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Mood, Modality, and Multimodality Analysis in the Thai Government's Infographics during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The purposes of the current study were to explore the interpersonal clause grammar found in mood selections and modality choices and to analyze the multimodality of the Covid-19 infographics published by the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand. The theoretical frameworks were based on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014) and modes of communication (Kress, 2010; The New London Group, 1996). The findings suggested that the infographics informed and provided prevention methods for the Covid-19 virus to the general Thai population. The use of obligation and modal markers were significantly higher than other types of modality due to the media's purpose. The infographics also contained imperative clauses most frequently, followed by declarative clauses, whereas interrogative clauses were not found. In terms of multimodal analysis, the elements and formats in the Covid-19 infographics were similar and interrelated to convey meanings. The consistent presentation helped readers follow the government's instructions easily.

1. Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined Covid-19 as an infectious disease that causes acute respiratory illness and carries risks of death. On March 11, 2020, the WHO declared its outbreak a pandemic, indicating the worldwide spread of this novel disease. As the virus can spread without causing symptoms, the number of infected people has steadily increased on a global scale. As a result, state authorities across the world have faced big challenges with the rare virus while managing to keep their citizens safe. Government organizations, including those in Thailand, have published valuable information, measures, and announcements through various channels of mass media, such as printed and online posters and television advertisements. Under these circumstances, the published media must be easy to comprehend, effective, and appropriate for all readers. For example, announcements from a government carry a clear purpose and show reliability, careful editing, and thoughtful design for readability, which fulfill the requirements of public writing (Doyle, 2017).

Currently, the world is surrounded by modern technologies that greatly facilitate and accelerate our lives. The Internet, which creates a vast online world, is one of these valuable innovations. Smith (2018) claims that social media deliver updated news and the latest trends and connect the whole world with a single click of a mouse. Yet, the Internet's credibility has increased as the user's perception changes over time (Mandelli & Vianello, 2010). This digital platform has become a channel with remarkable implications for marketing media, public administrations, governments, and companies. Consequently, a vast amount of information is created and shared in an online format, including infographics.

Infographics, or information graphics, incorporate multiple visual representations that attract attention, reduce cognitive load, and activate schema (Clark & Lyons, 2010). They have the ability to communicate the fundamentals and essence of a message (Dunlap & Lowenthal, 2016). With infographics, readers do not need to read through extensive texts as other elements, e.g., images and symbols, can convey the story on their own (Kress, 2010). These multimodal elements, drawn from various modes of communication, serve as tools in meaning-making, and all are equally important (Kress, 2010). As a result, infographics are used and created in a variety of industries by diverse creators, including during the pandemic.

The influential role of government messages to citizens is widely acknowledged. To assist readers in comprehending the features and significance of the elements contained in the Covid-19 infographics published by the Thai government, the current study investigates the grammatical structures related to mood and modality choices in interpersonal clauses. Additionally, it analyzes the Covid-19 infographics' multimodality through an exploration of their interpersonal metafunctions and modes of communication.

In order to achieve the objectives, the research questions are as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of the mood and modality selections in the Thai government's Covid-19 infographics?

2. What are the characteristics of multimodal elements in the Thai government's Covid-19 infographics?

2. Literature Review

This section covers key topics: Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), including mood and modality systems, and multimodality and modes of communication. These topics support the analysis of the Thai government's Covid-19 infographics within SFL's interpersonal metafunction and multimodal communication framework.

2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Linguistics, henceforth SFL, is a theory initially formulated by John Rupert Firth but predominantly developed by Michael Halliday in the 1960s (Butt, 2019). This linguistic theory considers language as a social semiotic system and describes how language generates potential meaning within its context. Based on Halliday (1978) and Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), SFL analyzes language at four strata: context (of culture), semantics, lexicogrammar, and phonology/graphology. In addition, language is also examined through three metafunctions (modes of meaning): textual, interpersonal, and ideational. As languages are resources for creating meanings, SFL adopts a holistic approach—an ecological exploration. Moreover, it investigates language through natural texts functioning in their contexts and employs a trinocular perspective on language consisting of below, above, and around perspectives.

