

## An Analysis of Imperatives in Grade X English Textbook

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### Highlights

Utilizing the PPP method in the instruction of imperatives enhances student comprehension and exemplifies effective grammar teaching in EFL materials

**ABSTRACT:** The Grade X English textbook uses the PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) method to teach imperatives. This method shows how to introduce, reinforce, and use this grammatical feature. The PPP framework provides the contextual elucidation of imperatives, succeeded by organized practice activities and culminating in autonomous production. In this case, students write their own sentences employing the target structure. This study analyzes the treatment given to imperatives in the textbook within this framework. A descriptive qualitative methodology was employed, with data gathered through content analysis of the textbook. The results show that the textbook makes grammatical explanations as easy as possible for students at different levels of proficiency, which helps them learn and improve their skills over time. In particular, imperatives are taught through clear examples and conversations in context, followed by guided exercises and activities that encourage communication. This method provides people with a way to internalize the structure slowly. The research demonstrates that utilizing the PPP method in the instruction of imperatives enhances student comprehension and exemplifies effective grammar teaching in EFL materials. These findings are crucially important for textbook authors and educators, highlighting the importance of scaffolding grammar instruction according to learners' readiness, which promotes active language use.

**Keywords:** Analysis, Imperatives, English textbook

### Introduction

The presentation of grammar in course books is largely determined by the choice of specific grammatical items made and to what extent these meet the learners' needs (Cunningsworth, 1995, p. 32). Thus, conducting a needs analysis is necessary for textbook writing. However, the organization of grammar instruction in textbooks is a complex task. The sequence in which grammar is presented changes depending on the level of proficiency of the learner, whether the grammatical point is simple or complex, and on the personal preferences of authors of course books (Cunningsworth 1995). Such variability can result in mechanical presentation of grammar on the page, which can render learning less interactive and more cognitively burdensome—particularly for L2.

One of the most well-known methodologies to teach grammar is PPP (Present, Practice, Produce). This approach normally begins when the teacher presents the grammatical points explicitly, provides activities to practice controlled practice, and ends with a stage that encourages production intended to develop fluency (Thornbury, 1999, p. 128). Moreover, while Nimi Azin teaches PPP models with “support,” there are some who decry their tendency to oversimplify content. One significant paradox described by Thornbury (1999) of PPP is that, although fluency is expected to follow accuracy, students often require opportunities to use the language independently—and make mistakes—in order to achieve genuine competence in it (p. 129). Scrivener (2005, p. 272) extends the current-practice cycle by breaking it into "authentic exposure" (e.g., listening and reading tasks) and "authentic output" (ie, speaking and writing), indicating that there is eventual transfer of control from the teacher to the learner. However, the reliance on deficient sources of language, such as textbook dialogues and gap-fill exercises, in contact with learners at beginning levels can limit both authentic use of language and learner independence.

On the other hand, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) sets communicative fluency and learner autonomy as a priority at the outset. It is different from PPP; TBLT assumes that in the initial stages of communication, L2 learners may attend more strongly to the meaning of what they say than to how they say it and that grammatical accuracy will develop organically over time with opportunities for repeated practice and feedback (Thornbury 1999:129). Though this method promotes actual use of language and learner independence, it presupposes some grammatical knowledge-only, particularly where tasks require precision in command of form. On this point, TBLT might be problematic for less proficient learners who still need explicit teaching of grammar and scaffolding.

### **Pedagogical Implications for Teaching Imperatives in High School**

Imperatives are of particular interest for high school students because this syntactic form can be seen as a base in which other pragmatic functions, usually developed in real life, like giving commands or requests (and asking for them), advising or warning, come up quite often at both institutional and social levels. For ESL students, becoming proficient in imperatives not only supports spoken communication but also comprehension of written instructions, classroom directives, and course content. Consequently, the way imperatives are introduced and taught in textbooks may have a strong effect on learners' development of productive skills in English, which can later be used in actual settings.

In a PPP cycle, for example, imperatives could be presented through schemas or handouts instead of explicit grammar rules to adjust drills and controlled exercises in the P-phase (e.g., matching pictures to imperatives; filling out gaps), leading into freer production (such as writing up a list of classroom rules). While providing students with practice and exposure to the forms, this may not grant learners enough opportunities for meaningful usage and negotiation of meaning.

In contrast, in an ATBLT context, students may be involved in collaborative tasks which entail the production and comprehension of instructions (e.g., planning and

carrying out a school event or project; playing an imperatively directional game). Activities such as these encourage the natural use of the target form within a context that will lead to greater processing and retention. Nevertheless, without adequate scaffolding, many students may struggle to generate the correct forms, which could hinder comprehension and communicative effectiveness.

