

PRAGMATIC EFFECTS OF THE OVERT SUBJECT IN ROMANIAN CONDITIONAL IMPERATIVES

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Abstract. The purpose of this article is to give a brief synopsis of the coordinate constructions [imperative + declarative] in Romanian, focusing on the pragmatic effects of the overt subject in Romanian. In configurations of the type: (i) *Open the window and I'll kill you*, (ii) *Open the window or I'll kill you*, and (iii) *Open the window and you'll catch a cold*, in which the imperative clause is prototypically subjectless (even in non-*pro-drop* languages), the occurrence of an overt subject should be pragmatically motivated. Confronting the current description of the conditional imperatives to the Romanian data, the paper aims to sketch an inventory of the overt subjects that are allowed in each syntactic type, in an attempt to describe the consequences of subject lexicalization upon the pragmatic function of the imperative. This would set the ground for a more in depth investigation concerning the connections between syntactic and semantic-pragmatic restrictions upon the occurrence of the overt subject in the imperative clause.

Keywords: conditional imperatives, Romanian, overt subject, pragmatic effects.

1. INTRODUCTION

Accounts of the semantics and pragmatics of the imperative show a great degree of universality. Imperatives are commonly associated to a communicative universal; they are bound to a “prototypical function of performing a directive speech act” (Jary and Kissine 2012). As far as the morpho-syntax of imperatives is concerned, the mapping of imperative clauses show that they are not necessarily bound to the presence of the imperative mood, and that the linguistic expressions usually associated to imperative meaning or to its prototypical function display a great diversity in the languages of the world².

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² A general picture on the cross-linguistic variety of the imperative, and/or its surrogates (in languages that do not have the full imperative paradigm, or in languages that do not employ imperatives at all) is provided by van der Awerda et al. 2005, Aikenvald 2010.

Recent studies on imperative clauses – Speas and Tenny (2003), Schwager (2004, 2005), Zanuttini (2008), and Zanuttini et al. (2012), Portner (2005, 2007), van der Wurff (2007), Hill (2007, 2013), Alcázar and Saltarelli (2014), Isac (2015) – redraw the syntax-pragmatics interface and bring syntax into domains that were considered to be purely pragmatic in nature. Roughly, in the current interpretation, imperative clauses are functional projections – Speech event (SePs) / Speech act (SaPs) Phrases. The Addressee is represented in syntax, as all imperatives, be they true or surrogate, have a relevant projection – the Jussive Phrase – that hosts an Addressee related feature. In this view, the apparent Vocative / Subject overlaps³ are explained in syntactic terms.

Though the subjects of imperative clauses have been studied extensively, the subjects of “conditional imperatives” (a cross-linguistically complex clause type) have not received much attention in the literature. The aim of this paper is to investigate this particular syntactic configuration in which imperative expressions are involved, in an attempt to provide empirical data on the syntactic restrictions that are assumed to be a corollary of the semantics and pragmatics of imperatives. There is a long-standing tradition of understanding the semantic-pragmatic restrictions on imperative subjects, and perhaps the analysis of non-prototypical imperative constructions could bring a fresh perspective on the issue.

2. CONDITIONAL IMPERATIVES

In many languages⁴, [imperative + declarative] coordinated structures⁵ (in conjunction or in disjunction) are interpreted as conditional constructions or pseudo-imperatives⁶, see Bolinger (1977), Davies (1986), Clark (1993), Han (2000), Russel (2007), Corminboeuf (2008), von Fintel and Iatridou (2011), Kaufman (2012), Jary and Kissine (2012). The conditional reading of the [imperative + declarative] structure is supported by

³ For the early generative interpretation of the subject in imperative clauses, see Dobrovie Sorin 1983.

⁴ [Imperative + declarative] constructions are attested in English, German, Dutch, Spanish, Modern Greek, Russian, Polish, and Georgian (Kaufman 2012: 221). For a brief recording of this syntactic configuration in Romanian, see Vasilescu (2013: 476), Alexe (2015: 193–4).

⁵ The conjunction of an imperative clause to a declarative is often considered to be a case of *pseudo-coordination*. See Culicover and Jackendoff (1997) for the analysis of *LSand* (left subordinating conjunction) constructions. See also Croitor (2013: 516), for other types of constructions involving pseudo-coordination.