Tannen (2007, p. 2) asserts that language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for expressing, constructing, and negotiating social

relationships and identity. The literacy framework was then developed, consisting of field, tenor, and mode, as these three key factors can provide a system for illustrating sociolinguistics more clearly. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 33), “field” refers to the subject matter within a given situation, “tenor” refers to the persons involved in the situation, and “mode” refers to the role played by language and other semiotic systems in the situation.

Based on three metafunctions, the interpersonal metafunction was selected as the framework to explore social roles and relationships manifested in the Thai government’s Covid-19 infographics. In the subsequent sections, this study explores the interpersonal clause grammar, specifically focusing on the Mood system, which reveals how clauses are constructed. Moreover, the Modality system is explored, demonstrating how Covid-19 information is assessed and evaluated by the Thai authorities. This assessment encompasses the negotiation region of the proposition and proposal, which involves weighing positive and negative values towards the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.2 Systemic Functional Linguistics

2.2.1 Mood

The mood system, known as mood structure, is one of systems within the interpersonal metafunction. This interpersonal clause grammar presents the involved interactants in conversation. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 23-24), mood is divided into major and minor clauses. All major clauses select for mood types—indicative (declarative and interrogative) and imperative. Indicative clauses realize “proposition” (statement and question), while imperative clauses realize “proposal” (offer). Major clauses generate free and bound clauses, and minor clauses contain calls, greetings, and discourse continuity.

In English, the mood structure consists of two parts: the Subject (a nominal group) and the Finite (a verbal group), whereas the rest of the clause is called Residue, which includes Complement and Adjunct. The order of the mood element determines clause types, i.e., declarative (where the Subject is followed by the Finite) and polar interrogative (where the Finite is followed by the Subject).

In Thai, the mood structure comprises Negotiatory elements and clause Remainders. The Negotiatory elements consist of a mandatory Predicator and an optional Negotiator,

realized by an interpersonal particle. The Negotiatory element is essential in determining mood selections and assessing the negotiatory value of a clause in a dialogic exchange. On the other hand, the Remainder, which can be a Subject, Complement, or Adjunct, offers three alternatives for the configuration of the mood structure in Thai: the Negotiatory element ^ the Remainder element (the symbol '^' means 'followed by'). This structural arrangement enables Thai speakers to effectively perform their social roles and interactions and engage in collaborative interactions while conveying interpersonal meaning.

Dialogic exchanges consist of initiating mood and responding mood. The initiating mood has four speech functions: statement, offer, question, and command. Similarly, the responding mood has four speech functions: acknowledgement, compliance, answer, and acceptance.

2.2.2 Modality

Modality is a non-compulsory system within the interpersonal metafunction as it is not essential in independent major clauses. According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 177-178), modality can be categorized as modalization and modulation. Modalization operates on propositions and encompasses (i) degree of probability with likelihood and (ii) degree of usuality with oftenness. On the other hand, modulation is an evaluation of proposals and is restricted to command and offer speech functions. Modulation contains (i) obligation for command speech function and (ii) tendency for offer. Modality is expressed through optional forms, such as modal finite in English or modal marker in Thai, as well as through mood adjuncts and interpersonal grammatical metaphors. Besides, modality can express the speakers' positions in various forms, for instance, probability, usuality, obligation, temporality, and typicality.

Recent linguistic research has explored mood and modality in various contexts. For instance, Yu (2017) argued that advertisers use different moods to provide information or make texts more interactive, while modality is used to control readers' attitudes and behavior. Dajem and Alyousef (2020) studied mood and modality in workplace discourse and found that those in power employ different mood structures and modality and play the role of instruction-givers, allowing them to express attitudes and judgments. Conversely, those with less power are instruction-receivers. In another study, Syamsidar et al. (2019) examined the use of mood types and modality in Soekarno's speeches and found that declarative clauses were used to express competence in persuasive speech while

maintaining a neutral tone and fostering a close relationship with the audience. These studies provide valuable insights into the application of mood and modality in different linguistic contexts.

2.3 Multimodality and Modes of Communication

Multimodality focuses on the application of several modes of communication or representation in one medium (Kress, 2010). Media do not contain only texts but also incorporate selected colors, images, and symbols depending on the mode—a communication channel. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) revealed that modes definitely show the relations between sign creators and receivers and display the specific social relations among producers, viewers, and represented projects. The New London Group (1996) divided modes of communication into five modes and proposed a framework for multimodal analysis. These modes include: (i) textual mode, which realizes linguistic choices, e.g., modality, vocabulary, and information structure; (ii) visual mode, which considers objects, symbols, sizes, and colors; (iii) spatial mode, which analyzes space organization; (iv) gestural mode, which considers body language, facial expressions, and feelings; and (v) audio mode, which examines songs, music, and sounds.

