On the licensing and recovering of imperative subjects

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Imperative verbs displaying no overt inflectional marking for their mood specification never demand any explicit identification of their addressee. Consequently, the formally unmarked imperative is generally considered to be 'subjectless'. Nonetheless, in this paper, I argue that formally unmarked imperatives always license a syntactic subject. While in some languages this subject may be optionally phonetically realized, it is usually represented as a specific imperative zero pronoun that shares mixed properties of the more common empty pronouns *pro* and PRO.

1. Introduction

It has long been observed in the study of sentence types that imperative clauses often lack an overt subject. As a consequence it was concluded that, in contrast to other verbal moods, the imperative is in principle subjectless in its use. Contrary to assumptions made by Rosengren (1992), Platzack & Rosengren (1994), and Han (1998), this generalization surely does not hold for imperative constructions on a crosslinguistic basis. Instead it turns out that, in any case, this applies to the class of formally unmarked imperatives. In fact, those never demand the overt realization of their syntactic subject, neither in null subject languages nor in non-null subject languages. But how could we account for this peculiarity? Should we think of a structural deletion process? Or - is it more reasonable to assume a factual absence of any subject in imperative sentences?

In this paper, I will provide answers to questions like the ones above. It is organized as follows: In section 2 I will give a brief overview of the main morphosyntactic properties of formally unmarked imperatives. The next section outlines the problem. Formally unmarked imperatives do not require the explicit identification of their addressee, but they do allow it in some cases. Hence, it seems unclear whether formally unmarked imperatives actually take a syntactic subject or not. I will review arguments for both views in the following subsections. In section 4, it is shown that, due to their specific structure, formally unmarked imperatives license a zero subject pronoun, which is replaced by an overt nominative DP under certain circumstances.

2. Formally unmarked imperatives

With regard to their inflectional morphology, imperatives are divided into two variants. Imperatives that do not display any inflectional marking for mood specification constitute the set of the formally unmarked imperatives. They are found, for instance, in the entire Indo-European language family. Their representation as a grammatical category occurs covertly and requires, at least in earlier stages of language history, no other inflectional marking either (Szemerényi 1990:263). Therefore, the lack of inflectional morphemes can be defined as the formal characteristic of the initial Indo-European imperative. Accordingly, as shown in (1), the Hittite (cf. 1a) as well as the early Sanskrit (cf. 1b) imperative verb consist solely of the bare verbal root or, in case of thematic conjugation, of the bare verbal root plus connection vowel.
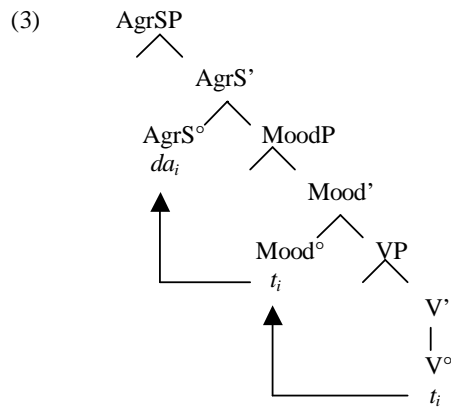
On the contrary, formally marked imperatives which form the other group are always represented by an overt imperative morpheme. Such an inflectional marking results in most cases from an advanced functionalization of future temporal or agent oriented modal morphology (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994:210ff). Alamblak (cf. 2a) and Tibeto-Burman (cf. 2b) imperatives are instances of the formally marked group. Consequently, they are always identifiable by a specific morpheme.

(1)   a.   **da** (Hittite)
           give
           'Give.'
      b.   **cala** (Sanskrit)
           hurry
           'Hurry up.'

(2)   a.   nikë **wa-roh-twa-   kë** (Alamblak)
           you IMP-sit- FUT+IRR+IMP-2PL
           'Sit down.'
      b.   daju-bhai **mun-dhupt-a-chi**! (Tibeto-Burman)
           brothers   talk -IMP -2DUAL
           'Talk to each other as brothers.'