According to Montolio (1999), *apud* Alexe (2015: 193), [imperative + declarative] configurations are *pseudo-coordinates*. In her analysis devoted to this structure in Spanish, Montolio shows that, besides the particular modal-temporal correlation involved in the conjunction of the two clauses (which is employed for expressing a cause – consequence relationship), besides the need of a specific intonation (usually associated to a pause), they also display ordering restrictions. The imperative clause is always the antecedent of the consequence expressed by the declarative, and it can never occur in the second position:

- (i) Come any closer and I'll shoot.
- (ii) *I'll shoot and come any closer.

⁶ Kaufman (2012) and Jary and Kissine (2014) provide excellent overviews over the various approaches on conditional imperatives / imperatives in constructions with conditional value.

the fact that both configurations – conjunction (1a) or disjunction (2a) – are paraphrasable by true conditionals (1b) and (2b).

- (1) a. Be on time and you'll get a seat. (< Kaufman 2012: 221)
 b. If you are on time, you will get a seat.
- (2) a. Be on time, or you'll miss the first slot. (< Kaufman 2012: 221)
 b. If you are not on time, you will miss the first slot.

Semantic accounts of the conditional reading of such constructions rely on the fact that the imperative in the first clause is associated to a particular directive force which creates a fictive world (Corminboeuf 2008: 206–208); in the framework of Kaufman (2012), conditionals are modal sentences that express quantification over possible worlds individuated by a modal base and an ordering source. The antecedent of the conditional further restricts the modal base, which is the imperative clause.

Consider the counterparts of the constructions under (1) and (2), resumed below in reported speech as (1') and (2'). Examples (1'b) and (2'b) clearly show that the conceptual structure of their correspondents is not preserved. The complementation of the coordinated clauses constituents fails, as it leads to (at least) odd statements, while the projection of the declarative clause in complementation to the verb of saying, with the imperative clause in adjunct position, is the right transposition for both (1a) and (2a).

- (1') a. Be on time and you'll get a seat.
 b. ?She told me [to be on time] and [to get a seat].
 c. She told me [that I would get a seat [provided I was on time]].
- (2') a. Be on time, or you'll miss the first slot.
 b. ?She told me [to be on time] or [to miss the first slot].
 b. She told me [that I would miss the first slot [unless I was on time]].

Among the authors who deal with the [imperative + declarative] coordinated structures, Davies (1986) is the first who points out that apart from the type of coordination, there are other features that differentiate them. According to Davies (1986: 177), [imperative + declarative] conjunctions are *imperative-like conditionals* (ILCs), while [imperative + declarative] disjunctions are *imperative-like ultimatums* (ILUs). In terms of the illocutionary force of the imperative in the first clause, ILCs can be both directive (3a,b), and non-directive (3c):

- (3) a. Finish by noon and I'll pay you double. (directive ILC)
 b. Come closer and I'll shoot. (inverse directive ILC)
 c. Catch a cold and you'll end up with pneumonia. (non-directive ILC)

In ILUs, the imperative is usually associated to a warning illocutionary force (4a), but directive reading is not completely banned, see example (4b), with a stative verb (Takahashi 2012):

- (4) a. Stop or I'll shoot.
 b. Know the answer or you'll flunk. (< Takahashi 2012: 164)

Kaufman (2012: 212–254) classifies conditional imperatives according to the type of coordination displayed by the configuration: IaDs (imperative *and* declarative) and IoDs (imperative *or* declarative). She further provides an analysis of conditional imperatives in terms of their grammatical, semantic and pragmatic properties. IaDs are split in Type I IaD, and Type II IaD. Type II IaDs correspond to both Davies' (1986) inverse directive ILCs, and non-directive ILCs, see (3b,c), above. Type I IaDs correspond to Davies' (1986) directive ILCs, see (3a), above.

Kaufman (2012: 225) unifies the analysis of Type I IaDs and IoDs (which correspond to Davies' ILUs) under the assumption that "they involve an imperative followed by information about the course of events in case the imperative is complied with / not complied with". For Dancygier and Sweetser (2006: 247), the imperatives in IoDs that have the meaning of a threat are in fact means of deterrent. The imperative establishes a mental space that is perceived as improbable, because the addressee recognizes the activity suggested there as highly imprudent.

According to Kaufman, Type II IaDs are different, as they behave like true conditionals. For Clark (1993: 114), these are the only *genuine pseudo-imperatives*. The imperatives in Type II IaDs are conditional antecedents, and for that reason, they do not allow speech act related modifiers (5a,b), while the imperatives in Type I IaDs and IoDs can be modified by speech act particles (5c,d). The imperative is followed here by information about the future state of affairs, which is the consequence of compliance/non-compliance with the request/order:

- (5) a. *Please come closer and I'll shoot.
 b. *Please catch a cold and you'll end up with pneumonia.
 c. Please finish by noon, and I'll pay you double.
 d. Please stop, or I'll shoot.

