Simon Mauck, Miok Pak, Paul Portner and Raffaella Zanuttini
Georgetown University

Clause Typing in Imperatives: A Cross-linguistic Perspective

0. Background

Sentential force per se is not directly encoded in the syntactic representation; rather, clause typing is marked in the syntax by encoding primitive components of the type's semantics. In Zanuttini & Portner (2003), this approach was applied to explain the entire range of forms conventionally associated with the force of exclaiming, and now we are extending it to the clause type of imperatives. Here, we examine the subject of imperatives because it constitutes an important component in clause typing of imperatives in our approach.

1 Hypothesis

We will explore the viability of the following hypothesis:

> UG contains a principle requiring imperative subjects to refer to, or quantify over, an addressee, a group of addressees, or a group containing the addressee(s).

We will begin by examining imperatives with third person subjects (section 2), and then turn to first person subjects (section 3). The facts which we bring up will allow us to discuss the hypothesis in sections 4 and 5.

2 Third person subjects

2.1 English

English imperatives have subjects that appear to be counterexample to the hypothesis stated above. These are noun phrases that trigger third person agreement on the verb in other clause types (declaratives, interrogatives), such as *everyone*, *Jane* and bind third person pronouns and anaphors. While it is hard to tell what kind of verbal agreement they trigger in imperatives, it is clear that they can bind third person pronouns and anaphors.

Quantificational subjects
The literature on imperatives generally points out that, in addition to null subjects and overt second person subjects, quantifiers are also possible imperative subjects in English:

(1)   Everyone raise their/his hand!
(2)   Someone raise their/his hand!

Despite the third properties exhibited by these examples, it is clear from their meaning that the addressee is involved; in particular, these subjects quantify over a set of

addressees. Furthermore, while these subjects obligatorily bind third person pronouns and anaphors in other clause types, they can bind second person in imperatives:

(3)a   Everyone raised their/*your hand. (declarative)
(3)b   Everyone raise your hand! (imperative)
(4)a   Students, someone should raise their/his/*your hand. (declarative)
(4)b   Students, someone raise your hand! (imperative)

Finally, in the presence of a tag question, the tag obligatorily shows a third person subject in other clause types, but a second person subject in imperatives:

(5)a   Everyone raised their hand, didn't they? (declarative)
(5)b   Everyone raise your hand, won't you? (imperative)

Referential subjects
Potsdam (1996) points out that referential subjects are also possible as imperative subjects in English, though with some restrictions. For some speakers, this is simply not the case; referential noun phrases can only be vocatives. For others, they can indeed be subjects, but only when used contrastively; in particular, names require contrast and a special "list intonation":

(6)   Passengers with tickets go to their seats, passengers without come to the desk.
(7)   Jane hang up her coat, Michael put away his lunch box, and Rebecca pick up the toys!

Though these subjects certainly are third person noun phrases, they cannot be used to refer to someone who is not the addressee; they pick out individuals, or groups of individuals, from a set of addressees. The fact that they bind third person anaphors in these examples shows that they are not vocatives (since vocatives can only bind second person); moreover, they can co-occur with a vocative:

(8)   Kids, Jane hang up her coat, Michael put away his lunch box, and Rebecca pick up the toys!

It is clear in this example that *Jane*, *Michael* and *Rebecca* are individuals in the set of the addressees the vocative refers to. As with the quantificational subjects, these subjects can also bind second person anaphors:

(9)   Kids, Jane hang up your coat, Michael put away your lunch box, and Rebecca pick up the toys!

2.2 Classical Sanskrit and Bhojpuri

Classical Sanskrit and Bhojpuri (a modern Indic language that evolved from Sanskrit and is currently spoken in Northern Uttar Pradesh) have a verbal paradigm that marks first, second and third person in imperatives. They have third person subjects equivalent to the

ones discussed in the previous section; in addition, they exhibit two kinds that are not attested in English.

