Wake up to the new imperatives: The language of persuasion in #Covid19NZ tweets

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We use language for many reasons, one of which is to direct others in order to influence future events.

Such uses of language are called ***directives***.

Directives are stereotypically given through the use of imperative clauses such as:

However, imperative clauses are only one of many linguistic strategies used to convey directives.

The linguistic strategies we use are often influenced by cultural politeness norms, power dynamics, and familiarity.

In a time of global connectivity through social media, which strategies are used to persuade others to uphold or subvert the status quo?

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READ: How Twitter users built 1,000 of their most persuasive #DirectiveTweets…

Pragmatics

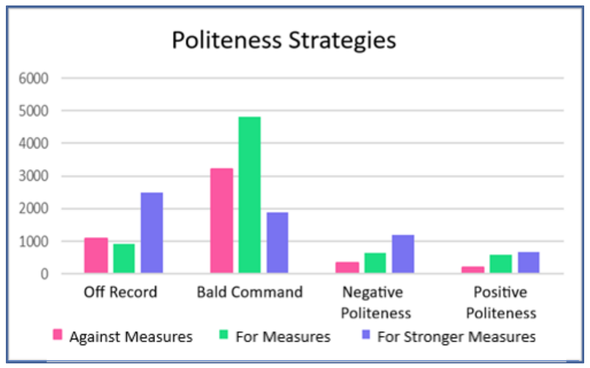
How polite should I be?

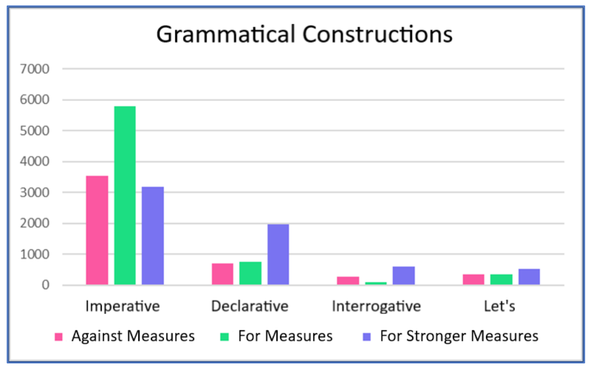
Grammar

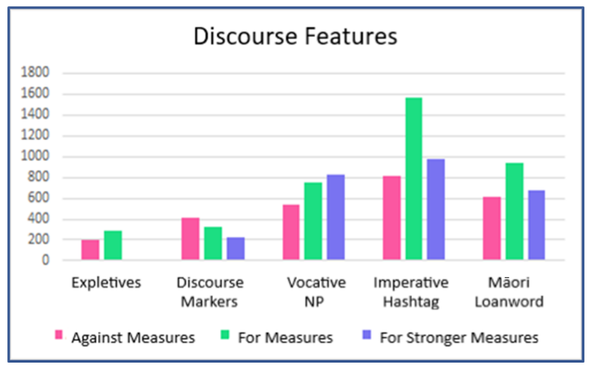
What's the best way to word my directive?

Discourse Features

Add your own flair!





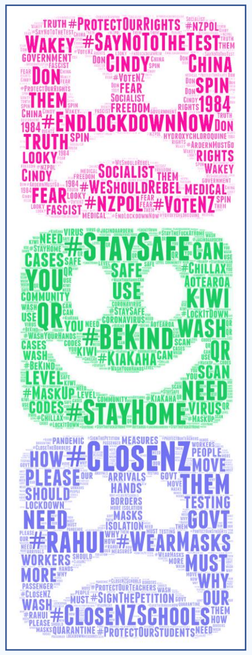


See it in action!

Please hang in there Steve. More and more are waking up to this tyranny. When 2020 has concluded and we have the final mortality figures, only the most wilfully deluded will remain in denial. #COVID19nz	Seymour is a cockwomble. It was assumed knowledge but it needed to be spelled out. AirBnB's for managed isolation? Fuck off with that dumbfuckery. #COVID19nz	And with that…The gates of Middle Earth are now officially closed. If you're not a hobbit you can fuck right off #Covid19NZ	Would Jacinda care to explain this screenshot that is currently circulating NZ right at this moment? #nzlockdown #COVID19nz #WhatsUpDoc?	Well done Aotearoa. Let's not get complacent and let's keep tracking, tracing and scanning in! #COVID19nz	Geez #NewZealand look what you have done! From the people that have studied and lived communism, inform yourself before its too late #NZPolitics #nzpol #NZHellhole #covid19nz
Negative politeness + Imperative + Vocative	**Bald Command + Imperative + Expletive**	**Off record + Declarative + Expletive**	**Off record + Interrogative**	**Positive politeness + Let's + Māori Loanword + Vocative NP**	**Bald command + Imperative + Discourse Marker + Vocative NP + Expletive**

What's trending?

Against Measures



For Stronger Measures

This matters…why?

Identifying linguistic strategies associated with strong ideological stances better enables us to recognize when we are being persuaded.

This in turn helps us become more analytical social media users.

Acknowledgements

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