3. THE ROMANIAN DATA

The Romanian imperative clause is organized around an overt imperative or surrogate form (Vasilescu 2013: 546–7). True imperatives display only forms for the 2nd person singular and plural (6a), and they have distinct forms for marking the affirmative / negative opposition (6b).

- (6) a.

Vino!	/	Veniți!
come.IMP.2SG	/	come.IMP.2PL
'Come!'		

 b.

Du	/	Nu	duce	astea	afară!
take.IMP.2SG		not	take.IMP.2SG	these	out
'Take / don't take these out!'					

Interjections like *hai*⁷, *na*, *iată* can also be employed in imperative clauses, as they display verbal features. While *hai* / *haide* ('come on') is reanalyzed as a verb by means of morphological devices (see the 2nd person plural inflection mark *-ți*⁸), the verbal behavior of *na* ('take') and *iată* ('here is/are') has syntactic grounds: they take direct objects and can host accusative clitics (7b,c).

- (7) a. Hai(de) / Haideți cu noi!
 come.IMP.2SG come.IMP.2PL with us
 'Come with us!'
- b. Vrei cartea? Na-ți-o!
 want.PRES.2SG book.DEF.ACC take=cl.2SG.DAT=cl.3SG.F.ACC
 'Do you want the book? Take it!'
- c. Unde e Ion? Iată-l!
 where is Ion here.is=CL.ACC.3SG.M
 'Where is Ion? There he is'

Surrogate imperatives (mainly subjunctives⁹) are employed either in the case of incomplete verbal paradigm (8a) (Zafiu 2013: 36, Isac 2015: 14), or in cohortative and exhortative contexts (8b,c) (Zafiu 2013: 45, Isac 2015: 27):

- (8) a. Să plăci tuturor!
 SĂ_{SUBJ} like.SUBJ.2SG all.DAT
 'May you be liked by everybody!'
- b. Să mergem!
 SĂ_{SUBJ} go.SUBJ.1PL
 'Let's go!'
- c. Să nu se așeze nimeni
 SĂ_{SUBJ} not CL.REFL.ACC sit.SUBJ.3SG nobody
 aici!
 here
 'Nobody sits here!'

As far as conditional imperatives are concerned, the three structural patterns¹⁰ attested in the literature – both types of IaDs, and the IoD – are possible in Romanian, displaying in each configuration a true imperative in the first component of the coordination:

⁷ The interjection *hai* is of Turkish origin and its reanalysis as a verbal form is a 'Balkan Sprachbund' phenomenon (see Tchizmarova 2005; Maiden 2006: 55).

⁸ The interjection *hai* can also be inflected for the 1st person plural: *haidem* ('let's go'), but the distribution of this form is limited, as compared to the 2nd person variants.

⁹ Along with subjunctive surrogates, Romanian also employs present and future indicative forms, and, for some uses, infinitives and supines, see Vasilescu (2013: 547), and Pîrvulescu and Roberge (2000).

¹⁰ Further on, for the description of the Romanian data, I will adopt Kaufman's (2012) terminology regarding conditional imperatives.

- (9) a. Tunde iarba și îți dau
 cut grass.DEF.ACC and CL. DAT. 2SG give.PRES.1SG
 50 de lei.
 50 of lei
 ‘Cut the grass and I give you 50 lei’
- b. Apropie-te și chem
 come.closer.IMP2SG=CL.REFL.ACC.2SG and call.PRES.1SG
 poliția.
 police.DEF.ACC
 ‘Come closer and I call the police’
- c. Pleacă sau chem poliția.
 leave.IMP.2SG or call.PRES.1SG police. DEF.ACC
 ‘Leave, or I call the police’

In the literature on imperative conditional constructions, a range of syntactic and semantic tests has been applied to force the imperative in the first clause manifest its nature (true imperative vs. pseudo-imperative). The structures are usually checked for their behavior in the context of pragmatic markers that are specific to directive speech acts, or they are tested for the prototypical syntactic properties of the imperative main clauses. It should be quite reasonable to presume that the exposure of the Romanian conditional imperative constructions to such semantic-pragmatic tests would not lead to spectacular results. As I am not interested here in the evaluation of the morpho-syntactic status of the imperative in coordinated constructions with a conditional meaning, I will only discuss the parallelism, within the same syntactic and contextual configuration, between subjectless and overt subject imperatives.

