; *deganggu* ['to be disturbed']. This indicates that, in JB, some imperative structures take a declarative-like form, which is also marked by words such as *jajal* ['try'] and *aja* ['do not'].

In comparison, English imperative structures are uniformly realized with base verb forms. English does not possess an imperative structure employing passive verbs. Structurally, the passive imperative shares similarities with the declarative passive structure and is sometimes accompanied by imperative indicators. Furthermore, some of these passive imperatives also appear without a Subject, consisting solely of the Predicator (as shown in Section 4.4). Table 8 demonstrates that the passive imperative can be replaced by its active counterpart in JB, confirming that the choice of this imperative form serves to highlight specific information (foregrounding the Patient). It also indicates that the passive imperative in JB is a conventional and optional construction.

Table 8
Modification of Passive Imperative vs. Active Imperative

JB Passive Imperative	**Active Imperative**
Inyong aja deganggu. ['I should not be disturbed.']	*Aja ngganggu inyong* ['Do not disturb me.']
Inyong debatiri. ['I am accompanied.']	*Batiri inyong* ['Accompany me.']
wedhusmu diengon. ['Your goat is herded.']	*Angon wedhusmu.* ['Herder your goat.']

5. Discussion

This study aimed to identify the structural and morphological markers of the imperative mood in JB by conducting a contrastive analysis with English using a parallel corpus of the novel *Ronggeng Dhukuh Paruk* and its English translation, *The Dancer*. The findings demonstrate that JB uses three types of predicators (base verbs, passive verbs marked by *di-/de-*, and verbs suffixed with *-na/-a*) and five structural patterns. In contrast, the English parallel corpus contains only base-verb imperatives (positive and negative) and no passive, suffix-based, or subject-retaining imperatives. These results challenge the assumption that imperatives universally lack overt subjects and are restricted to base verb forms, as JB allows both subject-retaining and passive-based imperatives. We now discuss each research question in turn.

The analysis identified five distinct structural patterns in JB: (1) base verb (active, no subject), (2) verb + *-na/-a* (no subject), (3) active verb with overt second-person subject *ko*, (4) passive verb without overt subject, and (5) passive verb with overt subject. The base-verb pattern (Type 1) is the most frequent, followed by the suffixed pattern (Type 2). The subject-retaining patterns (Types 3 and 5) and the passive without a subject (Type 4) collectively account for 17% of the corpus. These patterns are not arbitrary: they reflect JB's typological preference for treating subjects as optional and for using passive morphology to encode directive force. This structural diversity is absent from the English corpus, which contains only the base-verb pattern in positive and negative forms. While English grammar theoretically permits a marked subject imperative (e.g., You be quiet!), this construction did not occur in the novel, consistent with the narrative genre where most directives are directed at a specific second-person addressee without emphasis. Thus, the corpus-based claim that English has only two patterns is empirically valid for this dataset, though it does not deny the existence of a third pattern in other registers.

JB employs three types of predicators: base verbs, passive verbs prefixed with *di-/de-*, and verbs suffixed with *-na/-a*. The passive prefixes are unambiguous markers: they appear in both declarative and imperative clauses, but when the subject is omitted and the clause is used as a directive, they signal a passive imperative. The suffix *-na/-a* presents a more complex picture. For stative or unintentional verbs such as *krungu* ('hear') → *rungokna* ('listen') and *modar* ('be dead') → *modara* ('drop dead/kill'), the suffix is obligatory to convey an imperative meaning; without it, the base form cannot function as a directive. For these verbs, *-na/-a* unequivocally serves as a morphological marker of the imperative mood. In contrast, for inherently dynamic and volitional verbs such as *ndeleng* ('look') and *njagong* ('sit'), the base form already carries imperative force, and the addition of *-na/-a* is optional, serving primarily to add emphasis, politeness, or a benefactive nuance. Thus, the suffix is not a uniform marker across all verbs; its morphological status is conditioned by the lexical semantics of the base verb. This lexical conditioning does not invalidate the claim that *-na/-a* is a morphological marker of imperative mood; rather, it refines the claim by specifying the contexts in which it is grammaticalized as a mood marker. This understanding aligns with previous findings on Javanese suffixes (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019; Nuryani, 2014; Purnami, 2016), while extending those studies by providing a semantic-functional classification of the suffix's diverse roles.

