# Object drop in imperatives and the status of imperative subjects

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**Abstract**: The paper examines object drop in imperatives and argues that the null object in question undergoes movement to the left periphery. The paper also examines the position of overt imperative subjects, and argues that in some, but not all languages overt imperative subjects undergo movement to the left periphery, where the crosslinguistic variation in question correlates with the precise verbal form used in imperatives, the relevant difference being true imperatives vs other/bare forms used as imperatives (the latter leads to movement of overt imperative subjects to the left periphery).

**Keywords**: imperatives, null objects, *pro*-licensing, subject A'-movement

## 1. Introduction

This paper examines object drop in a particular type of imperatives, the starting point being such object drop in English imperatives. While imperatives typically have a null subject (1), the subject can be overtly realized (2).

(1)     Buy yourself a nice present!
(2)     You buy yourself a nice present!

Object drop in imperatives is illustrated by (3a). Previous literature has observed that object drop in imperatives is blocked when the imperative subject is overtly realized, as in (3b) (see Sadock 1974, Sigurðsson and Maling 2008, Bošković 2011).[1]

(3) a. Open carefully!
    b. *You open carefully!
    c. cf. You open it carefully!

I will use this paradigm to probe into the nature of the null element in question as well as the position of overt subjects in imperatives. I will argue that the null object undergoes movement to the left periphery for licensing reasons. This is on a par with what has been argued for in the literature for other null elements (see e.g. Johnson 2001, Fujiwara 2022, Mizuno 2022). Overt subjects in imperatives will also be argued to undergo movement. It will be observed that there is actually crosslinguistic variation regarding constructions like (3b), and a principled criterion that distinguishes contexts and languages where (3b) is allowed and where it is disallowed will be proposed.

## 2. Parasitic gaps

One argument for movement of null objects under investigation comes from parasitic gap licensing. It is well-known that parasitic gaps are licensed only under overt A'-movement. Importantly, the null object in question licenses parasitic gaps, which indicates that it undergoes A'-movement.

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[1]The judgments are given for the transitive use of *open*. I will be ignoring its intransitive use, as in *We are opening on Monday*. It should be also noted that there is some speaker variation regarding the object drop cases discussed in the paper—this may not be surprising, since, as we will see below, objects can be dropped through different strategies, so the issue might be which strategy is employed.

(4) Open without closing afterward

## 3. The blocking effect of overt imperative subjects on object drop

Another argument for movement comes from the blocking effect of overt imperative subjects on object drop, illustrated by (3). What will be relevant to the account of (3) given below is object drop in Germanic V-2 languages, illustrated by (5)-(6), where dashes indicate the canonical object position.

(5)    A:     Hvað finnst þér um nýja húsvörðinn?
               what think you about new janitor.the
        B:     Veit é(g) ekki __, hef é(g) ekki séð __ enn.
                know I not    have I    not seen    yet
                'I don't know (that), I have still not seen (him).     (Icelandic)
(6)    A:     Vad tycker du om den nya vaktmästaren?
               what think you about the new janitor.the
        B:     Vet ja(g) inte __, har ja(g) fortfarande inte sett __.
                know I    not    have I    still       not seen (Swedish, Sigurðsson and Maling 2008)

Sigurðsson and Maling (2008) argue that such null objects are possible only with an empty SpecCP, as stated in (7) and illustrated by (8)-(9), where the presence of an element in SpecCP (9), but not in C (8), blocks object drop.

(7) The Empty Left Edge Condition (ELEC): The left edge of a clause (i.e. SpecCP) containing a silent referential argument must be phonetically empty.