4. OVERT SUBJECTS

Since Romanian is a *pro-drop* language, the occurrence of overt subjects is usually associated with pragmatic contrast effects, or it conveys a marked communicative intention. In the particular case of the imperative, the presence of a lexicalized subject is expected to show stronger effects, on the one hand, due to the semantic nature of the imperative (mainly the directive force associated to it, which is prototypically oriented towards the addressee), on the other hand, due to the morphological traits of the imperative mood (a paradigm reduced to only two forms: 2nd person singular and plural).

As examples (9a–c) above show, Romanian imperatives in coordinated constructions are naturally subjectless, as is also the case with the main-clause imperatives. According to Isac (2015: 77), overt subjects of imperatives can be (i) pronominal subjects, (ii) quantificational subjects, (iii) proper names, and (iv) bare nouns. Alboiu and Motapanyane (2000: 30–31) state that with Romanian true-imperatives, overt subjects are ruled out unless they are “phonologically accented and contrastively focused”, and they add, “lexical subjects are licit only in surrogate imperatives” (subjunctives and indicative forms). As for the position of the overt subject in Romanian with respect to the imperative verb, to my knowledge, the issue has not been addressed in the literature. I will

provisionally consider that the prototypical position of the overt subject is postverbal, but both positions will be tested.

Examples (10–13) below show that subject lexicalization (as pronominal subjects) is allowed for each of the three patterns of conditional imperatives.

- (10) a. *Vino tu mai aproape și chem*
 come.IMP.2SG you.2SG more close and call.PRES.1SG
poliția.
 police.DEF.ACC
 ‘Just you come closer and I call the police’
- b. *Dă-i tu înainte cu*
 give.IMP.2SG=CL.DAT.NEUTRAL.3SG you.SG ahead with
asta și vezi ce pățești.
 this and see.IND.2SG what happens.to.you.PRES.2SG
 ‘Just you go ahead with it and you’ll see what you’re up against’
- c. **Tu vino mai aproape și chem poliția.*
 ‘Just you come closer and I call the police’
- d. ?*Tu dă-i înainte cu asta și vezi ce pățești.*
 ‘Just you go ahead with it and you’ll see what you’re up against’

Within type II IaDs (10a, b), the overt subjects can only occur after the imperative, and they function as additional markers by which the addressee is drawn attention upon the undesirable consequences of his/her actions (according to the reversed polarity imperative). The meaning of the imperative with overt subject is approximately “just you dare *p*”.

Examples (10c,d) are quite odd in the context of a speech act of threat. Probably (10d) could be better with a conditional correlative: “*Tu dă-i înainte cu asta și vezi apoi/atunci ce pățești*” (‘Just you go ahead with it and *then* you’ll see what you’re up against’).

Different effects are displayed by the examples with an overt subject in an IoD (11) and type I IaD (12):

- (11) a. ?*Stai tu jos sau chem poliția.*
 sit.IMP.2SG you.SG down or call.PRES.1SG police.DEF.ACC
 ‘You sit down or I call the police’
- b. **Oprește-te tu sau trag.*
 stop.IMP.2SG=CL.REFL.2SG you or shoot.IND.1SG
 ‘You stop, or I’ll shoot’
- c. *Tu stai jos sau chem poliția.*
 ‘You sit down or I call the police’
- d. **Tu oprește-te sau trag.*
 ‘You stop, or I’ll shoot’

(11a,b) are both examples of IoDs, with the meaning of an ultimatum (Davies 1986). The overt subject is responsible for the abnormality of the statement, because it yields an undesired mitigating effect on the imperative force. However, the two examples are not equally unacceptable. The construction in (11a) could be saved in a context where the

speaker really intends to attenuate the command, in order to prevent a manifestation of aggressiveness on the part of the addressee: “Stai¹¹ tu jos frumos, așa... sau chem poliția” (‘Just you sit down nicely, or I call the police’). Thus, despite the intrinsic pragmatic value of threat posed by the coordinated clauses, the use of the overt subject can show a sense of insecurity just on the part of the one who is supposed to perform a threat. What is interesting is that in example (11b), which has the same pattern as (11a), the presence of the overt subject leads to a totally unacceptable sentence. It is possible that the semantic features of the verb bear the responsibility for this contrast: the verb ‘stop’ is a cessative verb, which is incompatible with progressive events (as would be in the case of the speaker’s conciliatory attitude towards the addressee, induced by the overt subject). Examples (11c, d), with preverbal overt subject, are equally infelicitous¹².