Classical Sanskrit has passive third person imperatives:

(10)   Tyajyataam   ayam   tarus
        abandon-imv.pass.3s this-nom. tree-nom.
        "Let this tree be abandoned" (Hit. 2, 10)
        (context: a crow addresses her husband – let this tree be abandoned *by us*)
(11)   Idam   suvarNakankaNam   grhyataam
        this-nom.s gold-bracelet-nom.s grab-imv.pass.3s
        "Let this gold bracelet be taken" (Hit. 1, 2)
        (context: a tiger addresses a group of travelers – let the bracelet be taken *by someone in the group*)

It is clear from the interpretation of the utterance that the subject of the imperative is not the addressee. Rather, the addressee corresponds to the agent argument of the passive verb, which is syntactically encoded as an implicit argument. Because the agent is the underlying subject of the passive, these cases do not show that the hypothesis is wrong, but they do point to the need for more research. We must understand why Sanskrit imperatives allow addressee reference by the "underlying subject", while English and other languages only allow imperatives in which the surface subject is associated with the addressee.

Bhojpuri does not have passive imperatives, but it differs from English in allowing referential third person subjects freely. That is, it is like English except that it does not require contrastive stress or special intonation.

(12)   Lajke   cup   raaheN!
        children-nom. quiet-nom. be-imv.3p
        "Children be quiet!"
(13)   Shakti   jaay!
        Shakti-nom. go-imv.3s
        "Shakti leave!"

As with the English referential subjects, these subjects refer to the addressee. Our intuition is that they occur more freely than analogous English examples because of the availability of an imperative verbal form with third person agreement.

None of the examples presented so far obviously falsify the hypothesis that imperative subjects refer to or quantify over or overlap with the addressee. The following class, however, might. In these examples, the subject of the imperative is not addressed; rather, the addressee is being asked to make sure that the subject does what the imperative asks.

More formally, the addressee is someone with a "control" (Potsdam 1996, elaborating on Farkas 1988) relationship over the subject.

(14)   Lajke   (aapan) tini baje   aaveN
        children-nom. (self)   3   o'clock come-imv.3p
        "(Your) children come at 3 o'clock!"

This imperative is addressed to the mother of the children who are to come at 3 o'clock. Potsdam (1996) finds examples like these possible in English as well:

(15)   Maitre d', someone seat the guests!
(16)   Counselors, everyone be packed up and ready to go in half an hour!
(17)   Your guards be the diversion while we sneak in!

In (15) and (16), the intended meanings are that the maitre d' is to have someone seat the guests and that the counselors are to have everyone ready. We do not find these examples grammatical with the intended meaning. For us, this would require the presence of an overt causative, as in:

(18)   Maitre d', have someone seat the guests!
(19)   Counselors, have everyone packed up and ready to go in half an hour!
(20)   Have your guards be the diversion while we sneak in!

We find (15) and (16) grammatical on a reading that identifies the referent of the vocative with that of the subject (the counselors are the ones who are to be ready), and (17) ungrammatical. If they were grammatical (on the intended reading), they would be counterexamples to the above hypothesis. The fact that they are grammatical in Bhojpuri therefore presents a challenge for the hypothesis, unless such examples are to be analyzed as causatives. This is at least possible, given their meaning, but syntactic support for such an analysis would be required.

2.3 Interim Conclusion

So far, the data is more or less in accord with the hypothesis. There are some significant issues to work on: How does the implicit passive subject in the Sanskrit passive imperatives satisfy the requirement of a subject that refers to the addressee? Is there evidence for a causative structure in the Bhojpuri example (14)?

3 First person subjects: The case of Korean

Korean has a clause type traditionally known as 'promissives' (21):

(21)   Promissive
        Nay-ka   nayil   cemsim-ul   sa-**ma**.
        I-NOM   tomorrow lunch-ACC   buy-PRM

'I will buy you lunch tomorrow.'

Though this clause type is traditionally distinguished from imperatives, there are some similarities between the two clause types that cannot be overlooked as a mere coincidence. The similarities are as follows (These similarities are shared by another clause type known as 'exhortatives', e.g., *wuli icey cip-ey ka-ca* 'let's go home now', which occur in most languages and are usually thought of as a subtype of imperative.):

> (i) they do not allow tense markers (22)
> (ii) they allow a special negative marker *-mal* in negative formation (23)
> (iii) they do not allow mood particles, e.g. *-te* (retrospective), *-kwun*
>   (apperceptive), and *-ney* (apprehensive) (24)
> (iv) when embedded, they do not allow an overt subject (25)
> (v) they can be conjoined by *-ko* 'and', the same clause type conjoiner (26)