(8) a. (Det) känner ja(g) inte __.    Swedish
   b. (Það) þekki    é(g) ekki __. Icelandic
       (that) recognize I    not

(9) a. *Nu    känner ja(g) inte __.    Swedish
   b. * Núna þekki    é(g) ekki __. Icelandic
       now recognize I    not

Adopting a split CP, Sigurðsson and Maling argue that there are context-linking elements Topic, Logophoric Agent/Speaker (ΛA) and Logophoric patient/hearer (ΛP) above CP (i.e. above the projection where the initial element in V-2 clauses is located); null objects must enter into a licensing relation with them, which is blocked by something in SpecCP.

     Bošković (2011) argues that the licensing is actually accomplished via movement of null objects to the Specs of these projections. Since this must be A'-movement it is blocked by an intervening SpecCP in (9), as shown in (10).

(10)    [      Top/ΛA/ΛP [$_{CP}$ **SPEC** ... [$_{IP}$ ... Ø ...
         ↑_____↑
               *

If SpecCP must always be filled in V-2 clauses, the requirement can be satisfied by the null object in (5)-(6) (cf. Huang 1984), which would be moving through SpecCP on its way to the context-linking projections.

     Alternatively, the movement of null objects takes place to SpecCP (i.e. this is where the licensing is done), this is why SpecCP cannot be filled by anything else. I will leave the choice between these two possibilities open here.

     It should be noted that Sigurðsson and Maling (SM) argue that the effect in (7) is a PF processing effect. There are some obvious issues with this proposal (see Bošković 2011). First, it is strange to treat an intervention effect of the kind typically found in syntax as a PF phenomenon. Also, the effect has a semantic

reflex (determining the reference of the null object), it is obviously quite tricky to capture that in a PF analysis. Furthermore, if we were dealing here with a processing effect we might expect speakers to be able to "recover" from it, which does not happen. In light of this, I will adopt the movement intervention analysis from Bošković (2011).

Turning to the blocking effect of overt imperative subjects on object drop (3b), note that the overt subject is focalized, i.e. it is contrastively focused, in contrast to the null subject. The suggestion is then that, being focalized, the subject in (3b-c) undergoes A'-movement to the left periphery, hence it blocks A'-movement of the null object (see here Bošković 2023; the reason for subject movement will be slightly revised below). The blocking effect then also provides an argument for movement (in particular, A'-movement) of the null object.

It is worth noting here that Icelandic imperatives also show the blocking effect in question. Sigurðsson and Maling (2008) report that object drop improves when a clitic is used instead of a full pronoun subject. That makes sense from the current perspective since a clitic subject cannot be focalized (the account will be slightly revised below).

Note also that the effect in question is found with non-pronominal subjects as well, though it is somewhat weaker in this case.

(11) Everyone open it carefully
(12) ??Everyone open carefully

With an embedded clause object drop, a higher clause overt imperative subject induces an intervention effect (albeit somewhat weaker), which indicates that the movement of the null object here goes into the imperative matrix clause—it does not stop in the embedded clause CP field.

(13) Make sure that they open carefully
(14) ??You make sure that they open carefully

## 4. Islandhood effect
Another argument for movement is provided by islandhood effects. The dropped object is embedded within an island below, a Complex NP in (16) and a wh-island in (18). The islandhood effect indicates that the object is moving out of these islands.

(15) Print the instruction to open it carefully
(16) ?*Print the instruction to open carefully
(17) Ask how you can open it with a knife
(18) *Ask how you can open with a knife

There is also a Coordinate Structure effect (CSC). The effect is found in (19a), where the null object itself is a conjunct, but not in (19b), where it originates within the conjunct. I interpret this as indicating that when imperatives are coordinated, there is no movement out of an imperative conjunct itself (the movement can take place to the edge of the imperative in (19b) without moving outside of the coordination).

