

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO  
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**

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**HẢI PHÒNG - 2010**

**HAIPHONG PRIVATE UNIVESITY  
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT**

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**GRADUATION PAPER**

**A STUDY ON IMPERATIVE AND  
ERRORS MADE BY VIETNAMESE LEARNERS**

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**Class:NA1001**

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**HAI PHONG - 2010**

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TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**

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**Nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp**

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Tên đề tài: A study on imperative mood and some errors made by  
Vietnamese learners.

## Nhiệm vụ đề tài

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

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2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

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3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

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## CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI

### **Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:**

Họ và tên: Phạm Thị Thu Hằng

Học hàm, học vị: Thạc Sĩ

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Nội dung hướng dẫn: A study on imperative mood and some errors made by Vietnamese learners

### **Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:**

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*Người hướng dẫn*

*Hải Phòng, ngày tháng năm 2010*

**HIỆU TRƯỞNG**

**GS.TS. NGUYỄN Trần Hữu Nghị**

## PHẦN NHẬN XÉT TÓM TẮT CỦA CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN

**1. Tinh thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp:**

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**2. Đánh giá chất lượng của khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...):**

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**3. Cho điểm của cán bộ hướng dẫn (ghi bằng cả số và chữ):**

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*Hải Phòng, ngày ..... tháng ..... năm 2010*

**Cán bộ hướng dẫn**  
*(họ tên và chữ ký)*

**NHẬN XÉT ĐÁNH GIÁ**  
**CỦA NGƯỜI CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP**

1. Đánh giá chất lượng đề tài tốt nghiệp về các mặt thu thập và phân tích tài liệu, số liệu ban đầu, giá trị lí luận và thực tiễn của đề tài.

2. Cho điểm của người chấm phản biện :

*(Điểm ghi bằng số và chữ)*

Ngày..... tháng..... năm 2010

**Người chấm phản biện**

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Hai Phong,

Dinh Thi Phuong



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# **PART I: INTRODUCTION**

## **1. Rationale**

With the development of human being, a means of communication should be set to connect people closer. English has become an international language. The fact that in communication English language is widely spoken all around the world draws the attention of many linguists. To become fluent in this language now is one of the essential demands of most English learners. However, it is not easy to achieve this because this language can sometimes cause them a lot of trouble with its grammar, vocabulary, etc...

In English grammar, mood is a difficult category and the use of mood is popular in normal dialogue and communication. Those encourage the researcher to study more on mood, especially imperative mood.

Furthermore, in process of using imperative mood, learners may make mistakes that make the recipient may misunderstand the meanings of language. Thus, it's necessary for learners to grasp imperative mood to use it naturally and effectively in communication. I hope that it will be useful for those who are studying on English grammar in mood especially imperative mood.

## **2. Aims of the study**

This paper tries to deal with these following concerns:

- Providing definition of mood and imperative mood.
- Demonstrating structure and usage of imperative mood
- Analyzing some errors made by Vietnamese learners.
- Giving suggestions to solve the errors.

## **3. Methods of the study**

The information and examples in this study are selected from many reference books and websites relating to the topic “Imperative mood”.

Some examples are used to illustrate the given information which is extracted from variety of websites and references. Besides, to find out common errors in my graduation paper, I had to take a survey from Hai Phong Private University’s students through questionnaire form.

In addition to the valuable source of books and websites, this study is also fortunate to receive the down – to – earth advices from my supervisors from whom I have learned the ideas and techniques that I try to pass on in this study.

Those are the ways I carried out my research paper.

#### **4. Scope of the study**

Due to the limitation of time, I only focus on imperative mood and some errors that learners often make.

Due to lack of experience and knowledge, this study can not avoid making mistakes. Therefore, your truthful comments are very useful and important.

#### **5. Design of the study**

The study consists of three main parts:

**Part I** – Introduction which states rationale, aims, methods, scope and design of the study.

**Part II** – The main part of the study, is the Development. This part is subdivided into three chapters:

**Chapter 1** is an overview of English mood.

**Chapter 2** is the theoretical background of imperative mood.

**Chapter 3** is some errors made by Vietnamese learners and some suggested solutions to overcome the errors.

**Part III** – the Conclusion which gives the reviews of the study and suggestion for further study.

## **PART II: DEVELOPMENT**

### **CHAPTER 1: AN OVERVIEW OF ENGLISH MOOD**

#### **1. Definition of mood**

Mood in verbs refers to one of three attitudes that a writer or speaker has to what is being written or spoken.

There are three kinds of mood:

- ❖ Imperative mood
- ❖ Subjunctive mood
- ❖ Indicative mood

(([http:// www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic11771.html](http://www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic11771.html))

#### **2. Kinds of mood**

##### **2.1. Indicative mood**

Indicative mood expresses an assertion, denial or question.

*For example:*

Little Rock is the capital of Arkansas.

Ortriches cannot fly.

Have you finished your homework?