Based on the theoretical and practical reflections above, in this study, we will analyze the teaching of the grammar content as imperative mood in one high-school coursebook. The assessment applies the PPP and TBLT models to investigate how well the method enables high school students' grammatical development and communicative competence.

### **Methodology**

The study used a qualitative descriptive research design, which was deemed appropriate to explore the deployment and implementation of imperatives in instructional texts. "It should be noted that qualitative research differs from statistical methods in the degree to which interpretation and...shlessness of the...lives' zero, but does record a subnote of its shamness (Corbin & Strauss, 2015)." The idea here is that qualitative researchers typically focus on 'making sense,' (31) or wrestling with--trying to understand phenomena as they occur in everyday life. This approach agrees with the aim of the study, that is, to analyze the use of imperatives in a Grade X English textbook.

### **Data Collection**

The primary data of this study were a government-approved Grade X English textbook in senior high schools. All written materials, including dialogs, instructions, reading passages, and activity prompts, were scrutinized. The researcher individually collected IMP instantiations in each chapter of the textbook. To ensure complete data coverage, we classified a sentence as imperative if it contained an explicit command, request, instruction, or suggestion directly uttered to the interlocutor; then commands/requests with the impersonal you are sufficient. The average degree of embedding (DE) for LT was 0.80. There were at least two types used in their infinitive form, often with no subject.

### **Data Analysis**

The revealed imperatives were classified according to the function (e.g., command, request, instruction, advice) and situation (e.g., classroom practice, conversation task, reading project) in which they occurred. A codebook was developed using an iterative process, starting with a priori categories from the literature and modifying as emergent themes emerged in the data. Subsequently, a descriptive analysis was applied to identify emerging themes, language frames, and the educational intention of each imperative.

### **Trustworthiness in Research**

To improve the credibility of the results, investigator triangulation was implemented—an additional researcher independently examined a portion of the textbook and confirmed the coding of imperatives. Peer debriefing was also conducted to address any ambiguities and reconcile differences in interpretation. Furthermore, a comprehensive audit trail was kept throughout the analysis to guarantee transparency and the possibility of replicating the process.

## Findings and Discussion

### Findings

The textbook is for first-year high school students and is organized into chapters, which have four skills lessons: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The chapters are topic-based (making introductions, offering sympathy, and making appointments), which relates to a functional-notional syllabus.

Chapter 3 turns to the morphosyntactic aspect of imperatives. This grammar point is primarily "tested" in the reading section, which focuses on being able to both understand and write procedural texts. However, we also find imperatives in the listening [in response to directions], speaking [to operate], and writing [to write procedures] stages. The exercises in this chapter are divided into nine activities, listed in the following order:

Activities 1-5: Flexibility – introduction of procedural texts, parts, and structure.

Exercise 6: Introduces the target grammar: imperatives, through a short reading passage and multiple-choice questions.

Activities 7–9: Offer extra practice with the formation of sentences and find imperatives in real-world texts.

Excerpt from the textbook:

"Press the stop button," from Lesson 6.

The teacher told the pupils, Do not be noisy = from the grammar review.

The approach adopted by the textbook to teach imperatives is, in part, congruent with the present stage of the PPP model. Activity 6: Imperatives in a Reading Passage (Practice) Begin by reading the text, followed by questions of comprehension. However, they are not grammar-based, and there is no overt grammar accompanying the passage. It is the responsibility of the teacher to emphasize imperative form on its own, which can result in variation because of the varying levels of teachers' ability.

The grammar explanation appears notably later, in a boxed section following the exercises. It includes the uses of imperatives (commands, requests, prohibitions, and expressions of irritation), among others, such as:

a) You are pressing the stop button.

b) Dian said to Andi, "You press the stop button.

However, the coupling of these instances is uncertain. It is unclear whether 'you' in (a) refers to Dian, Andi, or the reader, which could cause students to be confused. Close Your email Recipient's email Your personalized message There is also no distinction between formal and less formal language in the additional box, which tries to explain what is not allowed- whether "don't" vs. "do not", for example, or spoken versus written uses of words. For example:

Explanation: We use the word "do not" or "do not" in front of verbs when we want to prohibit.

Example: "Do not be loud," the teacher said to the students.

Here, "be" is not a lexical verb, which goes against the first explanation and might be confusing to learners. The next section, Practice, is discussed in Activities 7 and 8. These exercises provide you with deliberate practice, for example:

- Writing commands to follow certain situations.
- The use of imperatives in elder-younger speaker interactions, where politeness strategies are subtly aligned.