In contrast to the previous examples, in (12a–d), which are type I IaDs, the presence of the overt subject does not lead to abnormal utterances, but the meaning is, to some extent, changed, as compared to their subjectless correspondents. There are even some differences between the variants with postverbal (12a,b) vs. preverbal overt subject (12c,d).

- (12) a. Tunde **tu** iarba și îți
cut.IMP.2SG you.SG grass.DEF and CL.DAT.2SG
dau 50 de lei.
give.PRES.1SG 50 of lei
‘Just you cut the grass and I give you 50 lei’
- b. Scrieți **voi** lucrarea și vă
write.IMP.2PL you.2PL paper.DEF.ACC and you.CL.ACC.2PL
trec
pass.
‘Just you write the paper, and I’ll give you the exam’
- c. **Tu** tunde iarba și îți dau 50 de lei.
‘You just cut the grass and I give you 50 lei’
- d. **Voi** scrieți lucrarea și vă trec.
‘You just write the paper, and I’ll give you the exam’

On the one hand, in (12a,b), the constructions have no longer the pragmatic [request] + [promise] reading (which is their standard interpretation – as a sequence of two speech acts, see Kaufman 2012: 224). The overt subjects induce, on the speaker’s part, a sense of doubt regarding the addressee’s ability to fulfill the request. In (12c,d), on the other hand, preverbal overt subjects do not bring about the speaker’s distrust, as in the previous examples with postverbal subject, but rather suggest that the speaker urges the addressees to comply with the order and to leave aside whatever preoccupation they may have on that moment.

Examples (10’–12’) resume the configurations in (10–12), in order to test the behaviour of the constructions with surrogate imperative (subjunctive).

¹¹ In this context, the verb has an ambiguous reading: it may also be interpreted as a representative (it describes the world according to the expectations of the speaker).

¹² With a pause, the personal pronoun could be interpreted as a Vocative, and so, the utterance is acceptable.

- (10') a. [?]**Să** **vii** **tu** mai aproape și chem
 SĂ_{SUBJ} come.SUBJ.2SG you.SG more close and call.PRES.1SG
 poliția.
 police.DEF.ACC
 'Come closer and I call the police'
- b. [?]**Să-i** **dai** **tu** înainte cu
 SĂ_{SUBJ}=CL.DAT.NEUTRAL.3SG give.SUBJ.2SG you.SG ahead with
 asta și vezi ce pășești
 this and see.PRES.2SG what happens.to.you.PRES.2SG
 'Go ahead with it and you'll see what you're up against'
- (11') a. [?]**Să stai** **tu** jos sau chem
 SĂ_{SUBJ} sit.SUBJ.2SG you.SG down or call.PRES.1SG
 poliția
 police.DEF.ACC
 'Sit down or I call the police'
- b. ^{*}**Să te** **oprești** **tu** sau trag
 SA_{SUBJ} CL.REFL.ACC.2SG stop.SUBJ.2SG you.SG or shoot.PRES.1SG
 'Stop, or I shoot'
- (12') a. **Să tunzi** **tu** iarba și îți
 SĂ_{SUBJ} cut.SUBJ.2SG you grass.DEF.ACC and CL.DAT.2SG
 dau 50 de lei.
 give.PRES.1SG 50 of lei
 'Just you cut the grass and I give you 50 lei'
- b. **Să scrieți** **voi** lucrarea și o
 SĂ_{SUBJ} write.SUBJ.2PL you.2PL paper.DEF.ACC and aux.FUT
 să luați examenul.
 SĂ_{SUBJ} pass.SUBJ.2PL exam.DEF.ACC
 'Just you write the paper, and you'll pass the exam'

As expected, a rough comparison of the three blocks of examples shows that overt subject IoDs are equally unacceptable in both imperative and surrogate imperative constructions (see 11'a,b). Still, in the examples of type II IaDs (10'a,b), although true imperatives unrestrictedly allow the lexicalized subject, their subjunctive counterparts display a low degree of acceptability. The explanation for this effect resides in the subjunctive marker *să*, which triggers a 'conditional' reading for the entire construction. Here, the subjunctive clause is no longer interpreted as an imperative, it is a true-conditional, the protasis of a conditional period. In spite of that, examples under (10'a,b) are still marked as odd, because, in order to be acceptable (with a full conditional reading), they need a correlative in the apodosis (*and then*)¹³.