##### **2.2. Imperative mood**

Imperative mood expresses command, prohibition, entreaty, advice...

*For example:*

Don't smoke in this building.

Be careful!

Don't down that puppy!

### **2.3. Subjunctive mood**

Subjunctive mood expresses doubt or something contrary to fact.

- Modern English speakers use indicative mood most of the time, resorting to kind of “mixed subjunctive” that makes use of helping verb:

If I should see him, I will tell him.

- Americans are more likely to say:

If I see him, I will tell him.

- The verb “may” can be used to express a wish:

May you have many more birthdays.

May you live long and prosper.

- The verb “were” can also indicate the use of the subjunctive:\

If I were you, I wouldn't keep driving on those tires.

If he were governor, we'd be in better fiscal shape.

<http://www.dailywritingtips.com/english-grammar-101-verb-mood/>

## **CHAPTER 2: THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF IMPERATIVE MOOD**

### **1. Definition of Imperative mood**

Imperative mood is a mood that expresses an intention to influence the listener's behavior.

The imperative mood is a grammatical mood that expresses direct commands or requests. It tells you to do something. It is used to signal a prohibition, permission or any other kind of exhortation.

*([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/imperative\\_mood](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/imperative_mood))*

According to Randolph Quick (1985): “imperative, is to offer, suggest, or request”.

## **2. Morphology of imperative**

### **2.1 Affirmative imperative**

Unlike most conjugated verbs in English, verbs in the imperative mood consist of a single word rather than a phrase of two or more words. Also unlike other English verb form, the grammatical subject of verbs in the imperative is always the second person singular or plural personal pronoun “you”. The imperative form of English verbs is identical to the base form (an infinitive without “to” functioning as the infinitive marker) of any English verb.



*For example:*

Infinitive	Base	Affirmative Imperative
To be	Be	Be
To do	Do	Do
To eat	Eat	Eat
To drink	Drink	Drink
To go	Go	Go
To sleep	Sleep	Sleep
To stay	Stay	Stay
To study	Study	Study
To wait	Wait	Wait

The form of the imperative that is identical to the base form of the verb is sometimes referred to as an affirmative or positive imperative.

Affirmative imperative is used to tell somebody to do something.

<http://www.learneramericaenglishonline.com>

## **2.2 Negative Imperative**

Unlike affirmative imperative, negative imperative is periphrastic. Periphrastic is a term that means a “phrase of two or more words that perform a single grammatical function that would otherwise be expressed by the inflection of a single word”. Negative imperative tells someone to not do something. The negative imperative form of English verbs is formed by the present tense form of the verb “do” followed by the adverb “**not**” and then the affirmative imperative form.

*For example:*

Infinitive	Base	Negative Imperative
To be	Be	Do not Be
To do	Do	Do not Do
To eat	Eat	Do not Eat
To drink	Drink	Do not Drink
To go	Go	Do not Go
To sleep	Sleep	Do not Sleep
To stay	Stay	Do not Stay
To study	Study	Do not Study
To wait	Wait	Do not Wait
To stop	Stop	Do not stop

The “**do not**” of a negative imperative is often spoken and sometimes written as the contraction “**don’t**”) as in:

Don’t be silly!

Don’t sleep too late.

(<http://languagestudy.suite101.com/article.cfm/what-is-the-imperative-mood-of-english-verbs-in-english-grammar>)

### 2.3 Imperatives with “let’s” and “let”

Imperative sentence beginning with “**let**” are different from other imperative sentences. Sentences beginning with “**let**” express ideas such as suggestion, proposal, request, wish, determination, desire...

*For example:*

Let me go

Let's take him to the doctor

Let no one leave him this room (the police inspector said)

Let's go for a walk

([http://www.englishonline.edusoftmax.com/imperative\\_sentence.html](http://www.englishonline.edusoftmax.com/imperative_sentence.html))

### 2.3.1 The first person imperative

The English language makes the first person imperative with “**let + me**” or “**let + us**”. We use “**let's**” including yourself in the imperative.

*For example:*

**Let** me do it for you

**Let** me see

**Let's** stop now

**Let us** have some lunch

**Let's** leave the case at the station (Martine&Thomson:123)

Because the speaker or writer is included in the imperative, the tone of the sentence is softened. The sound of the imperative sentence is more courteous and less demanding. Even when the speaker or writer is aware that he or she is really not involved in the action of the verb, this form is used to sound more like a suggestion. Compare the following pairs of sentences:

Try to be a little quieter.

**Let's** try to be a little quieter.

In the two illustrated sentences above, the speaker or writer is suggesting that someone should be a little quieter and knows that the suggestion is only directed at the person to whom the command is given. The speaker or writer is only including himself or herself in order to make the command sound more like a suggestion.