(22)   a. Imperative
          *Mek-ess/-ul/-nun-e-**la**
           Eat-PST/FUT/PRES-SP-IMV
        b. Promissive
          *Mek-ess/-ul/-nun -u-**m**-a
           Eat-PST/FUT/PRES-PRM-SP
(SP-speech style particle, IMV – imperative particle, PRM – promissive particle)

While other clause types such as declaratives and interrogatives use the negative marker *ani*, imperatives and promissives use the negative marker *mal* (promissives actually allow both *ani* and *mal*)

(23)   a. Imperative
           Mek-ci   *an(i)/mal*-a-la
           Eat-NOM NEG-a-IMV
           'Do not eat.'
        b. Promissive
           Mek-ci   *an(i) h/mal*-u-m-a
           Eat-NOM NEG(+do)-u-PRM-SP
           'I promise not to eat.'

Special mood particles such as the retrospective (RTR) *-te*, the apperceptive (APE) *-kwun*, the suppositive (SUP) *-ci*, and the apprehensive (APR) *–ney*, among others, are compatible with declaratives and interrogatives, but they cannot occur in imperatives and promissives.

(24)   a. Imperative
           *Ne cemsim-ul   mek-te/kwun/-ci/-ney-la.
           You lunch-ACC eat-RTR/APE/SUP/APR -IMV
        b. Promissive
           *Nay-ka nayil   cemsim-ul   sa-te/kwun/-ci/-ney-m-**a**

I-NOM tomorrow lunch-ACC buy-RTR/APE/SUP/APR-PRM-SP

When imperatives and promissives are embedded, an overt subject cannot appear:

(25)   a. Imperative
        John-i   Tom-ekey [(*Ney-ka/*Tom-i) cip-ey   ka-la]
        John-NOM Tom-DAT [(you/Tom-NOM)   home-to go-IMV]-
        -ko   mal-ha-ess-ta
        COMP say-do-PAST-DEC
     (Intended meaning) 'John ordered Tom to go home.'
        b. Promissive
        John-i   Tom-ekey [(*nay-ka/*John-i) nayil   tasi
        John-NOM Tom-DAT [(I/John-NOM)   tomorrow again
        o-m-a] ko   mal-ha-ess-ta
        come-PRM-a]- COMP   say-do- PST-DEC
     (Intended meaning) 'John promised Tom that he/John would come back
        tomorrow.'

While different clause types such as declaratives and interrogatives cannot be conjoined by *ko* 'and', a same clause type conjunction, promissives and imperatives can:

(26)   a. Declarative and interrogative
        *John-un sakwa-lul   mek-ess-ko ne-nun   mwuess-ul mek-ess-ni?
        John-TOP apple-ACC eat-PST-and you-TOP what-ACC eat-PST- INT
        Intended meaning 'John ate an apple and what did you eat?'
        b. Imperative and promissives
        Ne-nun   sakwa-lul mek-ko na-nun pay-lul   mek-u-ma
        You-TOP apple-ACC eat-and I-TOP   pear-ACC eat-u-PRM
        'You eat an apple and I promise to eat a pear.'

Given above shared properties, we are led to the conclusion that promissives and imperatives are same clause type. Then, promissives are a subtype of imperatives with first person subject. This, however, poses a problem to the hypothesis above in that the imperative subject does not refer to or quantify over or overlap with the addressee; the subject refers to the speaker.

4 We still need the hypothesis!

Given that UG allows first person subjects in Korean imperatives (promissives), one might be tempted to abandon the original hypothesis altogether, and conclude that the subject of imperatives does not need to refer to the addressee. However, a principle of that sort is necessary to explain the lack of certain readings of imperatives in many languages. For example, it captures the fact that the subject of English third person imperatives like (27 (=7)) must refer to an addressee:

(27)   Jane hang up her coat, Michael put away his lunch box, and Rebecca pick up the
        toys!

The point is more dramatic in the case of languages which allow third person
morphological forms in imperatives, and yet still require that the subject coincide with
the addressee, like Italian or Greek. In Italian, for example, an imperative can be
expressed with the subjunctive when one is referring to the addressee in the polite form,
which is a third person singular; in such cases, the subject is clearly the addressee:

(28)   Signor Rossi, si   sieda!
        Mr. Rossi,   self seat-subj-3sg
        'Mr. Rossi, have a seat! '
(29)   Esca   da   quella parte!
        exit-subj-3sg from that   side
        Exit on that side!'