The only examples in which the substitution with a surrogate imperative does not produce any major effect on the acceptability of the constructions are (12'a,b), within the type I IaD pattern. Compared to the true imperatives in (12a,b), the subjunctives have a

¹³ For a detailed description and a corpus-based analysis of *să*-conditionals in Romanian, see Alexe (2015: 134–138).

softened force, which, added to the mitigating effect conveyed by the overt subject, favors a change in the meaning of the imperative clause: there is a concessive attitude of the speaker towards the addressee's ability to comply with the order. Here, too, as for (10c,d) above, the addition of a correlative (*atunci*, 'and then') in the apodosis would probably make the utterances better, i.e. consistent with the conditional reading (with a concessive ring).

In type II IaD configurations with overt pronominal subject, Romanian also¹⁴ allows the occurrence of a doubled imperative. The imperative is repeated after the postverbal overt subject, in a rhymed pattern, for prosodic effect. The syllabic 'weight' of the compound does not seem to be relevant. Compare (13a), with a monosyllabic verb, to (13b), where the verb is trisyllabic, and it also carries a clitic as the fourth syllable of the verbal cluster.

- (13) a. **Zi tu zi** prostii ca asta
 say.IMP.2SG you.SG say.IMP.2SG foolish.things like this
 și vezi ce pățești
 andsee.PRES.2SG what happens.to.you.PRES.2SG
 'Go ahead, say foolish things and see what you're up against'
- b. **Supără-mă tu, supără-mă** și
 make.angry=CL. ACC.1SG you make.angry=CL. ACC.1SG and
 am să schimb placa
 aux.FUT.1SG SĂ_{SUBJ} change.SUBJ.1SG record.DEF
 'Just you continue to make me angry and I'll sing another song'

The repetition of the imperative has the function of an intensifier. The imperative clause is, in fact, the protasis of the conditional period, so the pragmatic effect of the reduplication is an emphasis on the danger represented by the (undesired) consequence of the event in the second clause. The illocutionary force of the imperative is not an order, the speaker employs a commissive speech act by means of which he performs a warning (he gives the addressee a warning about the imminence of the threat).

These effects can be emphasized by discourse markers, which usually encode the appeal function (*hai, ia* 'come (on)', etc.), or with modal particles (*mult* 'much', *numai* 'only', etc.). It is interesting that when discourse and modal particles are associated to a subjectless imperative clause, they seem to endorse the same effects observed for the overt subject, which means that they trigger the same pragmatic function. The discourse markers are also allowed by type I IaDs (which will not be illustrated here, but their behavior could be easily tested in the previous examples).

- (14) a. **(Ia) (hai) (mai)** zi **(tu)** prostii
 come.on more say.IMP.2SG you.SG foolish.things
 și vezi ce pățești.
 and see.PRES.2SG what happens.to.you.PRES.2SG
 '(C'mon), go ahead, say (more) foolish things and see what you're up against'
- b. **(Hai) (ia) (mai)** supără-mă **(tu) mult** și
 come.on more make.angry=CL.ACC.1SG you much and

¹⁴ Similar examples are reported for Georgian, see Kaufman (2012: 230).

- b. Să mă mai suni ?tu/tu
 SĂ_{SUBJ} CL.ACC.1SG again call.SUBJ.2SG you/you.FOC
 când poți!
 when can.PRES.2SG
 ‘You give me a call when you can!’

While true-imperatives only allow 2nd person pronouns as overt subject, surrogate imperatives can also have 1st person (18) and 3rd person pronouns (19) in the subject position. With 3rd person pronominal subject, the obligation to fulfill the order is still put to the addressee, it is not transferred to a third party (the referent of the subject), because the addressee is the one who has to make sure that his ‘to-do list’¹⁵ is checked. When the referent of the subject is not identical to the addressee, the latter is responsible for determining the subject to comply with the order. Instances in which the subject is in the 1st person are situations in which the subject and the addressee coincide (irrespective of the fact that the utterance may or may not have any audience). Even when there is an audience, they are not the addressees; they only have the role of a witness, with no responsibility in fulfilling the order. The current syntactic description of the subject – addressee configurations can account for the distribution of overt subjects with respect to the type of imperative¹⁶.