*Other examples:*

Remember to send her a birthday card

**Let's** remember to send her a birthday card

([http:// www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic11771.html](http://www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic11771.html))

### **2.3.2 The third person imperative**

When the speaker or writer is not included in the imperative sentence, instead, a direct object follows “let”. The verb that describes the action of the command then follows the direct object. *For example:*

Let Jack cut the grass today (direct object = Jack)

Let me use your car for the afternoon (direct object = me)

Let the soldiers rest before the next march (direct object = the soldiers)

Let her try on your new dress (direct object = her)

In order to create a negative form of an imperative, put “let’s not” or “let somebody/ something not” in front of the infinitive verb:

([http:// www.english-for-students.com/Passive-Voice.html](http://www.english-for-students.com/Passive-Voice.html))

*For example:*

Let’s not open the door (Quirk, &Greenbaum, 1973:201)

Let's not argue

Let's not tell her about it.

Besides, do not is also available but informal for 3<sup>rd</sup> person imperatives:

*For example:*

Don't let's open the door (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1973:201)

Don't let anyone fool himself

### 3. Kinds of imperative sentence

Imperative sentences have the following features:

Verb position	The finite verb comes first
Verb form	The finite verb is in the imperative
Intonation	The voice falls at the end of the sentence
Punctuation mark	Exclamation mark or period

(<http://www.canoo.net/services/OnlineGrammar/Satz/Satzart/Aufforderung.html?lang=en>)

#### 3.1 Emphatic imperative (persuasive imperative or insistent imperative)

We can make an emphatic imperative with “do imperative”. This is common in polite requests, complaints and apologies.

It remains to consider the interpretation of those affirmative imperative which are marked as peculiarly emphatic by the presence of stressed “do”. This “do” may itself be regarded as meaningless, with a purely syntactic function. However, since it serves as a carrier for emphasis, which does have a semantic function, we can refer some what loosely, to the meaning of emphatic “do”. While many have commented that such imperatives are interpreted in a rather different way from other imperatives, they do not seem to have been very successful at specifying exactly what it is about the interpretation the receive .

Which distinguishes them form ordinary, non – emphatic imperatives?

Descriptions of these emphatic imperatives tend to imply that the difference relates to the kinds of illocutionary force with which they can be used, and that emphatic imperatives are in fact specified for some particular type of illocutionary force. For instance, (Jespersen,1954:507-8) claims that “with an imperative do is used not so much denote a command, which generally requires rapid enunciation and therefore

does without do, as an urgent request or entreaty”, and (Kruisinga,1931:417) similarly observes that emphatic do as an imperative expresses an urgent request, not a command. (Zandvoort, 1969:80) makes a comment similar to that Kruisinga, while (Sheurweghs, 1959:344) claims that it “renders something in the nature of an entreaty”. There does seem to be some truth in these observations, certainly the first example below seems more likely to convey a request or emotive appeal than the kinds of authoritative command which could be conveyed by the second example.

*For example:*

**do** give it to them

**give** it to them

However, those observation seem to limited, for do imperative need not necessarily convey either requests or entreaties. While could be used simply to give permission sounds more like an effusive invitation; and whereas the speaker who utters could be making a suggestion without caring whether the addressee acts upon it, in he seems to be really concerned that the addressee should do what he proposes. In the presence of do serves to emphasis the importance of complying with the instruction given.

*For example:*

Help yourself (Swan, 1997:168)

=> **Do** help yourself

Try next door

=> **Do** try next door

Ensure that power is switched off before removing cover.

=> **Do** ensure that power is switched off before removing cover.

Some more general characterization of the contribution of do is evidently required to account for all these contrasts. So we find descriptions like that of (Levenston,1969:39), who labels imperatives with do as “insistent”, which (Quirk,1972:406) describe them as “persuasive” or “insistent” and others (Poutsma, 1926); (Curme,1931) simply use the term “emphatic”. More explicitly, (E.C. Davies, 1974:180) suggests that do marks the construction as realizing “speaker’s wish”.

These remarks also seem to imply that do specifies an imperative for a particular type of illocutionary force potential; for if do is a marker of persuasive or insistent, then any imperative which contains it will presumably have to be used as a directive, since only then will there be something for the speaker to insist on and the addressee to be persuaded of. If this were indeed the case, it would follow that do would be inappropriate in imperatives uttered with other kinds of force, for instance, to give permission, to acknowledge of possibility, to express defiance, and so on. However, do can occur even in these contexts, as is illustrated by the following examples:



*For example:*

A<sub>1</sub>: I know you don't want me to invite him. But he'll be offered if I don't. (Bolinger, 1977:82)

B<sub>2</sub>: Oh, very well. **Do** invite him then, if you must.

A<sub>1</sub>: I'm doing my best not to make any mistake.

B<sub>2</sub>: **do** make one, so what? It doesn't matter that much.

When it occurs in this kind of context, do seems to fulfill a rather different function; it is used to emphasize an affirmative in order to contrast this with a corresponding negative. Those whose comments on do were noted above have evidently overlooked this contrastive use of do, probably because of the tendency to ignore the use of imperatives to give permission, express indifference, and so on, where this contrastive function is most obvious. However, contrastive do is discussed by (Bolinger, 1977), whose comments will be explained below.