Research focusing on the gestural mode has revealed interesting findings. Marentette et al. (2020) found that pantomime is part of multimodal communication in children and is associated with longer and higher-quality responses. These gestures often adopt a character-viewpoint and use non-manual articulators, revealing an understanding of the role of pantomime in speech-gesture integration. Regarding the textual mode, Acosta (2018) analyzed a song to examine the portrayal of African Americans in the United States. The singer assumes shared knowledge among the listeners, as evidenced by the use of exophoric references, and uses imperative clauses without any interrogative clauses. The singer assumes the role of an information indicator or presenter. In regards to the audio mode, Yao and Zhuo (2018) analyzed a promotional video of China's Hangzhou city, finding that background music can stir viewers' emotions, engage them with enjoyment through tempos and rhythms, and complement the visual representations. These studies demonstrate how different communication modes can significantly influence effectiveness, thereby providing insights for designing more impactful communication strategies.

3. Methodology

3.1 Data Collection

This qualitative study employed the frameworks of interpersonal metafunction—mood and modality—along with The New London Group's (1996) modes of communication to analyze a series of eight Covid-19 infographics. These infographics were published by the Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, during the Covid-19 pandemic. The data was collected approximately one week after the online publication from the department's website under the column titled "How to Prevent Coronavirus" (only in Thai version). The data was made available online on March 19th, 2020, at a time of intense Covid-19 crisis in Thailand. The government created these online advisory infographics for a total of eight public places, including public transportation, passenger transportation, religious places, military camps, condominiums, hotels, tour groups, and restaurants, to serve as safety guidelines. Each infographic was specifically tailored to one of these eight public places. Furthermore, all of the infographics analyzed in this study belonged to a single set, sharing the same parallel design pattern.

3.2 Data Analysis

To begin the study, all textual information in Thai was transliterated and translated into English to preserve its literal meaning. The verbal section of the infographics, including titles, subtitles, and informative messages, was subjected to analysis. Ure's text classification (1989) was applied to categorize the infographic texts. Mood and modality choices were utilized to examine the textual selections. Mood was analyzed in terms of mood structure (i.e., the Negotiatory element ^ the Remainder element) and mood types (i.e., declarative mood, interrogative mood, and imperative mood). Modality was investigated based on the notion of modality in Systemic Functional Linguistics, as well as modality in Thai grammar and discourse as proposed by Rangkupan (2005). The various types and realizations of modality were identified (e.g., obligation modality is realized by k^huan1 'should' and tɔŋ3 'must'). Furthermore, the study analyzed the multimodal elements present in the infographics across three modes of communication. The textual mode was examined to determine how structures and content were realized, while the visual mode was explored to identify how letters, objects, logos, colors, and sizes were utilized. The spatial mode was evaluated to assess the organization and layout of the infographics.

By integrating the analysis of all three modes, a comprehensive understanding of the infographics' design was achieved. The results were primarily presented in tables, supplemented by relevant explanations and accompanying images to provide further clarity and context.

4. Results

Initially, the characteristics of mood and modality selections within the Covid-19 infographics of the Thai government are presented. Subsequently, the attributes of the multimodal components in the textual, visual, and spatial designs are explained.

4.1 Mood and Modality Choices

4.1.1 Contextual Values: Field, Tenor, and Mode

The three key elements of the messages in the Covid-19 infographics published by the Thai government are presented in Table 1. The table includes the categories of field, toner, and mode, along with their subtypes and descriptions.

Table 1

Contextual values of Covid-19 infographics

Contextual values	Subtypes	Descriptions
Field	Social processes	Give information, advice, and suggestions to general Thai citizens.
	Social action	Inform and guide readers.
	Domain	Nature of information being given: hygienic and medical related information
Tenor	Institutional role	Government sectors - Thai citizens
	Hierarchy	Inequal: information sources > message receivers
	Interactant	Expert: the government's public health officers Audience: Thai citizens and company owners who seek methods for preventing and protecting themselves from the Covid-19 virus

Table 1

Contextual values of Covid-19 infographics (Cont.)