In contrast to those imperatives that are overtly marked within the inflectional morphology, formally unmarked imperatives were never involved in any modal-morphological grammaticization process (Bybee 1990). This is why they are not only formally, but also semantically unmarked. Hence, the imperative mood of the languages concerned indicates directive speech acts on each level of deontic strength (Palmer 1986:108). It behaves analogously to the likewise formally unmarked indicative, which, being the unmarked member in the epistemic domain, holds in its use the entire class of assertives.

Structurally, the imperative verb is attracted by the abstract features of the functional head AgrS°, to which it moves successively before Spell out.

Indicating the default mood of the deontic system, it is, just as its epistemic counterpart, exempt from licensing any overt inflectional marking at the head of the lower Mood projection. Since it differs, on the other hand, from the indicative verb in that its tense characterization as well as its person agreement are only determined in a modal-immanent directive way, it selects no functional head T° and is therefore unable to project a T-node (cf. structure (3) for the Hittite imperative).

(3)   AgrSP
          /\
        AgrS'
         /\
   AgrS°   MoodP
    da$_i$ /\
            Mood'
             /\
        Mood°   VP
         t$_i$ /\
                 V'
                 |
                 V°
                 t$_i$

These structural properties are in fact reflected in its morphological development. In the course of morphosyntactic change, the formally unmarked imperative often allows the affixation of inflectional markings like, for example, aspect morphemes (cf. the Russian example (4a)), voice morphemes (cf. the Ancient Greek example (4b)) or number agreement morphemes (cf. the Spanish example (4c)).[1] But to avoid redundancy within the modal-inherent prospectivity and reference to an addressee, it never permitted the affixation of morphological tense or person agreement specifications. Hence, neither the Italian imperative verb with the future morpheme (4d) nor the German one with the overt agreement specification for the second person (4e) are acceptable forms. Note that such strict morphological restrictions cannot be observed in the case of an overt inflectional marking of the imperative mood (cf. 2).

(4) a. **Smotri!**; **Posmotri!** (Russian)
         look   PERF-look
         'Look.'; 'Look. / You must look.'
     b. **Paideyei!**; **Paideyoy!** (Ancient Greek)
         educate   educate-MID
         'Educate.'; 'Educate yourself.'

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[1] Imperatives are also found to enter inflectional paradigms of other moods. The present-day imperative paradigm of the Slavic languages, for example, consists of early optative forms. Therefore, we cannot be sure yet whether it should be regarded as pure suppletive paradigm.

    c. **¡Tira!**; **¡Tirad!** (Spanish)
       pull   pull-PL
       'Pull.'
    d. **Fiorisci!**; ***Fioriscirai!** (Italian)
       flourish   flourish-FUT
       'Flourish.'
    e. **Spring!**; ***Springst!** (German)
       jump   jump -2.PERS
       'Jump.'

3. Subjectless imperatives and overt imperative subjects

One of the most outstanding peculiarities of formally unmarked imperatives is the fact that they do not demand any explicit identification of their addressee. This is illustrated by the canonical imperative sentences of the null subject language Bulgarian and the non-null subject languages English and German (cf. 5a-c) whose subjects are apparently absent. The formally unmarked imperative is therefore generally considered to be 'subjectless'. In many languages, it is nevertheless possible to use it together with a 2nd person nominative pronoun. This, however, has to be stressed in most cases. Such pronouns can be found under (6) where the Bulgarian *ti* (6a) and the German *du* (6c) do indeed carry particular emphasis.

(5)   a. **Otidi**   do hlebarničata! (Bulgarian)
        PERF-go   to bakery-the
        ,Go to the bakery.'
    b. **Don't touch** that.
    c. **Heirate** sie! (German)
       marry   her
       'Marry her.'

(6)   a. **TI otidi**   do hlebarničata! (Bulgarian)
        you PERF-go   to bakery-the
        'Go to the bakery.'
    b. **Don't you touch** that.
    c. **Heirate DU** sie! (German)
       marry   you her
       'You marry her.'

Apart from these 2nd person pronominals there are also 3rd person imperative subjects, for example in English and German. In German, only quantificational expressions qualify as lexical subjects (cf. 7a-c). Davies (1986:133) maintains that in English, such a limitation does not exist (cf. 8a-c).