The existence of examples like those in ones below alongside those given poses more questions about the semantic content of this emphatic do. If the do in example: "do give it to them" and "do ensure that power is switched off before removing cover" is analyzed as a marker of persuasiveness or speaker's wish, as has been suggested, then there seems no way in which it can be defined with that which occurs in example like the two above. One view, then, might be considered the two to be semantically distinct. On the other hand, it might be possible to identify some semantic characteristic common to all occurrences of do and to explain the different effects it has by some other means. This would make possible a unified semantic treatment of emphatic do which could deal with both its persuasive and its contrastive functions.

(Bolinger, 1977) offers such a unified account, claiming that the distribution of *do* can be fully accounted for in terms of its single meaning, as a carrier of emphatic affirmation, since the context in which it can not occur are incompatible with this kind of meaning. In two examples mentioned above, it is easy to see that such emphatic affirmation is motivated by a need to contrast with the corresponding negative, which occurs earlier in the discourse. Bolinger claims that such a contrast is always implicit in the use of do, but that in other cases the contrast is provide by the context of utterance. According to him, when a speaker use a do imperative such as “*do give it to them*”, this is understood to mark a contrast with a previous state of affairs where the addressee did no perform the action referred to, wherever such a previous stage of non- doing can be understood them, it is possible to use do.

<http://google.books.com>

*For example:*

**Do** sit down (Swan, 1997:189)

**Do** have some more sherry (Quirk &, Greenbaum, 1973:201)

**Do** let’s go to the theatre (Quirk& Greenbaum, 1973:201)

### 3.2 Passive imperative

The imperative sentence in the passive voice has the following structure

<i>Let + object + be + past participle</i>
--

When the active voice begins with “do not”, the passive voice has the following structure:

***Let not + object + be + past participle***

In some sentence, it is possible to put “not” after the object or “be”.

*For example:*

<i>Active</i>	<i>Passive</i>
Bring it home	Let it brought home
Do it at once	Let it be done at once
Do not beat the dog	Let the dog not be beaten
Let me do it	Let it be done by me Or let me be allowed to do it.

You can begin the sentence with “you” if you want to put emphasis on the person addressed to:

*For example:*

Please help me

⇒ Let me be helped

Or

⇒ **You** are requested to help me

Don't touch it

⇒ Let it not be touched

⇒ **You** are warned not to touch it

The passive form has to begin with “you”, when the object of the verb in the active voice is not given.

*For example:*

Work hard

⇒ **You** are advised to work hard.

Get out

⇒ **You** are ordered to get out.

**More examples are given below:**

Please lend me some money

⇒ **You** are requested to lend me some money.

Kindly do this work

⇒ **You** are requested to do this work.

Get me a glass of water

⇒ **You** are ordered to get me a glass of water.

Let us go for a walk.

⇒ It is suggested that we should go out for a walk.

([http:// www.english-for-students.com/Passive-Voice.html](http://www.english-for-students.com/Passive-Voice.html))

To tell people to arrange for things to be done to them, we often use:

<b>Get + past participle</b>
------------------------------

*For example:*

Get vaccinated as soon as you can.

Get examined when you feel tired. (Swan, 1997:104)

### 3.3 Subject with imperative

The imperative does not usually have a subject but we can use a noun (the name) or pronoun (you; everybody; anybody; nobody; someone...) to make it clear who we are speaking to.

*For example:*

**Mary**, come here. **Everybody else** stay.

**Somebody** answer the phone

**Nobody** move (Richards.J, 2001:76)

Relax, **everybody**

You before an imperative can suggest emphatic persuasion or anger.

*For example:*

**You** just sit down and relax for a bit.

**You** take your hands off me.

**You** wait here.

In the negative imperative, to emphasize we can use “you” after “do not”.

*For example:*

Don't you dare to say I'm not telling the truth?

I've been answering questions all day. Don't you start now?

### **3.4 The imperative with question tags**

Sometimes we use question tags imperative (invitations; orders...); but the sentence remains an imperative and does not require a direct answer.

After imperatives, the normal question tags are “**will you? Won't you? Would you? Could you? ; can you; shall we? Can't you...**” After negative imperative, “will you?” is used.

❖ We add “**will you? / can't you? /won't you?**” to express annoyance.

*For example:*

Stop shouting, **will you?**

❖ We add “**would you?/could you?/ can you?**” for neutral requests:

*For example:*

Post this for me, **would you?**

❖ We add “**will you?/won’t you?**” for friendly offers:

*For example:*

Take a seat, **will you?** (Alexander.L.G, 1990:105)

❖ When you use the word “**let’s**”, the question tags at the end must be “**shall +we?**”

*For example:*

**Let’s** visit the Archeological Museum, **shall we?**

❖ When you use the word “**let**”, the question tags at the end must be “**will/won’t /could+ you?**”

*For example:*

**Let** the prisoners go, **will you?**

**Let** the prisoners go, **could you?**

**Let** the prisoners go, **won’t you?**

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish-central-grammar-imperatives.ht>

**More examples of question tags are given below:**

Give me a hand, **will you?**

Sit down, **won't you?**

Get me something to drink, **can you?**

Be quite, **can't you?**

Let us think about it, **shall we?** (Swan, 1997:124)

### **3.5 Special cases of imperative**

In many cases, in order to be brief, past statements that are imperatives or that represent imperatives are used on signs or in general announcements over a loud speaker.

