Imperatives
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Literature:


(Literature I know of, but have not had access to, or have not yet consulted.)

- Potsdam (199?).
- Stockwell, Schachter and Partee (1973)

Imperatives:

- Why imperatives have not been of central concern to linguistic theory.
- imperatives: impoverished
  - root constructions
cannot be embedded; (but cf. Ancient Greek (Rivero, 1995)
Since they cannot be embedded they teach us nothing about locality or complementation.
For certain language groups, imperatives have played a less peripheral role (clitic placement in Romance)

- Why imperatives are interesting:
  - important primary data
  - imperatives differ from other clause types (declaratives, interrogatives, infinitives, subjunctives)
  - in many languages negative imperatives have different properties from affirmative imperatives (as well as from other negative clause types) (Schmerling, 1982, Zanuttini (1991), Rivero (1994)...

  (This generalization holds for the African languages that I am familiar with as well, as well as for Malagasy; looks extremely robust)

- Special word order properties of imperatives
  - V second
  - V-clitic (Romance)
    - fais-le : do it (French: V-cl particular to imperatives)
    - faites-le

    - Il le fait (declaratives)
    - he le does

- Dutch: Distribution of DP (“objects”)
  Objects in declaratives/questions etc must always precede the separable prefix (verb particle construction)

  (1) a. Ik heb dat boekje neergelegd (..O...Part.)
      I have the book down put

    b. * Ik heb neergelegd dat boekje (*.....Part DP)
       * I have downput that book

    c. * vandaag leg ik neer dat boekje
do today put I down that book

  But in imperative constructions, the object can follow the particle (see below for further restrictions). (Den Dikken, 19??)

  (2) a. Leg dat boekje neer
      Put that book down

    b. Leg neer dat boekje
      Put down that book

  properties of imperatives; future interest.
What elements can cooccur with the imperative V:
- silent subject, lexical subject (pronouns or QPs/DPs), tense, negation, subject agreement, object agreement, clitics, Topic, Focus, ...

**Typological**
- Language internal

**Universal Base hypothesis**

**Properties of imperative constructions:**

- morphology
- cooccurrence of V+morphology with:
  - silent subject
  - overt subject
    - pronominal
    - QP
  - negation
  - tense
  - subject agreement (under morphology)
  - object agreement
  - clitics
  - topic
  - focus

**Morphology of the imperative V:**

Impoverished verbal morphology:
- bare stem
- stem + suffix [ever any prefix?]
- [stem ..imperative particle ?]

Imperative force: different forms for imperatives (subjunctives/root infinitives/indicatives):

**Infinitives:**
(3) Afblijven! Hier komen! *Dutch*
  Off stay! (Don’t touch) Here come

**Subjunctives**
(4) No escribáis *Castilian Spanish*
  Neg write+Pres/subj+2pl

**Indicatives:**
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**Silent subject imperatives (affirmative):**
Independent of pro-drop. Imperative Vs cooccur with silent subjects:

(5) come here vs. (*you) came here /did *(you) come here?

- Is the silent subject ("the addressee") syntactically represented? Yes, at least as argument.

(6) a. come here, won’t you
   b. wash yourself
   c. Do this [without [e] further arguing about it] (Beukema and Coopmans, 1989)

- Imperatives contain a silent syntactic subject (deleted you)
- Imperatives contain a silent modal (delete will, looks more like a root infinitive)

- Given the fact that there is more than one subject position, where is the silent subject located? (Are imperatives truncated sentences? Are there functional categories missing?)
- What kind of empty category is the silent subject? Does it have Case? How is it licensed?
  NP-trace, PRO, pro, variable (null constant, Rizzi, 1994)
  variable bound by a silent operator (addressee)
  (QR: Beukema and Coopmans, 1989; but pro Beukema, 1992, Den Dikken, 1991)
  operator located in Spec, CP (imperative) (Belletti, 1995, Platzack and Rosengren (1996?) binding a null constant.

**Overt subject imperatives (affirmative):**

(7) you, come here (vocative, leave out of consideration)
(8) you come here (2nd person pronoun)
   somebody come here (QPs not good for all English speakers)

The properties of each of these types of imperatives have to be established and analyzed separately.

