

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The comments left by viewers on *Hereditary* and *Midsommar* reveal not just what people thought of the films, they also show how they used language to express those thoughts. In Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), mood refers to the structure of a clause and how it positions the speaker in relation to others, means whether they're sharing a statement (declarative), asking a question (interrogative), or giving advice or instruction (imperative) (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014; Thompson, 2014).

Across both films, the declarative mood was by far the most common. Out of 100 comments, 35 declaratives appeared in *Hereditary* and 30 in *Midsommar*. These are straightforward statements like "It is haunting" or "The cinematography is absolutely stunning." They show how viewers prefer to share their reactions as clear, confident opinions. Declaratives allow speakers to present their emotional responses almost as facts, which aligns with what Halliday calls the interpersonal function of language, it is how we use grammar to build relationships and express judgment.

In contrast, the imperative mood, which giving commands or suggestions like "Don't spoil the ending", found to be the least used: just 5 in *Hereditary* and 10 in *Midsommar*. These were mostly friendly tips or warnings, suggesting that viewers were more interested in sharing experiences than directing others. Interrogative mood appeared in moderation, often as rhetorical or reflective questions (e.g., "Was Peter possessed or traumatized?"), inviting others to think along rather than demanding answers.

What these patterns suggest is that viewers used language not just to react, but to connect emotionally and express a sense of shared experience. This supports Zappavigna's (2011) idea of ambient affiliation, it also means that how people use

language to build community online, even without directly interacting. By using declaratives filled with emotional weight, viewers align themselves with others who felt the same, creating a kind of silent agreement.

Finally, based on the tone and language used, especially the high number of positive, declarative statements, that means it's clear that both *Hereditary* and *Midsommar* were generally well received. While viewers pointed out moments of discomfort or ambiguity, their overall tone was reflective, admiring, and emotionally invested. In short, mood doesn't just show how people write, it means it gives us insight into how deeply these films resonated with audiences.

5.5 Suggestions for Future Researchers

Building on this work, future studies could expand both the scope and methods. Academically, researchers could analyze a larger and more diverse corpus of viewer comments: for example, comments on films of different genres (comedy vs. horror) or by other auteurs, and across multiple platforms (Reddit, YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, etc.). A cross-genre comparison might reveal whether certain patterns are specific to horror (e.g. high affect and disgust) or more general to all film fandom. Computational tools (sentiment analysis, corpus linguistics) could also be used to process larger comment datasets, automating aspects of tagging to test whether the trends found here hold at scale.

Qualitative future research could integrate interviews or surveys with comment analysis to triangulate audience attitudes. For example, linking language data with self-reported viewer motivations (such as desire for catharsis) would deepen understanding of why fans use such language. Another avenue is longitudinal study: comparing comment language immediately post-release versus years later could show how viewer commentary evolves.

In applied terms, this research has implications for media literacy and content analysis. Media educators could use SFL-based findings to teach students how to critically read audience commentaries, recognizing the types of evaluative language and social strategies people use online.

In aligning the findings with the initial research questions, this study confirms that mood are not only linguistic resources for expressing individual evaluations but are also essential tools for identity positioning, emotional affiliation, and reinforcing shared norms within horror film fandoms.