*For example:*

Deer crossing. (Represents an imperative = Caution)

⇒ Deer cross this road.

Keep right except to pass ( Road side sign)

Merging traffic. (Represents an imperative = Caution)

⇒ Car enter the high way here.

No parking here. (Represents an imperative = Do not park here.)



No smoking. (Represents an imperative = Do not smoke here.)

No swimming. (Represents an imperative = Do not swim here.)

Post no bills. (Represents an imperative = Post no signs on this wall.)

Reduce speed ahead. ( Road side sign)

Silence! (Represents an imperative = be silent!)

(<http://www.english-test.net/forum/ftopic11771.html>)

### **3.6 Indirect Imperative sentence**

We use the verbs: order/ request/ suggest/ask/tell/say.... to form indirect imperative

*For example:*

John asked Jill to turn off the light.

I order him to open the book.

## **4. Usages of imperative**

### **4.1 Giving an order**

Adults do not usually give each other orders, unless they are in a position of authority. However, adults can give orders to children and to animals. The intonation of an order is important: each word is stressed, and the tone falls at the end of the sentence

*For example:*

Sit down now!

“*Sit*”; “*down*” and “*now*” are all stressed, and the tone falls on “*now*”.

## **4.2 Giving a command**

Also known as the imperative form, commands are very easy to use. Begin the sentence with a verb and end with an object, a person or a thing.

### **❖ Tell someone to do something:**

*For example:*

Answer the phone, please!

Drive to the post office.

Help me find this information.

Follow me.

The subject in each of these sentences is “you” but it does not sound correct to use the subject.

*For example:*

~~You answer the phone, please!~~

~~You drive to the post office.~~

~~You help me find this information.~~

❖ **Tell someone not to do something:**

*For example:*

Don't do that.

Don't hit him (Richards.J,2001:42)

Don't drive a car without a seat belt.

In the sentence above, the present tense is used and the subject is “you”.

The polite form of a command uses the word “please”

*For example:*

Please give that to me!

Pass the potatoes, please!

(<http://www.learnamericaenglishonline.com>)

### **4.3 Giving an advice**

When you give advice using the imperative, the words are stressed normally.

*For example:*

Don't tell him you are resigning now! Wait until Monday when he's in a better mood.

Don't drink alcohol

Don't eat heavy meals. (Richards.J, 2001:63)

(<http://www.englishlanguageguide.com/english/grammar/imperative.asp>)

### **4.4 Giving a request**

You can also use the imperative to make a request, but you should use a polite word before the verb

*For example:*

Please take a seat

Please wait here

Please hold the line

Please don't smoke here.

**Notes:** note that an imperative sentence does not require a subject, the pronoun “you” is implied.

(<http://www.englishlanguageguide.com/english/grammar/imperative.asp>)

#### **4.5 Giving a warning and an instruction**

You can use the imperative to warn someone of danger. All the words in the warning are stressed, but the last word has a higher tone than the first word.

*For example:*

Sit down now

“Sit”; “down” and “now” are stressed, and the tone falls on “now”.

*Other examples:*

Watch out!

Look out! (Ann.B, 1977:126)

Don't cross.

You can also use the imperative to give instruction:

*For example:*

To get to the Shakespeare Theatre, turn to the right at the river and keep straight on. (Richards.J,2001:54)

Click here!

Take the next turning left.

#### **4.6 Giving a prohibition**

The imperatives used to give prohibition often are in negative imperatives with “do not” preceding the verb.

*For example:*

Do not walk on the grass

Do not throw trash on the street (Richards.J, 2001:78)

But, sometimes affirmative imperative is used to make a prohibition sentences:

*For example:*

Keep off the grass

(Prohibition is often used in public notices).

#### **4.7 Giving an entreaty**

*For example:*

Spare a penny, sir, for a starving man! (East Wood ,1994:77)

Help! Help! I'm drowning.

#### **4.8 Giving an invitation**

*For example:*

Come inside and meet my wife

Have a cigarette

Have a cup of coffee (East Wood ,1994:67)

#### **4.9 Giving a condition**

*For example:*

Do that again and I'll call a policeman!

Suppose you had an accident, what should I do?

Suppose you had a million pounds, how would you spend the money?

(Chalker.S, 1984:156)

#### **4.10 Giving a desire**

*For example:*

Have a good day! Enjoy yourself and come back quite well again.

### **6. The imperative to address particular people**

- ❖ When we say: “wait here!” we might be addressing one person or several. We are really saying: “you (singular or plural) wait here!”