The contrastive analysis reveals three major divergences between JB and English. First, JB allows passive-based imperatives (both with and without overt subjects), whereas English does not permit passive imperatives because the auxiliary be would introduce a Finite element incompatible with the imperative mood (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Second, JB routinely includes the overt second-person subject *ko* in imperatives, whereas English does so only in marked, emphatic contexts, a pattern absent from the novel. Third, and most significantly, the two languages differ in their congruent vs. metaphorical realizations of directive meaning. In the JB corpus, directives are predominantly encoded through the imperative mood (congruent realisation), with 180 imperative clauses. However, the English translation frequently resorts to declarative clauses to convey the same directive force. For example, the JB imperative *Delengna baen* ('You'll see') is rendered as the declarative *You'll see*; similarly, *Ko bali baen* ('You go home') becomes the declarative You had better go home. This cross-linguistic shift is a clear instance of interpersonal metaphor (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014): a declarative clause is used to realise a directive speech function, thereby expressing the command indirectly. The presence of such metaphors in English, alongside the absence of comparable metaphors in JB, suggests that JB relies more heavily on congruent grammatical encoding of directives, whereas English frequently opts for interpersonal metaphors, particularly in narrative discourse where the author may choose to soften directives or embed them in character thought. This finding extends the earlier observation by Cui and Zhao (2014) on advertising to literary translation and underscores the utility of parallel corpus analysis for uncovering cross-linguistic differences in mood realisation.

A striking finding of this study is that the presence of the second-person subject *ko* is the determining factor for a clause to be interpreted as an imperative. When the subject is first-person (*inyong*) or third-person (a proper name), the clause is unequivocally declarative, as shown in the minimal pairs in Section 4.3. This finding aligns with the typological observation that Javanese subjects are optional and pragmatically conditioned (Erawati & Sulibra, 2022), but it also reveals a grammatical constraint: only a second-person subject can co-occur with imperative force in an active verb construction. This person

restriction is not a feature of English imperatives, where overt subjects are rare and never grammatically required. The robustness of this restriction in JB suggests that the imperative mood is not merely a matter of verb form but interacts with the person feature of the Subject, reinforcing the SFL principle that Mood and Subject are interdependent.

Previous studies on Javanese imperatives (Ariviani & Warsitadipura, 2019; Nuryani, 2014; Purnami, 2016) primarily identified morphological markers such as suffixes *-a*, *-na*, and *-en*, as well as the prefix *di-*. The present study confirms these morphological findings but extends them by systematically describing the structural patterns in which these markers occur, including passive and subject-retaining constructions. This structural description is novel for JB and addresses a gap in the SFL-based contrastive literature. Moreover, the semantic classification of the suffix *-na/-a* into benefactive, causative, intention-changing, and emphatic functions, while noting that the emphatic function is optional for some verbs, provides a more nuanced account than previous studies that treated all suffixes as uniform imperative markers. This refinement is essential because it acknowledges that not all occurrences of *-na/-a* are imperative markers; the interpretation depends on the lexical semantics of the verb and the presence of other clause elements. Thus, the present study both corroborates and enriches the existing literature on Javanese imperatives.

The findings have implications for typological studies of mood in Western Austronesian languages, as they challenge the universal claim that imperatives lack overt subjects (Aikhenvald, 2010) and demonstrate that passive-based imperatives are a viable structural option in languages without tense auxiliaries. They also support the adaptation of SFL to tenseless languages (Santosa, 2021) by showing how the absence of Finite auxiliaries allows for structural possibilities not available in English. However, the study's reliance on a single novel limits generalisability. Future research should examine multi-genre corpora, including spoken JB, to determine the frequency and distribution of these patterns across registers. Additionally, experimental acceptability judgments could test the productivity of passive and subject-retaining imperatives beyond the novel's textual evidence.

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All the data generated and/or analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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This study involves analysis of published literary texts and does not involve human participants, animal subjects, or primary data collection from informants. Therefore, formal ethical approval was not required.

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