The examples below show (in)compatibility effects both with regard to the different types of conditional imperative constructions (type II IaD is impossible, see (18c) and (19c)), and with regard to the subject placement (in order to acquire an imperative reading of the first clause, the pronominal subject in the 1st person should only occur in postverbal position (18d), while the pronominal subject in the 3rd person is obligatory in preverbal position).

- (18) a. **Ia** să-mi țin **eu** gura
 come.on SĂ_{SUBJ}=CL.DAT.POSS.1SG keep.SUBJ.1SG I mouth.DEF
sau **încurc.**
 or CL.NEUTRAL be.in.trouble.PRES.1SG
 ‘I’d better keep my mouth shut or I’ll be in trouble’
- b. **Ia** să-mi văd **eu** de
 come.on SA_{SUBJ}=CL.DAT.POSS.1SG see.SUBJ.1SG I of
 treabă **și** o să fie bine.
 business and aux.FUT.3SG SĂ_{SUBJ} be.SUBJ.3SG well
 ‘I’d better mind my own business and everything will be all right’
- c. ?Ia să comentez **eu** acum **și**
 come.on SĂ_{SUBJ} talk.SUBJ.1SG I now and

¹⁵ Portner (2005, 2007) argues that the relation between imperatives and the addressee follows from a semantic fact. In his view, there is a ‘to-do list’ associated to each role in conversation.

¹⁶ In the generative framework, both the subject and the addressee value their features (person and Case) with the Speech event (Se) head. Isac argues that “the subject of true imperatives is always identical to the Addressee”, and “all cases in which we see a discrepancy between the Addressee and the subject will not be categorized as true imperatives in this view, but as surrogate imperatives” (Isac 2015: 112).

- o să fiu concediată.
aux.FUT.3SG SĂ_{SUBJ} be.SUBJ.1SG fired.PPLE.FSG
?‘Let me talk now and I’ll get fired’
- d. *(Ia) **eu** să-mi văd de treabă și o să-mi fie bine.
‘I’d better mind my own business and I will be well’
- (19) a. **El** să tacă din gură **sau**
he SĂ_{SUBJ} shut.up.SUBJ.3SG of mouth or
îl dau afară.
CL.ACC.3SG.MASC throw.PRES.1SG out
‘He shuts up or I’ll throw him out’
- b. **El** să tacă din gură **și**
he SĂ_{SUBJ} shut.up.SUBJ.3SG of mouth and
o să-i fie bine.
aux.FUT.3SG SĂ_{SUBJ}=CL. DAT. 3SG.MASC be.SUBJ.3SG well
‘He shuts up and he’ll be all right’
- c. ?**El** să (mai) comenteze și o să
he SĂ_{SUBJ} (more) talk.SUBJ.3SG and aux.FUT.3SG SĂ_{SUBJ}
fie concediat.
be. SUBJ.3SG fired.PPLE.M.SG
‘He talks much and he’ll be fired’
- d. ?Să tacă **el** din gură sau îl dau afară.
‘He keeps his mouth shut or he’ll be fired’

Examples (20a–c) display the behavior of the conditional imperative with quantifying expressions (indefinites and negatives) as overt subjects of the imperative clause. The constructions are type II IaDs, and it seems that both true imperatives and surrogate imperatives are allowed in these contexts. In fact, with true-imperatives, the quantifying expressions are not the subjects of the imperatives, they are appositions of *pro* (the covert subject). In the surrogate imperative version, the imperative reading of the subjunctive is lost, the constructions are hypothetical, i.e. they are true conditionals.

- (20) a. [E epidemie de gripă](Să) luați **vreunul**
[It’s flu epidemics] (SĂ_{SUBJ}) take.IMP.2PL(SUBJ.2PL) someone
virusul și ne
virus.DEF.ACC and CL.ACC.REFL.1PL
get.sick.PRES.1PL all.MASC.PL
îmbolnăvim toți.
‘Someone take the virus and we all get sick’
- b. (Să) nu ridicăți **niciunul** un
(SĂ_{SUBJ}) not lift.IMP.2PL(SUBJ.2PL) no.one.MASC a
deget să o ajutați și
finger SĂ_{SUBJ} CL.FEM.ACC help.SUBJ.2PL and
va eșua.
AUX.FUT.3SG fail.INF
‘Don’t anyone lift a finger to help her and she’ll fail’
- c. (Să) stingeți **careva** lumina și
(SĂ_{SUBJ}) turn.off.IMP.2PL(SUBJ.2PL) someone.light.DEF.ACC and

vedem filmul
 see.PRES.1PL movie.DEF.ACC
 ‘Someone turn off the light and we’ll see the movie’