(19) a. *Keep and other medications out of the reach of children.
    b. Hold can six inches from underarm and push down to spray.        (Saddock 1974)

## 5. P-stranding

Another argument for movement of null objects in imperatives concerns P-stranding. Consider (20). What is dropped in (20) is a on object of a preposition, stranding the preposition. As far as I know, null objects with Ps as in (20) are possible only if the language allows P-stranding under movement (a number of languages that allow imperative object drop but not P-stranding are discussed below—none of them allow examples like (20)). This may then provide another argument for the movement of the null object.[2]

(20) Dispose of carefully          (Saddock 1974)

## 6. Slavic and what really matters for the blocking effect of overt subjects

Turning now to Slavic, we will see in this section that Slavic languages enable us to pinpoint more precisely what is going on regarding the intervention effect discussed in section 3.

First, the blocking effect of overt imperative subjects on object drop is not found in Serbo-Croatian (SC).

(21) Otvori/Pažljivo otvori
    open/ carefully open
(22) Ti otvori/pažljivo otvori
    you open/carefully open

(23) ?*You wash leeks and you chop and place in boiling water[3]

(24) Ti operi prasu, a ti izreži i stavi u vruću vodu
    you wash leeks and you cut and place in hot water

While SC differs from English regarding the blocking effect of overt subject on object drop, there are still islandhood effects with such object drop in SC, as shown by (25)-(26), which indicates that it is not the case that the null object in SC simply does not move.

(25) ?*Udji u kuću kad Ivan bude otvorio
      enter in house when Ivan be opened
(26) ??Odštampaj instrukcije kako da otvoriš
      print instructions how that opens

Regarding the English/SC contrast, it is in principle possible that there is a difference in the nature of the null object, or that the subject Case matters (the subject is vocative in SC). I will argue this is not what matters. Rather, what matters is a difference in the verbal form. SC has a dedicated imperative verbal form, which is not the case with English.

That this is what is relevant here is confirmed by Russian (all Russian data below are due to Ksenia Zanon). Russian imperatives pattern with SC imperatives in the relevant respect: there is no blocking effect of an overt imperative subject on object drop.

(27) a. Otkryvaj ostorožno!
     open$_{IMP}$ carefully
   b. Ty otrkyvaj ostorožno!
     you open$_{IMP}$ carefully

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[2]It should, however, be noted that such constructions are not very productive in English either (see Saddock 1974), which may have to do with the recoverability of what is dropped.
[3]The context for (23)-(24): two people cooking, each 'you' a different person. Note that (23) is fine if the overt subjects are dropped.

However, Russian can also use infinitives (with dative subjects) as imperatives. In infinitival imperatives, the blocking effect in question shows up: an overt subject blocks object drop (noted by Ksenia Zanon, p.c.)

(28) a. Otryvat' ostorožno!
     open$_{INF}$ carefully
  b. ?*Vsem  otkryvat' ostorožno!
     all$_{DAT}$  open$_{INF}$ carefully
  c. ?Vsem otkryvat' pis'ma ostorožno!
     all$_{DAT}$ open    letters carefully
(29) a. ?*Vsem nemedlenno zakryt'!
     all$_{DAT}$  at.once    close$_{INF}$
  b. ?Vsem nemedlenno zakryt'   učebniki!
     all$_{DAT}$ at.once     close$_{INF}$ textbooks
  c. *Tebe/vam      nemedlenno zakryt'!
     you(sg)/you(pl)  at.once     close$_{INF}$
  d.?*/(???)Tebe/vam     nemedlenno zakryt' učebniki!
      you(sg)/you(pl) at.once     close$_{INF}$  textbook

Note that there is an islandhood effect with object drop.

(30) *Vojdi v dom,  kogda Ivan otkroet
     enter in house when Ivan opened

Consider also Slovenian (the Slovenian data are due to Adrian Stegovec). Slovenian also has regular imperatives and infinitives as imperatives. Dropped objects with overt subjects are better with the former. (Pronominal subjects are not allowed with the latter, only quantificational subjects. Recall that the blocking effect in question is weaker with non-pronominal subjects in English as well, cf. (12)).[4]

(31)  Odpri   vrata!
     open$_{IMP}$ door
(32) Ti odpri     (vrata)!
    you open$_{IMP}$  door
(33) a. ?Zdaj vsi odprite  (vrata)!
     now  all open$_{IMP}$ (door)
  b. ??Zdaj vsi odpret!
      now  all open$_{INF}$

Notice that the object drop in Slovenian is also island-sensitive.