Contextual values	Subtypes	Descriptions
Tenor	Distance	Neutral (no specific relationship between media creators and readers)
	Speech role	Information, advice, and suggestion giver - information, advice, and suggestion receiver
Mode	Medium	Online written and graphic presentation
	Turn-taking	Monologue
	Rhetorical mode	Formally informative and imperative modes
	Text organization	Blocks of short clauses with similar methods of text development and examples of each place

4.1.2 Classification

Although infographics were developed after Ure's (1989) text typology, the textual messages in the Covid-19 infographics produced by the Thai government are presented in the form of monologue written text. In this case, the Thai government acts as the text producer, while Thai citizens serve as the text receivers who only view and follow the provided instructions. The messages fit in the Advice and Warnings categories, which are specialized messages aimed at suggesting specific actions to viewers during rare crises. Moreover, together with visual elements, all multimodal components are incorporated to support the meaning-making process, functioning as advice and warnings from the authorities.

4.1.3 Interpersonal Metafunction Analysis

Mood in the Covid-19 Infographics

The Thai language has a unique characteristic wherein the subject of a clause can be omitted, leading to a "subjectless clause," as shown in Example 1. This linguistic feature poses a challenge for readers to identify whether a clause is declarative or imperative. However, the analysis of the Covid-19 infographics reveals that the predominant type of clause is imperative, mainly consisting of a Predicator. In Thai mood structure, the Predictor is one of the resources in major clauses, realized by either a verbal group simplex or a verbal group complex (Patpong, 2006). The interpersonal organization of Thai

clauses found in the Covid-19 infographics includes a mandatory Predicator and optional Subject, Complement, and Adjunct. This organization can be expressed as: ± Subject + Predicator ± Complement ± Adjunct.

Example 1

Subject-omitted declarative clause (hotel infographic)

Conjunction	Predicator	Complement	Predicator
ha:k2	mi:1	kraj1	puaj2
if	have	who	be sick

Predicator			Adjunct
kʰuan1	ri:p3	paj	roŋ1 pʰaʔ4 ja:1 ba:n1
should	rush	go	hospital

Translation: If one is a sick person, one should rush to a hospital.

According to Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014, p. 24) classification of general mood types, which includes declarative, imperative, and interrogative, imperative clauses were the most frequently used in the Covid-19 infographics produced by the Thai government, followed by declarative clauses, as depicted in Table 2. Notably, interrogative clauses were not employed in the infographics. Given that the primary purpose of the infographics is to provide information to readers, the media creator primarily used declarative clauses, specifically the positive present, to convey their intention.

Table 2

Mood types in the eight Covid-19 infographics

Mood Choices /Places	Clause ranks			Groups/ Phrase ranks	Number of clauses/phrases
	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	Phrases	
Public transportation	11 (46%)	-	12 (50%)	1 (4%)	24
Passenger transportation	15 (56%)	-	11 (40%)	1 (4%)	27
Religious places	5 (28%)	-	12 (67%)	1 (5%)	18
Military camps	9 (29%)	-	21 (68%)	1 (3%)	31

Table 2

Mood types in the eight Covid-19 infographics (cont.)

Mood Choices /Places	Clause ranks			Groups/ Phrase ranks	Number of clauses/phrases
	Declarative	Interrogative	Imperative	Phrases	
Condominiums	5 (21%)	-	18 (75%)	1 (4%)	24
Hotels	13 (37%)	-	21 (60%)	1 (3%)	35
Tour groups	12 (46%)	-	13 (50%)	1 (4%)	26
Restaurants	7 (25%)	-	20 (71%)	1 (4%)	28
Total	**77 (36%)**	**0 (0%)**	**128 (60%)**	**8 (4%)**	**213**

Focusing on declarative clauses, some clauses within the infographics include modal markers to provide a clearer concept by expressing a range of obligations. A comparison between clauses with and without modal markers is presented in Examples 2 and 3, respectively. Additionally, Yu (2017) asserts that declarative clauses are a common tool for providing and conveying information. In the present study, the findings indicate that out of a total of 213 declarative clauses, 77 (36%) are accompanied by modal markers, accounting for over one-third of all the examined clauses.