(7) a. **Gib einer** die Chips 'rüber! (German)
pass someone the potato crisps
'Someone pass the potato crisps.'
b. **Nimm** sich **jeder** ein Stück Himbeertorte! (German)
take himself everybody a piece raspberry cake
'Everybody take a piece of the raspberry cake.'
c. ***Trag der starke Kerl** die Koffer! (German)
carry the strong guy the suitcases

(8) a. **Nobody move.**
b. **Someone help** me.
c. **The girl with the gun come** up here. [2]

Clearly, these observations raise a fundamental question: do all imperative sentences contain a syntactic subject, even if it is only covertly realized? Or is it more plausible to assume that imperative subjects need not be syntactically represented, or are in fact disallowed?

The discussion provided in the following two sections suggests that there are pretty good arguments in favour of either view.

3.1. Arguments for non-overt imperative subjects

The assumption that formally unmarked imperatives and even the so-called 'subjectless' ones always have a syntactic subject can be confirmed by imperative sentences whose covert subject acts as the binder of a reflexive anaphor. In the German example (9a) as well as in the English example (9b), the reflexive pronoun has to be bound in its governing category in accordance with Condition A of the Binding Theory. And, as shown in (10a-b), obviously only a 2nd person subject can do this job.

(9) a. **Wasch** dich anständig! (German)
wash yourself properly
'Wash yourself properly.'
b. **Behave** yourselves.

(10) a. ***Amüsier** sich gut! (German)
enjoy herself well
b. ***Don't torment** himself.

Furthermore the fact that, as illustrated in (11a-b), PRO of an embedded infinitive clause can be controlled by the covert subject of an imperative matrix sentence, suggests that a corresponding empty category exists.

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[2] It could be questioned whether English imperatives with non-quantificational 3rd person subjects in fact are not better defined as subjunctive forms.

(11) a. **Versuch** einfach PRO zu grinsen! (German)
         try   just   to sneer
         'Just try to sneer.'
     b. **Go** away without PRO saying goodbye.

Above all, we have to start with the assumption that imperative sentences, like all other sentence types, are obliged to fulfill the theta-criterion. Therefore, we must inevitably infer that the IP of formally unmarked imperatives hosts a syntactic subject which satisfies the theta-criterion as external argument. Precisely such a structural relation seems to be proved by the nominative Case marking of overt imperative subjects.

3.2. Arguments against non-overt imperative subjects

Of course, also objections to the assumption that imperative subjects exist are put forward in current works on the imperative sentence. But most of these counterarguments are not really convincing. Rosengren (1992) and Platzack & Rosengren (1994), for example, argue that the 2nd person imperative pronoun differs from syntactic subjects in being for the most part stressed, obeying separate restrictions concerning their distribution and in not fully agreeing with the verbal element. Accordingly, the authors come to the conclusion that imperative sentences simply do not have any subject (see Platzack & Rosengren (1994) for more details). Presupposing, however, that an overt nominative Case marking is normally not demanded and the imperative verb movement obligatorily ends up at C° in some languages (Rivero & Terzi 1995) whereby agreement is always specified mood-immanently, the above described behaviour is not very surprising for a real syntactic subject.

On the other hand, we have to realize that, in case overt imperative subjects check indeed some features at the specifier of the AgrSP in order to agree with the imperative verb, subjectless imperative sentences should contain an empty category in this position. Admittedly, none of the four known empty categories seem to be a suitable candidate to fit into the specifier position of the AgrSP of 'subjectless' imperatives.

At first sight one could claim that the covert subject of the canonical 'subjectless' imperative sentence is simply *pro,* because the empty pronoun *pro* bears Case and therefore alternates with overt DPs in the same distribution. Thus, an imperative subject-*pro* would be perfectly compatible with the occurrence of overt nominative imperative subjects. But the well-known fact that *pro,* as its main characteristic, can only be licensed in null subject languages, contradicts this hypothesis.