(34) a. ?*Stopi   v hišo   ko   bo     Ivan odprl.
     step$_{IMP}$ in house when fut.3sg Ivan open
     'Step into the house when Ivan will open.'
  b. *Stopi   v hišo   ko   Ivan odpre.
     step$_{IMP}$ in house when Ivan opens
     'Step into the house when Ivan opens.'

A short side remark is now in order regarding imperatives without a verb, illustrated by (35).

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[4]As noted by A. Stegovec (p.c), for an unclear reason both (33a) and (33b) are fine if the contrastive particle *pa* follows *zdaj*.

(35) Takoj        domov!
   immediately home
   'Come home right now!'

A. Stegovec (p.c.) observes that all these involve a direction, like 'home' or 'to school', but not a regular object, so there are contextual limitations on what can be dropped (cf. (36) vs (37)). Some verbs (like *go*) are general enough to be possible to recover them from the directionality of the PP. The same holds if there is another way of expressing direction, as in (38).

(36) Takoj       v šolo!
   immediately in school$_{ACC}$
   'Go to school right now'
(37) *Takoj         roke!
     immediately hands$_{ACC}$
     int. "Wash your hands right now!"
(38) Takoj          denar      nazaj!
   immediately money$_{ACC}$ back
   'Give back the money right now.'

The phenomenon is also found in Russian

(39) a. Nemedlenno spat'!                          (infinitive)
        immediately sleep$_{INF}$
     b. Nemedlenno vstal (i vyšel)!          (past tense)
        immediately got.up-masc.past (and left-masc.past)
     c. Nemedlenno v krovat'!                 (no verb)
        immediately to bed

The point to be made here is that these no-verb-imperatives do not come from (underlying) infinitival imperatives since SC, which does not have infinitival imperatives, has them (overt subject is also possible, in vocative where this can be seen).[5]

(40) Odmah       u školu!
   immediately in school.acc
   'Go to school right now'
(41) Svi odmah  u  školu!
   all immediately in school.acc

Taking stock of the main point of the discussion so far, taking SC, English, Russian, and Slovenian into consideration, the blocking effect of overt subjects on object drop does not show up with true imperative forms, it shows up in cases where an infinitive or a bare verb is used as an imperative.

　　　Also relevant is Icelandic. As noted above, Sigurðsson and Maling (2008) note that Icelandic imperatives also show the blocking effect in question (see section 7 for the data). While they gloss the relevant verbal form as imperative, the form in question for 2sg is formed by dropping the -a ending from the infinitival form of the verb, which yields a bare stem. 2pl plural imperative form is the same as the exhortative/indicative/subjunctive form. So the situation here is similar to English.

　　　Consider also French: the relevant imperative paradigm from French is given below.

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[5]One can imagine infinitival imperatives being possible in very limited single sentence instructions/warnings on labels, but overt subjects would still be completely out there, which is not the case with no-verb infinitives (cf. (41)).

(42) a. ?Ouvre!
    open
  b. *Tu  ouvre!
      you open
  c. (?)?Tu ouvre la porte!
        you open the door
  d. Ouvre la   porte!
     open the door

(42) indicates that French displays the overt imperative subject blocking effect. (An overt imperative subject is somewhat degraded; however, (42b) is worse than (42c).) What is relevant for us is that French imperative is syncretic with indicative (there is a difference for *-er* verbs but it is only orthographic: *Chante!* (You sing!) vs *Tu chantes* (You sing)).

In light of all this, I suggest that the relevant difference for the blocking effect under consideration is true imperatives vs other/bare forms used as imperatives.

