Addressee Agreement as the Locus of Imperative Syntax
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Problem & Key claims: In addition to its standard imperatives composed of an imperative verb form (1) (Bhatia 1993, Kaur 2018), Punjabi, an Indo-Aryan language makes another imperative with a declarative verb-form bearing obligatory overt addressee/allocutive (honorific/plural) agreement indicated by -je, (2).
1. (tuu/tussi) bacce-nuu vekh-Ø/vekh-o 2. (tussi) bacce-nuu vekhyaaj-je
   (2.sg/2.pl) child-acc see.imp-2.sg/see.imp-2.pl (2.pl) child-acc see.perf.m.sg-alloc
   ‘Look after/see the child.’

Unlike sentences such as ‘You will work tomorrow’ in English, which have a declarative syntax, but can be used either as a declarative or as an imperative in the appropriate context, (2) cannot alternate as per the context or prosody, and corresponds uniquely to a command/request. Given this lack of ambiguity, this paper claims that despite its declarative appearance, (2) has an underlying imperative (and not declarative) syntax. Specifically, the presence of addressee agreement in (2) provides all the building blocks that make a standard imperative. These are: a 2nd person feature which encodes the notion of an addressee, a defective/null T and an ‘agreeing’ 2nd subject (see Jensen 2003, Bennis 2006, Zanuttini 2008 a.o for varied versions). This uniquely imperative structure hosts a strong covert modal operator, resulting in its restricted (and strong imperative force related) semantic-pragmatic properties.

Account: Punjabi (select varieties) is a language with optional allocutive agreement (Akhtar 1999, Kaur 2017, 2018). Consider (3), where the verb agrees with the unmarked object in number and gender, and optionally hosts the addressee agreement marker -je. Note that -je in (3) does not correspond to either the subject or the object, and instead encodes the honorific/plural addressee of the utterance.
3. karan-ne kuRii vekhii -(je)
   Karan-erg girl.f.sg see.perf.f.sg -(alloc)
   ‘(I am telling you), Karan saw a girl.’

A. Defective/null T: The occurrence of allocutivity in the language is contingent on the person-effectiveness of v-T. To elaborate, Punjabi is a split ergative language, such that imperfective subjects agree with the T head in full phi and are valued as nominative, (4). In contrast, perfective subjects do not agree with T and are valued as non-nominative, (5) (Deo & Sharma 2006, Chandra & Kaur 2017). Given (4) and (5), only the default (3.masculine.sg) auxiliary e, which obtains with all 1st/2nd and 3rd (non-nominative) perfective subjects and with 3rd imperfective subject, can be dropped to realize -je, as in (6).

4. maiN/tuu/o kuRii-nuu vekhdaa aAN/eNJ
   1.sg/2.sg/3.sg.nom girl-acc see.hab.m.sg be.pres.1.sg/2.sg/3.sg (default)
   ‘I/you(s)he am/are/is seeing the girl.’

B. Agreeing 2nd argument: The second property of addressee agreement in the language is that it can also co-occur with a 2nd argument (unlike Basque; see Miyagawa 2012). If the 2nd argument and -je refer to the hearer of the same Speech act projection/SAP, they must ‘agree’; see (7) with an honorific/pl 2nd object. Failure to ‘agree’ results in ungrammaticality, as in (8) with the non-honorific.sg 2nd object.

7. karan-ne tuwa-nuu bulaayaa -je 8. *karan-ne tai-nuu bulaayaa -je
   Karan-erg 2.pl/hon-acc call.perf.m.sg -alloc Karan-erg 2.sg/non.hon-acc call.perf.m.sg -alloc
   ‘Karan has called you.’
   ‘Karan has called you.’

To confirm this further, consider the following embedded context, (9).
9. mira-ne, tai-nuu keyaa sii ki maiN, match jitt jaavaangi -je
   Mira-erg 2.sg-acc say.perf be.past that 1.sg.nom match win go.fut.1.sg.f -alloc
   ‘Mira had said to you that she will win the match.’ (Shifted reading; *non-shifted)

Punjabi is an indexical shift language, such that the embedded subject maiN can refer either to the matrix speaker, or to the matrix subject mira. In the non-shifted reading, -je refers to the matrix hearer, and so
does the 2nd object in the matrix clause; mismatch of features on the two items causes ungrammaticality. In the shifted reading, all pronominals in the embedded domain shift, with –je referring to the embedded speech act addressee, who is elder to Mira. The 2nd argument in the matrix clause gets its reference from the utterance addressee, who is not evaluated for (non)honorificity vis-à-vis the embedded speaker Mira, but the matrix speaker. Since the 2nd argument and -je do not get their reference from the same hearer, no agreement is required.

