CHAPTER SEVEN

RAMIFICATIONS—THE IMPERATIVE

The Speech Act based formalization proposed in this book capitalizes on the syntactic mapping of the addressee. The discussion has been focused on how the processing of the [hearer] p-role feature in SAH⁰ triggers the merging of VocP in a clause derivation. This targeted discussion may leave the impression that the hearer p-role feature is introduced in syntax only for the sake of vocatives, which would qualify the entire analysis as stipulative. With this mind, we aim to show, in this chapter, that the syntactic mapping of the hearer and its qualification as addressee occurs irrespectively of the presence of VocP. In other words, VocP merging in SAH⁰ is a sub-case of a more general syntactic phenomenon.

Evidence for the mapping of both [speaker] and [hearer] features has been provided in various studies, following Speas & Tenny (2003). Here, we contribute to that discussion by showing how the mapping of the [hearer] concerns both constituents and verbs. The evidence provided in this chapter consists of addressee morphemes on verbs and phrases, especially in imperative clauses. We shall not enter into a detailed account of imperative clauses, but confine ourselves to examining those aspects of imperatives that align it with vocatives or require recourse to the same pragmatically oriented architecture.

The second point of the chapter is that, since SAH⁰ licenses both VocP and imperatives through its [hearer] feature, VocP and the imperative verb are bound to meet sometimes, in a local Spec-head relation. There is evidence that this may happen, which brings up the old question of whether vocatives may count as the subject of imperatives. While we subscribe to recent formal analyses that deny such a characterization of vocatives, we are able to bring new data showing how the vocative restricts the type and the interpretation of DPs that qualify for the subject position of an imperative verb.

1. The Theory: The Addressee and the Imperative

Imperative clauses have been used in this book in connection to particles of direct address, in Chapter 5 (e.g., *hai*), because these particles show a
series of affinities with the imperative: they display a similar person ending; their intrinsic injunctive/hortative semantics enhances the imperative reading; and they allow for the deletion of the imperative verb (i.e., the verb may not be spelled out at PF). When it comes to the structure of the imperative clause, the analysis we worked with is based on the “standard” configuration in which the true imperative verb moves to Force° to check the illocutionary force that types the clause as an imperative (e.g., Han 1998; Rivero & Terzi 1995).

In this chapter, we switch our perspective on the mechanism that derives imperative clauses and follow the analysis proposed in Isac (2013), where illocutionary force is seen as a derivative of a series of more primitive features that are responsible for the imperative reading: [modality], [speaker], [addressee], [cause]. This new perspective proves to be more adequate for the purpose of this chapter, since the [addressee] feature is clearly identified in a syntactic context for which the vocative is not a prerequisite.

Briefly, Isac (2013) argues for a structure where the imperative clause is headed by a Speech Event Phrase, whose head Se° is associated with [addressee] and [cause]. The feature [cause] stands for the impact the speaker’s point of view makes on the addressee when she conveys directions by means of imperatives. Se° selects a [modality] feature associated with Mod°, which, in turn, selects a compatible TP, as in (1), where the TP field includes the heads for negation and clitics.

(1) \( [Sep \ Se_{\text{[cause]}}\{\text{pers}:2\} ModP Mod_0 \text{[modal]} [TP \ldots ]] \)

In (1), Se° and Mod° enter into a head-head Agree relation, by which the person feature is transferred to Mod°. Further transfer to T° does not take place, because T° is defective in imperatives, and displays the properties of anaphoric tense. This analysis justifies the morphology of imperative verbs (i.e., second person) by the mapping of the addressee on the selecting Speech Event head. Imperatives are licensed by movement to Mod°: in true imperatives, the verb moves to Mod°; in subjunctive or infinitive surrogates, the respective mood markers, or the negation, or—in the absence of mood marker and negation—the subjunctive or the infinite verb itself may move to Mod°.

Seen from a cartographic perspective, this analysis dispenses with the clause typing level of ForceP, as the illocutionary force is the results of a combination of feature checking operations, instead of the checking of one clause typing feature. The advantage of this analysis is primarily a greater and more systematic coverage of the cross-linguistic variation