(43) The blocking effect of overt subjects on object drop arises in imperatives with non-imperative-specific verbal forms, i.e. where a bare verb or a different verbal form is used as an imperative.

To account for this, I suggest that only true imperatives have/license SpecIP. Overt imperative subjects cannot stay in SpecvP (see Potsdam 1998 and fn 6). In English (3b), the overt imperative subject then must move to the left periphery, where, being located in an A'-position, it blocks A'-movement (see also Bošković 2023).[6] This is not the case in e.g. SC (22), where the imperative subject in SpecIP then does not block A'-movement of the null object.

As noted briefly above, Sigurðsson and Maling (2008) report that object drop in Icelandic imperatives improves when a clitic is used instead of a full pronoun subject. This makes sense, given that a clitic would undergo cliticization movement, and given that traces do not count as interveners (see Chomsky 1995, Bošković 2011; to illustrate the effect, Italian experiencers block subject movement (44a), but not when they undergo cliticization (45) or topicalization (44b)).

(44)    a.*Gianni$_i$ sembra a Maria [t$_i$ essere stanco].
          Gianni seems   to Maria    to be ill
       b. A Maria$_j$, Gianni$_i$ sembra t$_j$ [t$_i$ essere stanco].
          to  Maria  Gianni  seems        to be  ill
(45)    Gianni$_i$ gli$_j$ sembra t$_j$ [t$_i$ essere stanco].
        Gianni  her seems        to be  ill                              (Italian)

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[6]Potsdam 1998 places the overt imperative subject in English in SpecIP. His arguments, however, only show that the subject cannot be lower than that—they are compatible with a movement to the left periphery treatment. Thus, the data in (i)-(ii) simply show that the imperative subject is not lower than SpecIP—they don't tell us anything about whether the subject is in SpecIP or higher.
(i) There's plenty of room.
    *Simply everyone move to his right a little!
(ii) a. Don't you *simply* stand there!
    b. *Don't *simply* you stand there!
    c. *Don't stand there *simply*!                    (Potsdam 1998)

To summarize the discussion in this section, we have seen that languages (and particular constructions within the same language) differ regarding the blocking effect of overt subjects on imperative object drop. I suggested that the relevant difference for the blocking effect in question is true imperatives vs other/bare forms used as imperatives. The preliminary generalization regarding the blocking effect in question was given in (43). The generalization was motivated by English, Icelandic, SC, Russian, Slovenian, and French (additional motivation is provided below with Spanish and Italian). The reader should, however, take the above discussion as a preliminary investigation of the validity of the potential typological generalization in (43).[7]

## 7. Inverted imperatives

I will now briefly consider inverted infinitives. They involve true inversion, as indicated by the fact that negation takes wide scope in (46) ((46 is fine on the "everyone should expect..." reading, not on the "nobody should expect…" reading. Potsdam (1998) in fact claims that negation in inverted imperatives always takes the widest scope, just as in other constructions involving inversion).

(46) Don't everyone expect a raise

Turning now to object drop, there is a blocking effect of overt subjects on object drop in inverted imperatives as well, which seems to be surprising, given that the negation here is in C.

(47)  a. Don't you open forcefully
       b. Don't you open it forcefully
       c. *Don't anyone open forcefully
       d. Don't anyone open it forcefully

What is relevant here is the discussion of inversion above the phrase hosting local subject A'-movement in Bošković (2023). Bošković (2023) argues that local subject A'-movement goes to a lower phrase than non-subject A'-movement of the same type. Thus, he argues that *who* in *who left* undergoes wh-movement, but its landing site is lower than the landing site of *what* in *what did Mary buy*. Bošković (2023) argues that focalized subjects in indicatives also undergo this lower A'-movement (see Bošković 2023 for a more detailed discussion of the nature of the position/movement in question, which I am simplifying here). Consider (48).