A form of the subjunctive is also used when the subject is quantificational:

(30)   Qualcuno vada ad aiutarla!
        Somebody go.subj to help-her
        'Someone help her!'
(31)   I passeggeri muniti di biglietto vadano allo sportello N.4!
        The passengers holding a ticket go.subj to-the window #4
        'Passengers with tickets go to window #4!'

Here again, despite the third person form, the quantifier's domain must be a set of
addressees.

A similar restriction holds in the case of first person subjects as well. We know that
Italian allows imperatives with a verbal form in the subjunctive (cf. 28-31) and that the
subjunctive paradigm has a form for first person (contrary to the imperative paradigm).
We would expect that a clause with a first person subject and the verb in the subjunctive
could be used to add a requirement to the subject, the speaker – that is, that it could be
used as a promissive, like in Korean. But this is not the case; such sentences are sharply
ungrammatical:

(32)   *Io vada domani!
         I go-subj-1sg tomorrow
(33)   *Io porti fuori   l'immondizia!
         I   take-subj-1sg the-trash

In the case when a third person subject fails to be associated with the addressee, it might
be argued that the ungrammaticality does not necessarily stem from a syntactic violation,
but rather from a pragmatic one. That is, one could argue that it is not possible to utter an
imperative, whose function is that of adding a requirement to someone's to-do list, unless
that individual can be "reached" by the utterance. But in the case of a first person

subject, the subject is the speaker, and so "reaching" that individual is not an issue. There must be some grammatical principle that restricts the occurrence of such cases – a principle like the one that restricts the subject to the addressee, which must be at work in Italian but not in Korean.

5 Prospects for understanding person restrictions in imperative subjects

The presence of promissives in Korean shows that we cannot maintain the hypothesis as originally stated. However, the absence of promissives, and perhaps of non-addressee directed third-person imperatives, in languages like Italian which have the morphosyntactic resources for creating them, shows that some grammatical principle rules out such forms in these languages.

It appears that we should not consider the restriction linking imperative subjects to the addressee as a basic component of UG, but one which holds of particular languages. This raises the question: What is it about English, Italian, Greek, etc., that makes them have the subject-restriction? Or conversely, what is it about Korean that makes it lack the restriction?

More research is needed to determine whether the cross-linguistic status of third-person imperative subjects is the same as that of first-person ones (promissives). Are the third-person type actually possible like promissives, but just rare? Or are third-person forms universally ruled out? More research on Sanskrit and Bhojpuri will help resolve this question.

Because we can't yet conclusively say what the status of third-person forms is, let's confine our discussion to promissives and consider what could be responsible for the difference between Korean and languages lacking promissives.

Four possibilities:

1. There is no deeper reason for the split among languages. The availability of promissives is dependent on a parameter being set in a marked fashion. The rarity of promissives cross-linguistically is a historical accident.
2. Languages that have promissives have a grammatical resource (a special kind of null subject, functional projection, feature, or whatever) which languages lacking promissives don't have. This would be to say that, despite appearances, Italian and English don't have what it takes to make promissives.
3. Languages that have promissives don't have a grammatical resource which languages lacking promissives have. This possibility is perhaps counterintuitive, but for example could work like this: Korean allows promissives because it doesn't have verbal agreement in the traditional sense at all. Its lacking of agreement would mean that the categories of first-person imperative (promissives) and second-person imperative are not grammatically distinguishable in this language, and so there would be no way for the restriction

in question to apply. The prediction is that only (and all?) languages completely lacking agreement should allow promissives.

4. There could be two strategies for forming imperatives in the languages of the world. One is subject to the restriction in question, while the other is not. This would mean that the traditional category of imperative is a pragmatic construct lumping together two grammatically distinct sentence types. Evidence for this possibility would consist in finding additional grammatical differences between imperatives in Korean and imperatives in languages lacking promissives, and then discovering whether other languages whose imperatives are like Korean's also allow promissives.

Department of Linguistics
Georgetown University
Washington, DC 20057 USA

smm23@georgetown.edu
pakm@georgetown.edu
portnerp@georgetown.edu
zanuttir@georgetown.edu