What about PRO then? We could think that, due to their lack of inflectional mood, tense and person agreement morphemes, formally unmarked imperatives are at most incompletely finite. In accordance with this, PRO, which, bearing Null Case, acts exclusively as the subject of infinitival clauses, seems to be the right choice to fill their subject specifier position. Since,

however, exactly this position hosts optionally overt subjects that, just like all lexically filled DPs, are Case-marked, the licensing condition of PRO cannot be met in imperative sentences. Overt DPs and PROs are always in complementary distribution.

The NP-trace is the easiest option to exclude. If it were true that the imperative subject, because of an assumed non-finiteness of the imperative IP, does not receive Case and is therefore forced to move, the trace left behind would require identification by an antecedent in a c-commanding argument position. Such an antecedent, however, is clearly absent in imperative sentences.

Although in contrast to the NP-trace, the Wh-trace is left behind by a constituent which moved out of a Case-marked position to an A'-position, it must be ruled out as a possible non-overt imperative subject, too. Because an operator in an A'-position which could bind this variable is, just like a binding antecedent-NP in an A-position, nowhere to be found in imperative sentences.

3.3. Imperative subjects versus vocatives

Based on their line of reasoning, Platzack & Rosengren (1994) claim that overt imperative pronouns are to be classified as vocatives since they are used only to talk to the addressee but never to talk about him. This view, though, is not sustainable.

Vocatives are structurally separate elements. Therefore, regardless of their distribution, they do not have any influence on the semantico-syntactic relations of the convergent sentence, according to which they are detached from the structure, orthographically, by commas and, perceptually, by intonation breaks. This essential difference with regard to integrated nominative expressions makes it impossible to equate vocatives with common imperative subjects. Although both the vocative DP as well as the imperative subject are used to address the addressee, they do not behave analogously concerning their function and their insertable elements.[3] In (12), for example, the German imperative sentence can only be accepted if *Hilda* acts as a Vocative DP (cf. 12b). A proper name simply calling the person spoken to can never function as a structurally integrated subject. Conversely, (13) is a well formed sentence only if *einer* acts as syntactic subject (cf. 13a) because, in contrast to imperative subjects, a vocative cannot be used to define a subset of addressees. It must refer to all the addressees if there is more than one (Davies 1986:140ff.). Finally, in the English example (14), we clearly observe an identity of reference between *his* and *somebody* only if *somebody* is interpreted as the real subject of the imperative sentence (cf. 14a).

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[3] Moreover, in many languages, for example in Latin, Gothic and Roumanian, vocatives differ from nominatives in their inflectional morphology (cf. salutarius (nominative); salutarie (vocative) (Latin) 'guard').

(12) a. *__Hol Hilda__ das Geld! (German)
    fetch Hilda the money
  b. Hilda, __hol__ das Geld! (German)
    Hilda fetch the money
    'Hilda, fetch the money.'

(13) a. __Gib__ mir __einer__ die Knarre! (German)
    give to me someone the gun
    'Someone give me the gun.'
  b. *Einer, __gib__ mir die Knarre! (German)
    someone give to me the gun

(14) a. __Somebody$_i$ dry__ his$_i$ hair.
  b. Somebody$_i$, __dry__ his$_j$ hair.

4. The licensing and recovering of imperative subjects

But how can be decided which of the arguments stated in the sections 3.1. and 3.2. are the most convincing after all? At any rate, the data shown in 3.1. give rise to the suspicion that formally unmarked imperatives do license a syntactic subject. And a closer inspection of the inflectional morphology of imperativised verbs leads to the same conclusion. That is because many languages where imperative mood is not represented overtly exhibit number agreement morphemes on the imperative verb (cf. 4c). Since the attached inflectional features, which are not mood-inherently specified, have to be licensed in a spec-head relation with an agreeing XP, we must inevitably assume that the AgrSP of formally unmarked imperatives hosts a syntactic subject as its specifier. Since the imperative verb s-selects an external theta-role that has to be syntactically represented as an argument, this subject is necessarily required in order to satisfy the theta-criterion. The subject of a formally unmarked imperative is therefore an empty category that is optionally replaced by a nominative pronoun.

The discussion of section 3.2., however, strongly opposes the supposition that the imperative AgrSP hosts an empty category as its specifier. Consequently, we have no choice but to inspect the separate empty categories in more detail.