- Silent subject imperatives versus overt pronominal subject imperatives:
  overt subject imperatives have different morphological properties from silent ones (as well as different cooccurrence restrictions with topics (Dutch))

Silent subject imperatives (no number agreement) versus overt imperatives (obligatory number agreement): (leaving out the polite archaic form).
  V higher than pronominal subject in overt pronominal infinitives. (V-second=V to C)
(9) kom maar hier  
come focP here

kom jij maar hier  
come you focP here

*komen maar hier  
come +PL focP here

kom*(en) jullie maar hier  
come Pl you focP here

ben/wees maar tevreden  
be focP content

zijn/wezen jullie maar tevreden  
be+pl you focP content

- Not all languages allow overt pronominal subject imperatives
  Vata (Kru) Nweh (Grassfield Bantu)

French:
(10) fais-le/faîtes-le
    Do-it Do-2nd pl-it

(11) *fais-tu le/fais le-tu
    *quelqu’un/chacun fais-le

(12) toi tu le fais (indicative) (you do it)
(13) vas-tu rester tranquille! (same form as question, imperative force)
    stay quiet, won’t you!

- Not all languages allow for third person subjects QPs in imperatives (Dutch)

(14) Pakken jullie je boeken maar
    Take you your books focP

(15) a. *Pakt iedereen z’n boeken maar
    Take+3sg everyone his book

    b. iedereen z’n /je boeken pakken (root infinitive)
    everyone his/your books take

(16) a. Pak allemaal je boeken maar (floated quantifier; silent subject imperative)
    Take all your books

    [English imperatives do not allow for floated quantifiers??]

    b. *Pakken allemaal je boeken maar (no plural agreement possible)

    c. *Pakt allen je boeken maar (no third person agreement possible)

But: Biblical Dutch:

    d. komt allen tesamen
    Come-3rd all together

silent subject/overt pronominal subject/third person subject imperatives have different properties

No unified analysis of English imperatives (Zanuttini, 1991)

Distribution of the pronominal subject in affirmative imperatives:
The pronominal subject in imperatives does not have the same distribution as the pronominal subject in declaratives (Henry, 1995, Platzack and Rosengren 1996). [it is unclear that this should be taken as showing a difference with respect to the subject, which is what P and R do]

- Belfast English, Henry, 1995)

(17) Dialect A: (inversion more restricted; Dialect B: more liberal)

- Go you there!
  - *read you that book
  - *run you!

(18) Always come you here when I call you (Henry, p.60)

- *Come always you here when I call you
- *Come you always here when I call you

- Quickly run you home
  - * Run quickly you home

Platzack and Rosengren (Danish and Norwegian) (boldfaced orders are excluded in yes/no questions which are also V first)

(19) a. "Ät den du bara! "Ät den bara du! "Ät du den bara

  eat-IMP it you just eat-IMP it just you Eat-IMP you it just
  ‘Just eat it’

  b. *Äter den du bara! *Äter den bara du! Äter du den bara

  eat-Pres it you just eat-pres it just you Eat-pres you it just
  ‘Do you just eat it?’

**Imperatives and negation.**

- Imperative morphology cannot occur under negation (exceptions)
- Verb with imperative morphology can cooccur with negation if the V lineary precedes negation (exceptions)
  - cooccurrence imperative + negation + overt subjects

**Imperative morphology cannot occur under negation**

(reminiscent of the fact that English tense morphology cannot occur under negation: *I not telephoned home*)

Italian: a. telefona!

  telephone-imp (thematic vowel)

  b. * non telefona non le telefonare (infinitive)

    neg telephone-imp neg telefonarle

Spanish: a. habla *no habla! no hables (subjunctive)

  Talk! (2nd sg.) neg talk-imp neg talk-subj
b. hablad!  *no hablad! no habléis (subjunctive)  
Talk (2nd pl.)  neg-talk-imp  neg talk-subj  

Exceptions:  
(20) Ikke vaer rampet da! (Norwegian, Platzack and Rosengren)  
Not be+IMP rude then  

In Bulgarian, imperative morphology cooccurs with negation:  
(21) Ceti ja Bulgarian (Rivero, 1993)  
read+IMP+2nd it  
(22) ne ja ceti!  
Neg it read+imp+2nd ‘Don’t read it’  

Verb with imperative morphology can cooccur with negation if the V linearly precedes negation  
(23) kom maar niet hier  
(24) fais-le pas (Quebec French)  
do it not  

Exceptions:  
Danish: normally finite V can precede Negation, but Danish does n’t have negative imperatives at all.  