❖ If we want to speak to someone, we can:

- Add you (unstressed) for an instruction

*For example:*

You keep quite!

- Use “you” with (or without) a name

*For example:*

You wait here, Henry

Or Henry, you wait here.

- Add yourself/ yourselves to verbs like : “help; enjoy; behave”

*For example:*

Behave yourself.

Help yourself to whisky. (Anna.B, 1977:11)

❖ If we are talking to groups of people, we can use the imperative with:

- Everybody:

*For example:*

Everybody keep quite!



Or keep quite! Everybody

Everybody shut their eyes (Quirk& Greenbaum, 1973:200)

- Someone/somebody/nobody:

*For example:*

Somebody answer the phone!

Nobody say a word!

- Don't....anybody:

*For example:*

Don't say a word, anybody!

Don't anybody say a word! (Alexander.L.G, 1990:105)

## 6. The uses of “please” and “kindly” in imperatives

- ❖ “Please” is often used with requests or instructions to make them more polite. It is a shorter form of the order expression: “*if it pleases you*”. “please” comes at the beginning or end of a sentence, as with names but it does not usually come before the name at the beginning or after the name at the end.

*For example:*

Samantha, please come here!

Samantha, come here, please!

Come here please! Samantha

Please come here! Samantha

(<http://www.english-online.org.uk>)

All examples above are all different ways of saying the same thing. If it is a boss speaking to his secretary, this would be an instruction. If it is a boy talking to his girlfriend, it is a request.

❖ In written English, you might also see “kindly” used as a polite word:

*For example:*

Kindly return the documents as soon as possible.

Kindly forward this to the sales and marketing department.

Kindly send me two copies of your brochure.

Kindly lend me some money.

(<http://www.english-at-home.com/grammar/using-the-imperative-form/>)

## **7. Changing a statement into an imperative sentence and vice versa**

If you change a statement into an imperative sentence, the elements of the statement remain intact. It's only the verb that is altered. The target of that verb will always be second person, but the pronoun “you” is understood and not spoken or written. The verb becomes an elliptical infinitive (“to” be omitted).

*For example:*

- Jone came home by three o'clock.
- ⇒ Come home by three o'clock.
- She has been one of the candidate's supporters.
- ⇒ Be one of the candidate's supporters.
  
- We will help her look for her keys.
- ⇒ Help her look for her keys.

<http://english-learners.com/2010/02/imperative-statements.html>

Modal auxiliaries such as: must/ must not /can not/need not/should/ should not... are used in imperative sentences including the subject

*For example:*

They must clean the carpet.  
 ⇒ Let them clean the carpet.

We needn't wait for him.  
 ⇒ Let us not wait for him.

You should get up early.  
 ⇒ Get up early.

You must stop now.  
 ⇒ Stop now.

You can't step on the grass.  
 ⇒ Don't step on the grass.

[www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=153931](http://www.onestopenglish.com/section.asp?docid=153931)

## **8. Punctuations in imperatives**

An imperative sentence can end either with a period or with an exclamation mark.

To emphasize the strength of a command, typically an exclamation point (!) is used. However, a period can apply as well. This choice signifies the strength with which the command and generally corresponds to the speaker's attitude: if "please" is used, an exclamation point is probably too harsh:

*For examples:*

Clean up this room!

Please clean up this room.

Though the exclamation mark is used as the marker for imperatives in most examples (mostly as a visual signification of the mood which is otherwise unmarked in English), there is no reason this is required, and a period is fine as well. However, a question mark would be confusing and in most cases incorrect. (Imperatives and uncertainty rarely go together, though in theory one could say "Clean up this room?" if they aren't sure about actually giving such an order.)

<http://www.writingcentre.uottawa.ca/hypergrammar/moods.html>

## **9. Stress in imperative**

Imperative sentence is one to express speaker's offer, suggest, request, etc..

- ❖ Imperative without a subject: stress falls strongly on main verb without endings for number or tense and slightly on nouns, adjective or adverb.

*For example:*

**Put it on the bookshelf!**

- ❖ Imperative sentence with a subject: stress falls strongly on subject and slightly on verb, adjective or adverb.

*For example:*

**You shut up!**

- ❖ Imperative sentence with “let”: stress falls strongly on “let” and slightly on subject, verb, adjective or adverb.

*For example:*

**Let it be!** (Quick, R, 1993:124)

- ❖ Negative imperative sentence: stress strongly falls on negative auxiliary verb and verb, subject, slightly on others.