Example 2

Declarative clause (passenger transportation infographic)

Subject	Predicator	Complement
kwa:m1 ru:4	kɯ:1	pʰu:m1 kʰum4 kan1
knowledge	be	immunity

Translation: Knowledge is immunity.

Example 3

Declarative clause + modal marker (passenger transportation infographic)

Subject	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
bɔ1 ri4 sat2 haj3 chao3 rot4	kʰuan1 du:1 lɛ:1	kwa:m1 saʔ1 ʔa:t2	saʔ1 tʰa:n5 tʰi:2
company give rent car	should take care	cleanness	place

Translation: Car rental companies should keep their places clean.

Regarding imperative clauses, the data only shows the presence of a jussive imperative clause, which urges readers to take action on their own. Apart from providing information, a series of Covid-19 infographics produced by the Thai government aim to encourage or discourage certain actions, thus making imperative clauses a common feature. Yu (2017) added that imperative clauses motivate readers to take positive and effective actions. The most frequently used mood type in the Covid-19 infographics is the imperative clause, which takes up 128 (60%) out of 213 clauses. These imperative clauses may also be accompanied by modal markers. Example 4 provides an imperative clause with a persuasive intention, while Example 5 provides an imperative clause with a dissuasive intention. Additionally, Examples 6 and 7 illustrate imperative clauses with modal markers.

Example 4

Imperative clause 'DO it' (religious place infographic)

Predicator	Complement	Predicator	Complement
ha:5	tʰa:ŋ1	lot4	kʰwa:m1 ʔɛ:1 ʔat1
find	way	reduce	crowdedness

Translation: Try to reduce crowdedness.

Example 5

Imperative clause 'DON'T do it' (condominium infographic)

Predicator					Complement		
Complement							
maj3	nam1	mɯ:1	ma:1	sam5 pʰat1	ta:1	caʔ1 mu:k2	pa:k1
NEG.: not	bring	hand	come	touch	eye	nose	mouth

Translation: Do not touch eyes, nose, and mouth with hands.

Example 6

Imperative clause + modal markers (hotel infographic)

Predicator			Adjunct
kʰuan1	ri:p1	paj1	roŋ1 pʰaʔ4 ja:1 ba:n1
should	hurry	go	hospital

Translation: One should rush to the hospital.

Example 7

Imperative clause + modal markers (passenger transportation infographic)

Conjunction	Predicator	Complement	Adjunct
tɔŋ3	tʰam1	kwam1 saʔ1 ʔa:t1	tʰuk4 kʰraŋ4
must	make	cleaness	every time

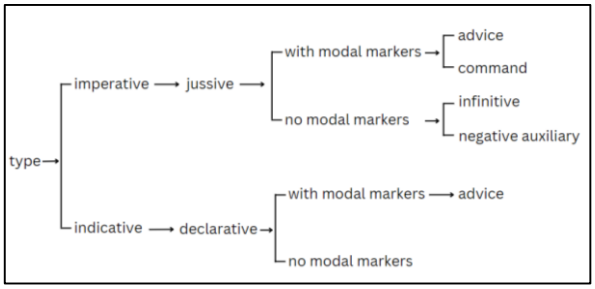
Conjunction	Predicator	Complement
laŋ5	haj3	bɔ1 riʔ4 ka:n1
after	give	service

Translation: One must clean (vehicle) every time after service.

In terms of interrogative clauses, their traditional function was to pose questions and elicit answers (Yu, 2017). However, their current function has shifted toward making an impact on discourse and capturing readers' attention. This shift in function may explain the absence of interrogative clauses in the Covid-19 infographics, as their purpose is to inform and guide readers in preventing the spread of the virus, rather than to elicit answers or create emphasis in the texts. Figure 1 presents the system of mood types found in the Covid-19 infographics.

Figure 1

Mood type system of Covid-19 infographics



Not only clauses but also phrases appear in the Covid-19 messages. As indicated in Table 2, each Covid-19 infographic features a single phrase that functions as a subtitle. Interestingly, all eight subtitles share the same pattern and meaning, with only the names of the places varying, as shown in Example 8.