Central Occitan (Zanuttini, 1991)  
(25) a. canta! b. *Canta pas! c. Cantes pas (subjunctive)  
sing! sing not Sing+2nd not  

What do languages do in Neg +V contexts?  
They resort to a different form of the verbal paradigm (Spanish, Italian, …)  
They use a different type of negation (Malagasy, Vata, Nweh).  
They cannot negate imperatives (Danish, Ncufie (Grassfied Bantu))  

Zanuttini (1991), Neg that needs Tense cannot cooccur with true imperative: no way to license Tense; Neg that doesn’t need tense can cooccur with imperative (tense can be absent).  

(Rivero, 1993) motivation for V-movement to C is different in Bulgarian than in Spanish/Italian.  
(Languages differ in where they express Imp force, Laka, 1990)). In Spanish the imperative V must move to C to mark imperative force; non intervenes between C and V, and blocks head movement (HMC).  
In Bulgarian, V movement would be triggered for reasons completely independent of the imperative. (C doesn’t mark Imperative force). V-movement (inversion) is necessary to provide a host for the clitic (“Tobler-Mussafia” law), and it does so in every sentence type. If some other
element (like negation) satisfy the prosodic requirement, the V is happy to stay low, and imperative morphology can be licensed.

Further insights into this question: finer structure of the left periphery.

- Italian negative imperatives (Kayne, 1991)

(26) non telefonarle
    non le telefonare

(root infinitives; order cl+ infinitive is possible (never in normal infinitives: V+cl in those dialects that show robust clitic climbing)
non licenses an empty modal; clitic climbs to this empty modal.

- cooccurrence imperative/negation and overt subjects

English:

(27) a. *Not go/be there tomorrow (same with overt subject)
    b. Don’t go there tomorrow
    c. Do not go there tomorrow
    d. Don’t you go there tomorrow
    e. *Do not you go there tomorrow
    f. *Do you not go there tomorrow

In negative imperatives, Do support is obligatory.
only negative n’t can cooccur with overt subject

Cooccurrence of imperative morphology with object agreement

In Swahili the imperative verb form (stem+ a (default vowel) cannot occur with object agreement.

(28) a. som-a kitabu!
    read-a 7book
    Read a/the book!

    b. *Ki- som - a (kitabu)!
    7OA-read-a (7book)
    Read it/the book!

    c. (u-) ki-som-e (kitabu)!
    (2S)-7OA-read-SUBJUNCTIVE (7book)
    Read it/the book!

- Cooccurrence of imperatives and topic

German: Initial topic and imperative V cooccur (Reiss and Rosengren, 1992)
But topic drop is not allowed in German imperatives, (though these are V first, and in contrast with German declarative clauses)

Dutch imperatives differ from Dutch declaratives with respect to initial D-topics. Declaratives allow for initial topic; imperatives do not; yet they allow topic drop.

Dutch and German differ with respect to the distribution of topics: in German, overt topic can precede imperatives but topic drop is not allowed. Where German has initial topics in imperative, Dutch has final topics in (subjectless) imperatives (but initial topics in declaratives!): (Koopman, 1997)

German:  Top V+Imp  Dutch:  *Top Imp
          * Topdrop Imp  Topdrop Imp ...
          *[VImp .....] Top  [VImp .....] Top
I. Dutch affirmative imperatives:
1. covert subject (2nd person)
2. V first
3. clitics in normal position:
   Leg ‘t maar neer
4. topic drop:
   Leg maar neer
   Put(imp) FP(but) down
5. no overt preverbal topic (DP or demonstrative pronoun)
   *dat leg maar neer
   that put FP down
6. V Part DP order possible
   leg maar néér dat boekje
   put FP down that book

II. Dutch imperatives with overt pronominal subjects (2nd person sg/plural):
1. Plural agreement with V
2. V subject order
3. clitics in normal position:
   Leg jij ‘t maar neer
4. topic drop: (not always good for me in this context (?/*))
   Leg jij maar neer
   Put(imp) you FP(but) down
5. overt preverbal topic (DP or demonstrative pronoun)
   dat leg jij maar ‘ns gauw neer
   that put you FP ‘ne quickly down
6. * V Part DP order
   * leg jij maar neer dat boekje
   put FP down that book

Table 1: Dutch affirmative imperatives.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>silent subject</th>
<th>overt subject 2nd person</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal form: imp infinitive</td>
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<td>3rd person sg</td>
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<td>(overt) preverbal topic</td>
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<td>Top drop</td>
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<td>clitic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vpart DP order</td>
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