*For example:*

**Don't turn off** air-conditioner.

## **CHAPTER 3: SOME ERRORS MADE BY VIETNAMESE LEARNERS AND SOME SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS TO OVERCOME THE ERRORS**

### **1. Some errors made by Vietnamese learners**

To analyze errors of imperative mood made by Vietnamese learners, I have carried out a survey questionnaire from non-major students third year section at Hai Phong Private University. And the result of the survey is given in the table as follow:

Number	No of incorrect answers	Percentage of incorrect answers
1	38/50	36%
2	12/50	24%
3	45/50	90%
4	6/50	12%
5	43/50	86%
6	39/50	78%
7	4/50	8%
8	36/50	72%
9	47/50	94%
10	3/50	6%
11	11/50	22%
12	16/50	32%
13	23/50	46%
14	17/50	34%
15	12/50	24%
16	8/50	16%
17	17/50	34%

18	13/50	26%
19	21/50	42%
20	38/50	76%
21	43/50	86%

Through this table, I have summarized some common errors that are presented below:

❖ **Double imperatives joined by “and”**

When we have two imperatives together, we join them with “and” but normally Vietnamese learners use “to” instead. The questionnaire shows that 94% of students use the wrong form of double imperatives.

*For example:*

Go to buy yourself a new pair of shoes.

The correct sentence is:

Go and buy yourself a pair of shoes.

The only exception is “try”. We can say: “try and help” or “try to help”.

*Other examples:*

Come and see us soon

Instead: come to see us soon.

Sit here and wait.

Instead: Sit here to wait.

### ❖ **Question tags in imperatives**

Relating to question tags, sometimes Vietnamese learners may say:

Don't tell anybody, do you?

The question tags “do you” may be true in sentence: “you don't tell anybody, do you?”, but in the imperative: “don't tell anybody, do you?” it is untrue. We have to use “will you?” in this case and the correct sentence is:

Don't tell anybody, will you?

Almost students chose incorrect answer relating to question tags used in imperatives, occupies 78%.

Other question tags also causes Vietnamese learners make mistakes. Such as: shall we? / can you?...

### ❖ **Let's and let us:**

Let's is used as the contraction of let us, but there are some differences between them. Sometimes when the speaker wants to imply an action including the speaker and the recipient but in some cases, it includes only the speaker. The number of students makes mistakes in this kinds of sentence is quite high, nearly 86%. It is difficult to distinguish “let's” and “ let us”, because sometime “let's” may be the contraction of “let us”.

*For example:*

Let's go to the cinema : cùng đi đến rạp chiếu phim nào

Let us watch TV: để chúng tôi xem ti vi.

### ❖ **Passive imperative:**



Sometimes, Vietnamese learners, especially non- major English students may makes mistakes with passive imperative. There are 86% of student from the survey choose the incorrect answer.

*For example:*

Let the dog not be beaten.

But they may say:

Let not the dog be beaten.

Besides, some other mistakes Vietnamese learners often get are: do imperative with 72%. To emphasize in imperatives, they use “please” instead of “do” preceding of the verb.

## **2. The suggested solutions to overcome the errors**

We consider the typical errors that Vietnamese learners commit when dealing with imperative mood. Following are some suggestions which may help to overcome the errors when using imperative.

*For learners:*

- ❖ Master the form and features of imperative mood through studying from grammar books, references as well as internet websites. Often use imperative sentences in speaking to make use it frequently.
- ❖ Use the imperative in proper situation to avoid impoliteness.

*For teacher:*

- Help learners master form and features of imperative and point out, distinguish the mistakes, even give specific examples to make learners grasp it clearly.

## **PART III: CONCLUSION**

### **1. Conclusion**

Imperative mood is a grammatical category that learners should master, but the knowledge of imperative is quite wide. Due to time limitation, my study may not avoid the lack of some knowledge on imperative mood. I only focus on kinds of imperatives and its usage as well as some common errors that Vietnamese learners often get. In this part, I would like to make a short summary of what I have been discussed in the previous parts. My research paper focuses on part 2 with 3 chapters:

Chapter 1 helps you to understand about an overview of English mood.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background of imperative mood. This is the foundation for the next chapters

Chapter 3 is some errors that Vietnamese learners often get and the solution.

I hope that through this study, learners can understand more clearly about imperative mood and avoid some errors in using it in either speaking or writing.

### **2. Suggestion for further study**

Imperative are often used in spoken English. Therefore, studying on imperative sentence is quite useful for either natives or non-natives. Together with imperative sentence, you can study on imperative sentence use as command and the way to change statement to a command. That will be an interesting topic for the learners of English.

## EXERCISE:

**Exercise 1: rewrite the sentences in imperative. Keep the meaning:**

**For example: You can't step on the grass.**

⇒ **Don't step on the grass.**

1) We must revise some new words

⇒

2) He should have a job.

⇒

3) We mustn't stop now.

⇒

4) You must go to bed.

⇒

5) You should get up early.

⇒

6) You mustn't stand here.

⇒

7) She can have a drink.

⇒

8) We needn't wait for him.

⇒

9) You can't park in this street.

⇒

10) They should taste this cake.

⇒

**Exercise 2: Use “shall we? / will you? / would you? / could you...” to make imperatives with question tags:**

**For example: Give me a hand.**

⇒ **Give me a hand, will you?**

1) Let's join them

⇒

2) Give it to your mum.