(48)  a. Only his girlfriend does John give any flowers.
       b. *John gives only his girlfriend any flowers.
       c. Only Mary showed any respect for the visitors.                    (Branigan 1992:84)

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[7]There is a potentially interfering factor to bear in mind when testing the analysis presented above with respect to other languages. Consider example (i) from Hungarian (due to András Bárány), where subjunctives are used as imperatives. In Hungarian, transitive verbs indicate a third person definite object by object agreement. A pronominal object is then generally dropped. In (i), an overt subject and a null object can co-occur. However, this is a different kind of a null object from the one discussed so far. It is an agreement licensed null object—in this respect it is more similar to subject *pro*-drop in languages like SC or Spanish. The above discussion is not intended to apply to agreement licensed *pro*.
(i) (Te)  (ezt)  óvatosan nyisd ki!
    you   this  carefully open
      'Open it(/this) carefully!'

The *only* licensor c-commands the NPI in both (48a) and (48b). The contrast then indicates that the licensing here is apparently not possible from an A-position. (48c) can then be captured if the focalized subject undergoes local A'-movement: The *only* DP in (48c) is then not in SpecIP, hence it can license the NPI, but it is also not in SpecCP. Consequently, it does not block inversion.

(49) Did only Mary show any respect for the visitors?

Another element that undergoes this type of subject focus-movement is *nobody* in (52). Consider the paradigm below. (50) indicates that an object can scope over a subject in SpecIP. The lack of inverse scope in (51) then indicates that *who* here does not stay in SpecIP. Interestingly, inverse scope is also not possible in (52). Based on this, Bošković (2023) argues that *nobody* undergoes the same kind of focus-movement as the focalized subject in (48c)/(49) (on focus-movement of negative constituents, see Bošković 2007, 2009; note that inversion is also possible with *nobody*, as in ??*Does nobody like John*?).

(50) Someone likes everyone        inverse scope OK
(51) Who likes everyone             *inverse scope
(52) Nobody likes everyone         *inverse scope

The suggestion is then that the imperative subject movement discussed above targets the same position. What is important for us is that an overt imperative subject can undergo that kind of movement, hence be in an A'-position, even in inverted infinitives: (47c) in fact patterns with (49) in the relevant respect: in both cases, the subject undergoes short A'-movement, as indicated by the blocking effect on object drop in (47c) and the relevant NPI-licensing in (49); still it is lower than the inverted element in C (what is important for us is that (49) provides independent evidence that the required subject A'-movement is possible below C).
     In fact, in Icelandic imperatives the verb quite generally precedes an overt imperative subject that induces a blocking effect, i.e. Icelandic imperatives are quite generally inverted.

(53) a. Skerið       (*þið) __ í litla bita.
       cut.Imp2PL (*youPL) in small pieces
       'Cut in small pieces.'
    b. cf. Skerið (þið)      þau í litla bita.
        cut2PL ( youPL) them in small pieces
        '(You) cut them in small pieces.'                   (Sigurðsson and Maling 2008)

Spanish and Italian, which have real imperatives, may also be relevant here. They disallow overt preverbal subjects in imperatives, but an overt subject is possible postverbally. Importantly, it is also possible with object drop, as shown by (54c)/(55c). (Recall that the verb form here is imperative specific. Note that the object drop in question is contextually more restricted in Spanish, thus (54a) e.g. does not work for jars).[8,9]

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[8]However, it may also be relevant here that subjects can stay in SpecvP in general in Spanish and Italian (though the issue is whether subjects can stay in situ in imperatives). At any rate, no intervention effect is expected to be found in (54c)/(55c) given that we are dealing with imperative-specific forms.

[9]In both Spanish and Italian, imperatives cannot be negated—in that context a surrogate imperative, subjunctive in Spanish and infinitive in Italian, is used. However, an overt subject is not possible in surrogate imperatives regardless of object drop.