Example 8

Subtitle of Covid-19 infographics

wi4	tʰi:1	cat2	ka:n1	(places)	haj3	plɔ:t2	waj1	rat4	kʰo:1	ro:1	na:3	sip2	kao3
method		manage			give	free	virus		Corona			19	

Translation: The Methods for Keeping (places) Free from Coronavirus/Covid-19

Modality in the Covid-19 Infographics

Modal marker

Modality can express the degree of a writer's confidence and can be achieved in three methods: modal auxiliary, modal adjunct, and interpersonal grammatical metaphor (Thompson, 2000). The analysis presents that the modality observed in the Covid-19 infographics includes probability, obligation, and inclination, as shown in Examples 9, 10, and 11, respectively. However, the concept of usuality was not present in the infographics.

Example 9

Obligation modal marker (tour group infographic)

Predicator		**Complement**			
kʰuan1	sɔ:p2 tʰa:m5	praʔ2	wat2	ka:n1 dɤ:n1 tʰa:ŋ1	
should	ask	history		travel	

Translation: One should ask about travel histories.

Example 10

Inclination modal marker (restaurant infographic)

Conjunction	**Predicator**		**Adjunct**			
do:j1	sa:5 ma:t3	da:w1 lo:t2	daj3	tʰi:3	krom1 kʰuap3 kʰum1	ro:k3
by	can	download	at		Department of Disease Control	

Translation: … by being able to download from the Department of Disease Control.

Example 11

Probability modal marker (public transportation infographic)

Subject	Predicator	Complement
ka:n1 cam1 na:j2 tua5 tʰa:ŋ1 ʔɔ:n1 la:j1	caʔ2	chuaj3 lot4 kʰa:m1 ʔɛ:1 ʔat2
selling ticket via online	will	help reduce congestion

Translation: Selling tickets online will help reduce congestion.

Table 3 demonstrates the frequency of modal markers utilized in the Covid-19 texts. As indicated, obligation markers appear most frequently, followed by inclination, probability, and usuality. Out of 46 clauses, 44 (96%) are modulated clauses and 2 (4%) are modalized clauses. Obligation and inclination belong to proposal (goods-&-services), which aims to command and offer. Since the Covid-19 infographics were designed to guide readers in following the government's recommendation, the dominant obligation markers are evident, with *should* being the most predominant, followed by *must*. In addition, the scarcity of probability markers in the texts is due to their association with uncertainty, which is inappropriate in formal media during a crisis.

Table 3

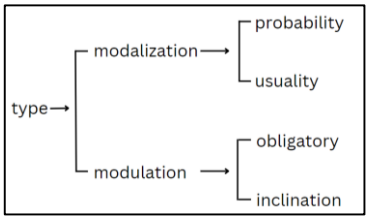
Modality in the eight Covid-19 infographics

Types/Places	Preposition		Proposal	
	Probability	Usuality	Obligatory	Inclination
Public transportation	1	1	3	-
Passenger transportation	-	-	7	2
Religious places	-	-	4	1
Military camps	-	-	5	-
Condominiums	-	-	1	2
Hotels	-	-	6	-
Tour groups	-	-	3	1
Restaurants	-	-	8	1
Total (n=46)	**1 (2%)**	**1 (2%)**	**37 (81%)**	**7 (15%)**

Figure 2 presents the system of modality types found in the Covid-19 infographics.

Figure 2

Modality type system of Covid-19 infographics



Modal adjunct

Mood elements sometimes appear with modal adjuncts, creating more meaning. Halliday (1994) classified modal adjuncts as (i) polarity and modality, (ii) temporarity, and (iii) intensity. Each type also consists of several subtypes to express different definitions. As shown in Example 12, the clause holds the adjuncts of polarity and modality of the usuality subtype. The excerpt is part of a cleaning suggestion showing that workers should clean touched areas frequently. So, this modal adjunct is added to illustrate a clearer picture.

Example 12

Mood with Modal adjunct (public transportation infographic)

Subject	Predicator	Modal adjunct
pʰu:3 do:j1 sa:n5	sam5 pʰat2	bɔj2 bɔj2
passenger	touch	frequently

Translation: Passengers touch frequently.

Interpersonal grammatical metaphor

Interpersonal grammatical metaphor is a useful method for analyzing modality in texts as it expands the system of congruence and incongruence in speech and tenor relationship construction. According to Halliday (1994), the texts in the Covid-19 infographics do not contain interpersonal grammatical metaphors, whether in terms of mood or modality. In other words, only congruent interpersonal clause structures are used to convey warning

and advice, which can be regarded as another form of imperative clause. The absence of incongruence in the Covid-19 infographics can be attributed to the purposes of the public medium, which aim to directly inform and guide readers. Therefore, the content remains neutral and straightforward, while still considering the relationship between writers and recipients.