Given these properties of allocutivity, we can see how (2) is derived: consider the schema in (10).

10. [SAP Addr(i) [CP[uAddr(i)] [TP[uPhi]] [VP perf 2nd subj(i) [VP Obj V]]]]

Adopting the standard analysis for addressee agreement, I posit that the C head in Punjabi enters the derivation with a [u2 Addr], which must agree with the addressee of the utterance located in the Speech Act Projection (SAP) (Speas&Tenny 2003, Miyagawa 2012, McFadden 2017). This agreement takes place via Upward Agree (Zeijlstra 2012), and is realized as –je. The T head has a [uPhi], which must be valued by agreement with a nominative subject. In the presence of a perfective verb, however, the 2nd subject is (unmarked) ergative and cannot control agreement. This results in default agreement, e, which is dropped leaving the T head null. Furthermore, the case-valued 2nd subject, which also refers to the hearer of the same SAP, undergoes “agree” with the addressee agreement –je. This relation between the 2nd subject and –je can be understood in terms of the Person Licensing Condition/PLC (Baker 2008), which states that “a DP/NP is second person only if it is locally bound by the closest c-commanding addressee or by another element that is itself second person”. Analyzed thus, (2) has the same components as a standard imperative- a 2nd person feature realized as -je, a defective/null T and an agreeing 2nd subject. A change in any of the three properties yields a declarative, (11) - (13).

11. tussi baccii vekhiyaa
   2.pl/hon child-acc see.perf.m.sg
   ‘You saw the child.’ (Drop je: DECL) ‘You saw the child.’ (Non-default agr: DECL)
12. tussi baccii vekhiyaa-je
   1.sg/3.sg erg child-acc see.perf.m.sg-alloc
   ‘I am telling you, I/(s)he saw the child.’ (1st/3rd subject: DECL)

Modal operator: As illustrated above, (2) has the same underlying imperative syntax as standard imperatives. However, it manifests distinct semantic-pragmatic patterns. First, (2) can only occur in commands/request, but not the other imperative uses (as listed in Schmerling 1982). Furthermore, it does not allow for an acquiescence reading (14), and cannot be used in IaDs (15) (von Fintel & Iatridou 2017). Standard imperatives in Punjabi, in contrast, have a wider usage, and allow for weaker readings.

   B: haan, khlo lo /# haan, khol ley-je
   ‘yes, open take.imp.2.pl/hon /# yes, open take.perf.m.sg-alloc
15. mainaN/o-ne baccii vekhiyaa-je
   1.sg/3.sg erg child-acc see.perf.m.sg-alloc
   ‘Work hard and you will pass.’

Given the absence of weak readings for (2), I propose that it contains a strong covert modal component which is responsible for the command/request reading (Schwager 2006, Kaufmann 2012 among others). For the standard imperative, in contrast, the semantic effects obtain possibly from the presence of an existential modal that can be strengthened (following Oikonomou 2016).

Cross-linguistic predictions: This paper has shown that allocutive agreement in languages like Punjabi can provide a 2nd person feature, which can encode the notion of an addressee and compose an imperative. Punjabi allocutivity is contingent on a null T and can co-occur with a 2nd subject, providing a very conducive environment for imperative formation. We predict that in languages where allocutivity obtains with richer T heads, the imperative will not obtain. This is evidenced by Tamil (see 16 from McFadden 2017). Furthermore, see (17, based on Alcázar & Saltarelli 2014) from Basque, which not only has a rich T head, but also bans a 2nd subject with allocutivity, ruling out an imperative.

16. ni-n-gae jangri vangu-ni-ngae
   2SG-HON jangri buy-pst-HON
   ‘You bought a jangri.’ NOT: Buy a jangri!
17. Zu-k platera-k apurtu d-it-u-zu
   2sg-erg plate-abs.pl broken Ø-pl(A)-aux.have-2sg(E)
   ‘You broke the plates.’ NOT: Break the plates!