(i) a. No abras!
    'Don't openSUBJ!'
  b. *Tú no abras (la puerta)!

(54) a. Arbre!
    open

b. *Tú abre    (la puerta)!
    you open the door

c. Abre  tú
    open you                                 (Spanish)

(55) a. Apri! 'Open!'

b. *Tu apri (la porta)! 'You open (the door)!'

c. Apri tu!                                     (Italian)

## 8. A test for null objects

The discussion above can be used as a diagnostic test for null objects (possibly of a particular kind). In this section I will use imperative object drop to examine cases where an argument optionally surfaces overtly (e.g. with *eat, donate)*, where it is not clear whether we are dealing with optionally transitive/ditransitive usage, without a null element, or whether there is a null element.

      Regarding *eat*, there is some speaker variation with *eat*; one of the patterns displayed by my informants is given below.

(56) a. Eat!

b. You eat!

c. Eat without boiling!

d. *You eat without boiling!

The pattern can be accounted for if these speakers have two options:

(a) a different phenomenon
(b) the usual moving null imperative object

(56b) is then acceptable because of option (a) and (56c) because of option (b). Notice that (56d) forces option (b) because of parasitic gap licensing, which requires movement, hence an overt subject, which blocks the movement is question, is not possible.

      Consider now *donate,* which can take a DP and PP object, both of which are, on the surface, optional. This is illustrated by the paradigm in (57).

(57) a. Alex donated ten dollars to the fund.

b. Alex donated to the fund.

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    'You don't open$_{SUBJ}$ (the door)!'

  c. *No abras tú!

    'You don't open$_{SUBJ}$!'                       (Spanish)

(ii) a. Non aprire!

    'Don't open$_{INF}$'

  b. *Tu non aprire (la porta)!

    'You don't open$_{INF}$ (the door)!

  c. *Non aprire tu!

    'You don't open$_{INF}$!'                      (Italian)

c. Alex donated ten dollars.

d. He hasn't donated yet.

Consider now the imperative paradigm in (58). The selective blocking effect of the overt imperative subject in (58) indicates that there is a null object in (58b) but not (58c). This means that the intransitive usage is not really intransitive—there is a null DP object on that usage, i.e. donate must have at least one internal argument.

(58) a. Please donate

b. *You donate

c. You donate to the fund

## 9. Conclusion

To conclude, the null object under consideration undergoes movement to the left periphery. It exhibits the following properties, all of which are indications of such movement:

-it licenses parasitic gaps

-it is island sensitive

-it correlates with the possibility of P-stranding

-it is blocked by overt imperative subjects, which was interpreted as indicating that the movement in question is blocked by overt subjects that undergo local A'-movement

I have argued that there is crosslinguistic variation regarding whether overt imperative subjects can stay in SpecIP—the relevant difference is true imperatives vs other/bare forms used as imperatives (though it is possible that further research will lead to a more specific restriction regarding the latter or even show that what we are dealing with here is a tendency, as most typological generalizations are).

It should, however, be noted that it would be strange if the kind of null object under consideration here would be confined to imperatives. In fact, even in imperatives it is contextually restricted—it is typically found on labels, on signs, and in recipes, it just happens that imperatives are typically used in those contexts. There are, however, languages where its distribution may be broader—the null object that is allowed in Germanic V-2 languages and illustrated by (5)-(6), which do not involve an imperative, may in fact be the same kind of a null element (or very similar to it) as the one we have been concerned with in this paper—recall that this object is subject to a similar intervention effect as the one we have been concerned with in this work (cf. also section 8). The most conspicuous property of the null object under consideration, movement, has also been argued to be involved in the derivation of other types of null elements (see especially Fujiwara 2022 and Mizuno 2022 regarding argument ellipsis in Japanese, they also consider the possibility of a movement derivation applying to radical pro-drop in Japanese). I will, however, leave the possibility of a unification, or a more fine-grained typology of null elements from this perspective for future research.

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