This stage focuses on restrictive output, which is in accordance with the PPP approach, and provides opportunities to practise the target structure under control.

However, the direction given is vague and does not specify expected results for Activity 9---identifying imperative sentences from newspapers. It is not clear if students are supposed to sort the orders out (i.e., classify commands vs. requests), in which case the educational value of that task is reduced. Also, authentic texts, such as newspapers, can be a real struggle for low-level learners (Thornbury 1999), and one should not put the students off.

The Production stage, where learners use imperatives in a more spontaneous and communicative way, is not as well developed as the controlled practice stage. For example, Activity 9 focuses on identification instead of application, which does not help people use language on their own. The textbook could improve its approach by adding more open, contextualized activities, such as:

- Role-playing scenarios (like giving directions or recipes)
- Stories where misunderstanding imperatives causes a problem.

These changes would change the method from PPP to TPP (Task-Presentation-Practice), which would make it easier for students to use language in a more natural way from the start.

Even though imperative forms are used in many parts (listening, speaking, reading, writing), the organization is not very clear. After topics that are not related, like invitations and appointments, procedural texts are shown. This makes the switch to imperatives seem out of place. This weakens the overall theme and could make it harder for students to connect form and function across different skills.

Instructions on procedures and imperatives were all put into one unit. This would allow for a stronger focus on the form and make it easier to reuse vocabulary and grammar from one assignment to the next, which would help students understand the material better.

Also, putting the grammar explanation at the end of the unit, after most of the activities, might make students less interested in the grammar content. Moving the explanation up in the sequence and adding tasks that focus on form would be more in line with Klapper & Rees's (2003, p. 310) ideas about focus on form.

The way this textbook deals with imperatives is mostly in line with the PPP framework, especially in the controlled practice phase. However, the overall execution seems disjointed, with late presentations, underdeveloped production, and not enough cohesion between sections. To teach grammar better, the textbook should introduce grammatical forms earlier in the chapter, give clearer examples of how they are used in context, and include more open, communicative tasks to improve the Production phase and make the units fit together better thematically, which will help the use of imperatives.

By fixing these problems, the textbook could offer a fairer and effective way to teach grammar through integrated skills instruction.

### **Discussion**

The findings indicate that textual enhancement could be an effective method to increase learners' awareness of imperatives, especially through the use of visual cues like underlining or bolding these components in texts. Because imperatives can be used as commands or requests, the enhancement method can be changed even more, like using different colors to show different pragmatic functions. This is similar to prior studies on input enhancement (e.g., Sharwood Smith, 1993; Lee & Huang, 2008), which show that these strategies can focus learners' attention on grammatical structures without changing the overall meaning. In the final activity, where students find imperatives in newspaper articles, having them come up with their own improvements encourages them to be independent and involved, which are important factors for long-term retention (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

However, studies show that students often care more about form than meaning, especially when they are just starting (VanPatten, 1996). This indicates that noticeable features draw attention to the grammatical structure instead of its communicative role. When making instructional tasks, this possible problem should be borne in mind. Furthermore, while numerous textbooks endeavor to integrate implicit form-focused instruction, research (e.g., Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) has identified inconsistencies in their efficacy in teaching grammar, especially concerning multifunctional forms such as imperatives. Consequently, the intervention aligns with general calls in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research for a more deliberate and visually prominent methodology in grammar instruction, especially as it fosters cognitive engagement and encourages learner autonomy—both key elements of effective grammar retention.

### **Conclusion**

Teachers may use the PPP (Presentation, Practice, and Production) framework to teach specific grammar points based on what your students need. This shows how important it is to do a full needs analysis. When teaching imperatives, which are a common grammar point in many textbooks, it is important to make sure that the challenge of the material and the way it is taught match the skill level of the students. PPP makes these kinds of changes easier by providing a structured way to move from presentation to production. Still, an analysis of textbook content reveals deficiencies in the introduction of grammatical features, potentially leading to misunderstandings or incomplete mastery among learners.

Textbook writers need to make sure that the grammar content is clear, correct, and relevant to the situation in order to fix these problems. Also, the production stage in PPP often does not go deep enough, so teachers should add more meaningful, communicative activities to make this stage stronger. Teacher support is still very

important throughout the whole process, but especially during text-based interventions, to help students learn grammar well.

Because classrooms are so different, PPP can and should be changed to fit the needs of the students and the way the classroom works. This flexibility can result in variations like TPP (Test, Present, Practice) or hybrid models that combine elements of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) or Focus on Form approaches. This integration can lead to grammar lessons that are more relevant to the situation and focused on the student. Therefore, the teachers should consider using PPP with other methods to help their students learn grammar better and meet their needs as they change.

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