4.1. Topic NP Deletion – a possible solution?

According to Chomsky (1981:330) a distinction has to be made between non-pronominal and pronominal empty categories. Non-pronominal empty categories are traces left behind by a moved element that, as anaphors, have to be A-bound and, as variables, have to be A'-bound by their antecedent.

Variables associated with a discourse-bound zero topic constitute at first sight the only exception to this pattern. For that reason Beukema & Coopmans (1989) defended the thesis that covert imperative subjects are a matter of Topic NP Deletion. They claim that the subject position of an imperative construction is represented at LF as an A'-bound empty element. However, the data of (15) and (16) clarify that their analysis cannot be right.

As Ross (1982) and Fries (1988) point out for German, a constituent - before its deletion by pronoun zap - moves in the preverbal position of a V2-matrix clause, that is to say to SpecC, where this constituent always has to be pronominal, thematic, unfocussed and unstressed. Instances of German zero topics can be found under (15).

(15) a. *e* hab' ich erledigt. (German)
      have I carried out
   b. *e* komme gleich. (German)
      come soon

Obviously, the occurrence of non-overt imperative subjects does not result from such a deletion process. Since German imperatives obligatory build a V1-structure, every preverbal constituent of imperative sentences receives particular stress and consequently can never be affected by pronoun zap. Topic NP Deletion simply does not operate in German imperative sentences. Hence, the second sentence of (16a) is not acceptable because *DAS* attracted by the specifier of the imperative CP has to be stressed and therefore remains undeletable. Of course, the same applies to the second sentence of (16b), where the dropped imperative subject *DU* renders the structure ungrammatical.

(16) a. **DAS erledige du**!; *[$_{top}$e] **erledige du**! (German)
     this carry out you   carry out you
   b. **DU sei** mal ganz still; *[$_{top}$e] **sei** mal ganz still! (German)
     you be just quiet   be just quiet

If we follow Beukema & Coopman's thought despite this counter-evidence and assume that 'subjectless' imperatives are instances of topicalization structures with empty topics we will get into conflict again with the German language. The sentence (17b) could never be grammatical for if the subject was deleted by pronoun zap, no further topicalization should be possible. That is why (17a) is starred. (17b) with only one topicalized constituent is still clearly acceptable.

(17) a. *[$_{top}$e] deinem Opa **schenk** einen Gameboy! (German)
       your grandpa give a Game Boy
   b. Deinem Opa **schenk** einen Gameboy! (German)
     your grandpa give a Game Boy

Since the non-overt subject of formally unmarked imperatives is evidently not a matter of a non-pronominal empty category, we must conclude that it belongs

to the pronominal empty categories. Accordingly, we are forced to examine the pronominal empty categories more carefully and look for the way in which they are licensed by the inflectional head INFL.

4.2. The licensing and recovering of empty pronouns

Huang (1984) and Jaeggli & Safir (1989) observed that pronominal empty categories are generated as the specifiers of very strong or very weak inflection phrases (IPs). With regard to the constitution of the complete verbal paradigms of the separate languages, this pattern is quite exactly reflected in the distribution of null subject languages (referring to this, Jaeggli & Safir formulated the condition of Morphological Uniformity). Since pronominal empty categories have no lexical antecedent they require identification from the nearest syntactic context. In terms of Huang (1984), as 'genuine zero pronouns', they have to fulfill the 'principle of recoverability'.

Let us start with the empty pronoun *pro*. Just as its overt counterpart, *pro* is licensed in the spec-head relation to a finite INFL, or rather, to an INFL that is specified as [+agreement] [+tense] (Rizzi 1986; Chomsky 1995:120). The principle of recoverability is met by *pro*´s content being recovered by the strong agreement inflection of the verbal head (Chomsky 1981:240f.). In (18) such a recovery is brought about can by means of finite clauses of the Romance null subject language Spanish.