4.2 Multimodal Analysis

In addition to verbal messages, the Covid-19 infographics incorporate non-verbal elements presented in the form of multimodal media. These elements collaborate to convey the intended meaning of the media. To analyze the multimodal elements of the Covid-19 infographics published by the Thai government sector, this study employs The New London Group's (1996) modes of communication. Before conducting the analysis, Figure 3 is presented to offer some examples of the infographics for a comprehensive understanding.

Figure 3

Examples of Covid-19 infographics (Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020)



Note. From *How to Manage to be Free from the Coronavirus*, by Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020, (https://ddc.moph.go.th/viral pneumonia/info.php)

4.2.1 Textual information

A series of infographics is comprised of various text elements, including titles, subtitles, and content. The subtitles are placed closely beneath the titles, both appearing larger and bolder in font compared to other texts, with the titles being the most prominent. While some subtitles are placed at the top of the infographics, others are slightly centered. All infographics share the common title “tʰuk4 fa:j2 ruam3 caj1 chuaj3 praʔ1 tʰe:t3 tʰaj1”

(Everyone is United to Help Thailand), accompanied by a symbol of the Thai flag, as depicted in Figure 4. In certain places, the subtitles may vary slightly, such as for military camps and hotels, where they are presented as “wiʔ4 tʰi:1 cat2 ka:n1 (places) haj3 plɔ:t1 waj1 rat4 (kʰo:1 ro1 na:3/ kʰo:1 wit2) sip1 kao3” (The Methods for Keeping (places) Safe from Coronavirus/Covid-19). The media creators have published the infographics following a consistent pattern to maintain a series and enhance readers’ comprehension. The subtitles are only colored letters, allowing them stand out from other text elements.

Figure 4

In-line Thailand’s flag in subtitle

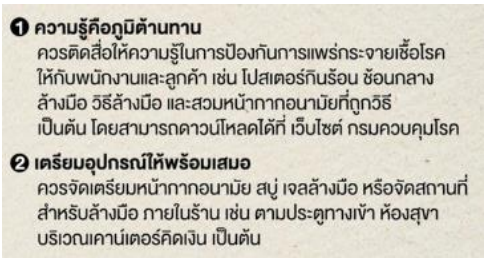


Note. From *How to Manage to be Free from the Coronavirus*, by Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020, (https://ddc.moph.go.th/viral pneumonia/info.php)

The content within the Covid-19 infographics is structured into concise paragraphs that feature a title phrase and accompanying clauses. The layout can be either horizontal or vertical. The margins of the content blocks are uniformly level, allowing for ease of reading and comprehension. Each content block is preceded by a cardinal number and has either a square or rectangular shape, signifying the sequential order that readers should follow. The title of each content block is shown in a slightly thicker font compared to the accompanying details. Given the limited space, the total number of messages in each infographic does not exceed 35 single clauses. All text is in black and in the Thai language, catering to the Thai audience for easier reading. Notably, most infographics, such as those related to condominiums, hotels, and military camps contain advice paragraphs, covering topics like knowledge, equipment preparation, and hygiene, which are repeated throughout the media. Figure 5 illustrates a visual representation of the positioning and organization of the content within the infographics.

Figure 5

Content organization



Note. From *How to Manage to be Free from the Coronavirus*, by Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020, (https://ddc.moph.go.th/viral pneumonia/info.php)

4.2.2 Visual Objects

The selection of objects in the Covid-19 infographics depends on the specific place being addressed. For example, if the infographic pertains to protective measures for restaurants, food-related objects are featured. The objects associated with each place are displayed and positioned differently throughout the infographic, including at the center, left, and right, and may occupy the majority of the space compared to other elements. The number of objects featured in a single infographic can range from one to three. Although the objects are vividly colored, they are adjusted to ensure they do not overly contrast with the beige background. Figure 6 displays three infographics of religious places—a temple, church, and mosque—reflecting the religious diversity in Thailand. While the content remains identical, the objects are customized to align with the relevant religion.