Lexical NPs can only be in subject position with surrogate imperatives. In (21), the conditional imperative reading is possible in a context in which, for instance, the speaker addresses to a waiter. Example (21a) is a type I IaD, and (21b) is an IoD:

- (21) a. **Masa** să fie curată și comandăm
 table.DEF SĂ_{SUBJ} be.SUBJ.3SG clean and order.PRES.1PL
 de mâncare.
 of food
 ‘The table be clean and we’ll make our order’
- b. **Masa** să fie curată sau
 table SĂ_{SUBJ} be.SUBJ.3SG clean.F.SG or
 mergem în altă parte.
 go.PRES.1PL in other place
 ‘The table be clean or we’ll go somewhere else’

A final note on the generic subject of conditional imperatives: examples (22a–f) show the contrast overt subject vs covert subject in paremiological contexts.

For certain communicative contexts, when the speaker shows empathy with the addressee, pronominal overt subjects (2nd person singular) seem to be tolerated (22b, d), provided that the pronoun is phonologically unaccented (the contrastive focus reading is banned in this context). On the other hand, 2nd person plural subjects (22e) are odd, and surrogate imperatives (22f) are even worse, as they would break the generic reading, altering the meaning of the proverb. The replacement of the true imperative with a surrogate leads to a non-paremiological reading.

- (22) a. Dă-i nas lui Ivan și
 give.IMP.2SG=CL.3SG.DAT nose to Ivan.DAT and
 se suie pe divan.
 CL.REFL.ACC.3SG climbs on sofa
 ‘If you give a mouse a cookie, he is going to ask a glass of milk to go with it’
- b. Dă-i ?**tu/*tu** nas lui Ivan
 give.IMP.2SG=CL.3SG.DAT you/ you.2SG.FOC nose to Ivan.DAT
 și se suie pe divan.
 and CL.REFL.ACC.3SG climbs on sofa
 ‘If you give a mouse a cookie, he is going to ask a glass of milk to go with it’
- c. Dă-i un deget și îți
 give.IMP.2SG=CL. DAT.3SG a finger and CL.DAT.2SG
 ia toată mâna.
 takes whole hand
 ‘Give him an inch and he’ll take an ell’
- d. Dă-i ?**tu/*tu** un deget și
 give.IMP.2SG=CL. DAT. 3SG you/tu.FOC a finger and

- îți ia toată mâna.
 CL.DAT.2SG takes whole hand
 ‘Give him an inch and he’ll take an ell’
- e. Dați-i *voi un deget și
 give.IMP.2PL=CL.DAT.3SG you.2PL a finger and
 vă ia toată mâna.
 CL.DAT.2PL takes whole hand
 ‘Give him an inch and he’ll take an ell’
- f. ?Să-i dai tu un deget și
 SĂ_{SUBJ}=CL.DAT.3SG give.SUBJ.2SG you.2.SG a finger and
 îți ia toată mâna.
 CL.DAT.2SG takes whole hand
 ‘Give him an inch and he’ll take an ell’

4. CONCLUSIONS

This paper took a quick survey of the [imperative + declarative] configurations in Romanian, as a pretext for collecting some empirical data about the occurrence of an overt subject in imperative clauses. Subject lexicalization in imperative clauses is constrained both syntactically (only true imperatives allow overt subjects, and only as 2nd person pronominals), and pragmatically. The investigation upon the pragmatic effects of the overt subject targeted only on conditional imperatives, but the few examples¹⁷ showed interesting facts. The three types of constructions responded differently to the presence of an overt subject in the imperative clause. The overt subject is rejected in IoDs, but is tolerated (in different degrees of acceptability) by the other two types. The contrast was explained in pragmatic terms. In postverbal position, which is the only one allowed for a non-focus, non-contrastive reading of the overt subject, it triggered a mitigated / softened reading of the imperative, which determined the crash of the illocutionary force of the imperative (IoDs are prototypically speech acts of threat, warning, ultimatum). The analysis revealed that the [imperative + declarative] clauses are sensitive to the phonological status of the overt subject, which also depends on its preverbal vs. postverbal position. Further investigation of the topic should take into account real data recordings (and also a prosodic analysis of the utterances), which would probably provide more information on the conditions of subject lexicalization in Romanian imperative clauses.

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¹⁷ Most of the examples are constructed, they are Romanian equivalents of the examples analyzed in the literature dealing with conditional imperatives.

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