(18) a. *pro* brinco (Spanish)
        skip-1SING
     'I skip'
    b. *pro* brincan (Spanish)
        skip-3PL
     'they skip'

Not only the individual identification of *pro* by strong INFL but also the acquisition of its usage and distribution contradict the allegedly logical assumption that imperative sentences are simply *pro-drop*-structures. The *pro-drop*-parameter is to be fixed already at an early stage of language acquisition being related only to the set of subject pronouns of the language the learner is exposed to. It cannot be modified with regard to certain selected sentence types. Thus, (19a) and (19b) are not acceptable - the German language does not allow any licensing of argument-*pro*s.

(19) a. **pro* lacht (German)
        laugh-3SG

    b. **pro* **lach**! (German)
        laugh(IMP)

Due to its Null-Case marking, PRO can only be found at the specifier of non-finite IPs, for example of those in (20). That is because only an INFL with the feature matrix [-agreement] [-tense] is able to check Null-Case (Chomsky 1995:119). Consequently, PRO and overt DPs are always in a complementary distribution and therefore – as we have seen above – PRO fails to act as a non-overt imperative subject. The recovering of the latter through control is impossible as expected. This is evidenced in (21). The covert subject of the subordinated imperative of the Ancient Greek example (21a) cannot be controlled by an element in the matrix clause. Similarly, the subject of the English imperative sentence in (21b) is obviously not interpreted as a 1st or 3rd person subject.

(20) a. Uncle Carl ordered Tamara PRO to smile again.
  b. PRO to smoke the biggest cigars would please Susan.

(21) a. Kratêres eisin ôn   krat' **erepson**. (Ancient Greek)
      bowls   are whose brims crown
      'There are mixing-bowls, the brims of which you must crown.'
  b. I hate the Waltons. Please, **switch** over to another channel!

From the above we can conclude that neither *pro* nor PRO qualify as subjects of formally unmarked imperatives.[4] – However, another potentially suitable empty pronoun springs to mind.

Although their IP lacks the AgrS-node entirely, the Asiatic languages Chinese, Japanese and Korean permit the occurrence of subject zero pronouns in finite clauses (Huang 1984). For that reason, Rizzi (1986) groups them together with the *pro-drop*-languages. Their zero pronoun, however, strikingly resembles PRO in not being recoverable through the agreement inflection of the verb. It appears, as shown in the Chinese examples (22) and (23), mainly as the controlled subject of subordinated clauses (cf. 22a,b).[5] In case a potential controller is absent, it is realized phonetically (cf. 23a,b).

(22) a. Zhangsan qi ma qi de *pro*/PRO hen lei (Chinese)
      Zhangsan ride horse ride until   very tired
      'Zhangsan rode until he was very tired.'

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[4] Without explicit argument, Han (1998) claims that languages have two options for deriving the imperative structure: infinitive type imperatives have an infinitive INFL, and subjunctive type imperatives have a subjunctive INFL. Depending on whether a language selects the infinitive or the subjunctive type, the imperative subject behaves like the subject of an infinitival or subjunctive, respectively like PRO or *pro*, in the language in question. I do not want to enter into details of this statement. For more discussion, see Han (1998:109ff.).

[5] Only the zero subject pronouns of clauses complemented by the bridge verbs *say* or *believe* do not behave analogously to the controlled infinitival PRO. Since their dominating CP is enclosed within a NP-shell, they do not have any control domain. Therefore, the reference of identity between them and any argument of the matrix clause is not required (Huang 1989).

    b. Ting xiwang *pro*/PRO keyi kanjian Lisi (Chinese)
       Ting hope   can see   Lisi
       'Ting hopes that he can see Lisi.'

(23) a. Ta kanjian ta le (Chinese)
         he see   he PERF
         'He sees him.'
    b. *pro/PRO kanjian ta le (Chinese)
                 see   he PERF

Since the inflectional head of these languages is thus always negatively specified for at least one feature of finiteness, PRO acts not only as subject of their infinitive clauses but also as subject of their finite clauses. It is replaced by an overt element only if it does not enter into any referential dependency within its immediate syntactic environment and if T° is specified positively.

    In my view, the occurrence of such a zero pronoun that is obviously licensed by an INFL with a [-agreement] [+tense]-specification also postulates the existence of a pronominal empty category licensed by an inflectional head with the opposite feature matrix, that is to say with a [+agreement] [-tense]-specification.