Figure 6

Comparison of religious places



Note. From *How to Manage to be Free from the Coronavirus*, by Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020, (https://ddc.moph.go.th/viral pneumonia/info.php)

4.2.3 Logos

As the Covid-19 infographics are issued by the government sector, they include logos from multiple government agencies. These logos serve to signify the media's source and enhance credibility. The logos comprise ministry campaigns, hotlines, QR codes, and icons for social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The logos of the ministry and its affiliated agencies are situated in the upper right corner, featuring a small size and circular or rectangular shapes. In contrast, the QR codes for each social media platform are placed in the lower right corner, sharing the same small size and square-shaped blocks. Beneath these blocks, the icons of the social media platforms and the channels' names are displayed within small rectangles, as illustrated in Figure 7. In summary, the logos are categorized into two sections: the upper section representing public authorities' symbols and the lower section representing contact channel symbols.

Figure 7

Contact channel symbols



Note. From *How to Manage to be Free from the Coronavirus*, by Department of Disease Control of Thailand, 2020, (https://ddc.moph.go.th/viral pneumonia/info.php)

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The current study explores interpersonal metafunction, mood and modality, and multimodality in a series of the Covid-19 infographics published by the Thai government sector during the pandemic. The inquiry is guided by the following research queries: What are the characteristics of the mood and modality selections in a series of Covid-19 infographics produced by the Thai government? And what are the characteristics of the multimodal elements in a series of Covid-19 infographics produced by the Thai government?

The results following the first question indicate that the mood selection and modality in the Covid-19 infographics strongly express the intention to command and suggest readers. This aligns with the approach taken in infographics by reliable organizations

like the WHO and CDC, which incorporate textual suggestions in the form of how-tos, dos and don'ts, and step-by-step guidelines, alongside commands in the form of imperatives (Pandya, 2021). Accordingly, the imperative mood type and obligation of proposal are predominant, followed by the declarative mood type. However, the Thai language's omission of subjects can lead to a potential misinterpretation of specific text types. For instance, while English clauses without subjects are counted as imperative clauses, Thai clauses without subjects can be both imperative and declarative clauses. Furthermore, the degree of formality in the Covid-19 infographics is not high, as they are produced for general audiences in Thailand. Maintaining a highly formal tone in messages could impede message reception because citizens are increasingly seeking valuable information from government communication during emergencies due to its faster flow (Sandoval-Almazan & Valle-Cruz, 2021).

Considering the lethal nature of Covid-19, societies can be better protected if governments issue announcements using strong obligation words. In Thailand, the Thai government's infographics predominantly use the modal marker "kʰuan1" (should) for suggestions, rather than the more direct "tɔŋ3" (must) for commands. This approach by Thailand's government, as a public media creator, provides readers with choices even during the emergency, mitigating the stress arising from the situation. Similarly, Gill (2022) reveals that while the UK government controls the country with fear through television ads during the pandemic, it also employs conditional imperatives, as noticed from the terms of exceptions to the rules, such as "necessity" and "try," offering choices and exceptions to certain rules. These differences in the Thai and UK governments' approaches contrast with Mirbabaie et al.'s (2020) findings that the Covid-19 crisis has triggered a rise in command and control in societies.

With regards to multimodal analysis, a series of Covid-19 infographics follow a consistent pattern and format. The consistency and synergy of multimodal identity aptly aid readers in the media-consuming process while also enhancing their credibility and fostering a positive attitude toward the organization (Kaur & Kaur, 2021). Every element was purposefully selected and positioned to convey the creator's intentions, including the images of places, different text colors, and logo placement. Based on Balkac and Ergun (2018), infographics should consider their purpose, subject matter, and targeted audience before initiating the design process. Each element works together to convey

a coherent meaning, and if one element is missing, it can affect the overall message. Consequently, infographics concentrate on simplicity, efficient use of information, and overall impact. Furthermore, infographics serve as valuable communication tools in the digital age, where almost everything is online. The Covid-19 infographics take advantage of visual information, particularly QR codes, to establish a direct link between the government sector and its citizens. By simply scanning this symbol with an electronic device, readers can access all the information they need within seconds.

As a result of the devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, online infographics published by the government have emerged as a trusted source of information, perfectly aligning with the demands of the digital age. The convenience of online media has proven particularly beneficial for individuals staying at home. However, it is important to note that the current study only uses data created by the government, and there are abundant infographics produced by non-governmental sectors that also warrant further examination.

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