⇒

3) Be kind to her

⇒

4) Take the car to the garage.

⇒

5) Let us forget about it.

⇒

**Answers to exercise:**

**Exercise 1:**

1) Let's revise some new words.

2) Let him have a job.

3) Let's not stop now.

4) Go to bed

5) Get up early

6) Do not stand here

7) Let her have a drink

8) Let us not wait for him

9) Do not park in this street.

10) Let them taste this cake.

## **Exercise 2:**

- 1) Let's join them, shall we?
- 2) Give me a hand, will you?
- 3) Be kind to her, will you?
- 4) Take the car to the garage, will you?
- 5) Let us forget about it, shall we?

## APPENDIX

### Questionnaire

**Đối tượng:** Sinh viên Đại học Dân lập Hải Phòng

**Họ và tên sinh viên:** Đinh thị Phương – Lớp Na1001

**Mục đích:** Câu hỏi này nhằm phục vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp

: “Mệnh lệnh thức và những lỗi thường mắc khi sử dụng câu mệnh lệnh thức của đối tượng học là người Việt Nam”. Các bạn hãy vui lòng khoanh vào câu trả lời mà các bạn lựa chọn.

*Xin chân thành cảm ơn!*

1. Theo bạn câu nào dưới đây là đúng dạng form của câu mệnh lệnh
  - a. I tell you to do your homework.
  - b. Do your homework.√
  - c. You must do your homework.
  
2. “Bring it home” khi chuyển sang câu bị động có dạng là:
  - a. let it be brought home√
  - b. you bring it home
  - c. have it brought home
  
3. Khi 2 động từ được dùng song song trong câu mệnh lệnh, chúng sẽ được nối bởi
  - a. giới từ “to”
  - b. giới từ “for”
  - c. liên từ “and”√

4. Khi sử dụng câu bị động, để lịch sự, ta lên dùng câu nào trong những câu dưới đây:
- you sit down
  - Sit down, please!✓
  - Sit down, will you?
5. “ Do not beat the dog” khi chuyển sang dạng bị động có dạng :
- the dog was not beaten
  - let the dog not be beaten✓
  - let not the dog be beaten
6. Theo bạn câu nào dưới đây đúng dạng của câu mệnh lệnh có dạng câu hỏi đuôi:
- Don't tell anybody, will you?✓
  - Don't tell anybody, do you?
  - Don't tell anybody, don't you?
7. Chúng ta có thể thêm “ let's” vào trước động từ nếu chủ ngữ là:
- you
  - we✓
  - they
8. Nếu muốn dùng câu mệnh lệnh để nhấn mạnh ta dùng..... trước động từ
- let
  - do✓
  - please
9. Theo bạn câu nào dưới đây là đúng:
- go to buy yourself a new pair of shoes
  - go and buy yourself a new pair of shoes✓



c. go for buying yourself a new pair of shoes

10. Câu mệnh thường được chia ở thì

a. hiện tại ✓

b. quá khứ

c. tương lai

11. “Go away” khi chuyển sang statement (câu trần thuật) sẽ là:

a. you go away

b. you must go away ✓

c. let's go away

12. Câu hỏi đuôi của “let's have a break” sẽ là:

a. Let's have a break, shall we? ✓

b. Let's have a break, will you?

c. Let's have a break, could we?

13. “You must not be hurry!” khi chuyển sang câu mệnh lệnh sẽ là:

a. Be not hurry!

b. Let not be hurry!

c. Don't be hurry! ✓

14. “use/umbrella/do/ not/ my/ him/ let” viết thành câu đúng sẽ là:

a. do not let him use my umbrella ✓

b. let him do not use my umbrella

c. do let him not use my umbrella

15. “Suppose you had a million pounds, how would you spend the money?”

là câu mệnh lệnh chỉ:

a. mong muốn

b. đề nghị

c. điều kiện✓

16. Khi dùng trạng từ “never” trong câu mệnh lệnh thì nó sẽ đứng ở vị trí:

a. đầu câu✓

b. sau động từ

c. cuối câu

17. “Let them make an experiment” khi chuyển sang câu trần thuật sẽ là:

a. they can make an experiment

b. they must make an experiment

c. they should make an experiment✓

18. “You must not cheat” khi chuyển sang câu mệnh lệnh sẽ là:

a. not cheat

b. do not cheat✓

c. let not cheat

19. “the/ you/ladder/will/ fetch” khi viết thành câu mệnh lệnh sẽ là:

a. you will fetch the ladder

b. Will you fetch the ladder?

c. Fetch the ladder, will you?✓

20. “Do forgive me”, do ở trong câu này là:

a. động từ

b. trợ từ

c. từ để nhấn mạnh✓

21. “Let’s go to the cinema” và “let us watch TV”. “Let’s” và “let us” trong 2 câu này là:

a. giống nhau

- b. “let’s” thì bao gồm cả người nói và người nghe, còn “let us” chỉ gồm người nói.√
- c.không đáp án nào đúng

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