4.3. The imperative zero pronoun

Since formally unmarked imperatives project no TP, they are negatively specified for one feature of finiteness, too. I infer from this that their IP, just as the finite IP of Chinese, Japanese and Korean, is weak enough to host a zero subject pronoun. The imperative zero pronoun, however, differs from PRO in that it is never controlled by a constituent within its control domain. Instead, it is identified through verbal morphology, where such a recovering is brought about by the modal-inherent specification for 2nd person agreement on the imperative verb and, in a large number of languages, by an overt marking for number agreement. In German, for example, the plural agreement marking of the imperative verb is effected by the number suffix –*t*. While the verbal element of (24b) therefore exclusively identifies plural subjects, the one in (24a) indicates reference to only one addressee. Moreover, due to the positive [agreement] specification of the imperative inflectional head, it is able to receive nominative Case, and consequently it can appear overtly. Thus, the imperative zero pronoun is licensed in the same way as *pro/*PRO of the mentioned Asiatic null subject languages, but it is recovered just like *pro* of the Romance null subject languages. In accordance with the Principle of Least Effort, it is, in contrast to phonetically realized and Case-marked DPs, the favoured and, in some languages, even the only element to represent the external argument of formally unmarked imperatives.

(24) a. **Warte pro/PRO** doch! (German)
     wait   just
     'Just wait.'

    b. **Wartet pro/PRO** doch! (German)
     wait-PL   just
     'Just wait.'

4.4. Overt imperative subjects

Overt imperative subjects bearing nominative Case are licensed only if their spec-head relation with INFL does not guarantee their complete recovery.

    Hence, all non-pronominal imperative subjects are realized overtly, like, for instance, all the ones of the English language (cf. 25a). Pronouns that, just like the imperative 2nd person pronouns in German, are focused or stressed are phonetically realized, too (cf. 25b). The same applies to all pronominal expressions that specify or modify the directive reference to the addressee, like, for example, additional 2nd person pronouns in combination with plural quantificational expressions (cf. 25c) or simply singular quantificational expressions (cf. 25d).

(25) a. **Brave guys go** ahead.

    b. **Küß DU** den Frosch! (German)
     kiss you the frog
     'You kiss the frog.'

    c. **Schaut [ihr] alle** her! (German)
     look   you all here
     'You all look here.'

    d. **Somebody take** a picture.

By using 3rd person quantifiers or any other 3rd person expressions for an imperative subject, the speaker effects a limitation of the set of addressees. In an imperative sentence like (25d), the imperative verb is clearly mood-immanently specified for 2nd person agreement, indicating reference to an addressee. Exactly this addressee, however, can neither be interpreted as 'all of you' nor as 'you as the only person'. Instead it is defined as any given subset that belongs to the addressed set and consists of one individual. Precisely this modification is made explicit by the speaker.[6] Consequently, it may not be very surprising that (25d) can precede a tag question containing a 2nd person subject pronoun (cf. 26a) and that, at least in English, imperative quantifier subjects are able to bind 2nd person reflexive anaphors (cf. 26b).

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[6] However, relating to this, we are faced with the apparent problem that it is all but clear how feature checking between the imperative verb, which is mood-inherently specified for 2nd person agreement, and the imperative subject could procede in a case like that. One could speculate that 3rd person DPs because of their lack of any person agreement specification do not create a feature mismatch within their checking domain (see Halle (1997) for more details).

(26) a. **Somebody take** a picture, will you.
      b. **Everyone help** yourselves.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper has been to resolve the problem of the canonical subjectlessness of formally unmarked imperatives. I have shown that, due to their lack of a T-node, formally unmarked imperatives are able to license a specific pronominal empty category that, despite its legitimization by weak INFL, is yet recovered by the agreement inflection of the verbal head. The imperative zero pronoun behaves therefore like both of the two common empty pronouns PRO and *pro*. In accordance with economy principles it is, in contrast to phonetically realized and Case-marked DPs, the favoured element to represent the external theta-role of imperative sentences.

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