DIFFICULT IMPERATIVES IN TURKISH
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INTRODUCTION: DIFFICULT IMPERATIVES (DIs)

- Imperative forms cross-linguistically have been associated with **a directive speech act** (expressing command, request, advise, permission etc.)

- In addition to its canonical directive speech uses, the imperative form in Turkish can also **express the speaker's attitude that the event expressed by the prejacent is difficult to actualize**.

- Context: Suzan is in a library with Melis and many tourists are there, too. While Melis will just watch Youtube, Suzan needs to study for her midterm. Seeing all the tourists making noise, Suzan says to Melis:

(1) Bu   gürültü-de   çalış   şimdi.
    this   noice-LOC   study.IMP   now
    Lit: `Study with this noise now' ↝ It is **difficult** to study with this noise.

- We label this construction **Difficult Imperatives (DIs).**

MAIN THESIS: DIs AS MOODPS

Problem: Difficult Imperatives cannot be derived if the imperative form always encodes a directive speech.
Proposal: Difficult Imperatives involve a **mood projection** combining with a TOUGH-operator.
        → This has implications for canonical imperatives (CIs) if we want to achieve a unified analysis.

DATA: YIELDING DIS

- The DI reading is **facilitated** by a range of idiomatized expressions.
- These facilitating expressions do not seem to have a compositional contributition to the meaning.
- The examples in (2a-d) are equivalent to (1). They all convey: (*the speaker thinks) it's difficult to study with this noise*.

    (2) a. **Gel**   **de**   bu   gürültü-de   çalış.   b. **Hadi**   bu   gürültü-de   çalış   **şimdi.**

    come.IMP   ADD   this noice-LOC   study.IMP   Come.on   this noice-LOC   study.IMP   now

    c. Bu   gürültü-de   çalış   **işin**   **yok-sa**.

    this noice-LOC   study.IMP   something.2SG.POS   not.exist-COND

    d. **Gel**   **de**   bu   gürültü-de   çalış   **şimdi   işin**   **yok-sa.**

    come.IMP   ADD   this noice-LOC   study.IMP   now   something.2SG.POS   not.exist-COND

- *Modulo* **intonation** [to be described in future work], the CI readings are **also** available for these strings.
    - ❖ The CI reading of [2c]: an actual command to the addressee: *Study with this noise, if you don't have anything to do!*
    - ❖ The DI reading of [2c]: an assertion: *It is difficult (for me) to study with this noise.*
- **Question:** Is the DI reading an inference of CIs?
    - A directive imperative uttered to challenge the addressee might license this inference:

        (3) Bu   gürültü-de   çalış   da   gör-elim

        this noice-LOC   study.IMP   ADD   see-OPT.1PL

        Lit: `Study with this noise! let us see it!' → licenses the inference *It is difficult to study with this noise.*

    - <u>Our Answer</u>: DI readings cannot be reduced to *an inference from challenging imperatives.*
    - If this were the case, (1)-(2) would need to be **self-challenge(?)** utterances. This is not morphologically supported:
    - Turkish has morphologically distinct imperative/subjunctive forms for different persons.   →
    - (1)-(2) makes use of 2SG imperative forms. Mysterious if they are **self-challenge** utterances

Context: Suzan is in a library with Melis and many tourists are there, too. While Melis will just watch Youtube, Suzan needs to study for her midterm. Seeing all the tourists making noise, Susan says to Melis:
(1)-(2) – OK [it doesn't invite Melis to study]
(3) #   [it invites Melis to study]

çalış-ayım	work-imp/subj.1sg
çalış-0	work-imp.2sg
çalış-sın	work-imp/subj.3sg

DATA: DIFFERENTIATING DIs FROM CIs

1. DIs tolerate a *yes/no* **response** contra CIs:

   (4) A: Gel de bu gürültü-de çalış. A': Bu gürültü-de çalış da görelim
           come.IMP this noice-LOC study-IMP this noice-LOC study-IMP ADD SEE-OPT.1PL

       B: Aynen/evet ya! (Mümkün görünmüyor.) B': # Aynen/evet ya! (Mümkün görünmüyor)
           Exactly/yes! (It doesn't seem to be possible.) Exactly/yes! (It doesn't seem to be possible.)

2. DIs can function as anchors to question tags, i.e. the speaker can ask for confirmation for the truthfulness of their statement:

   Context: It's late evening, you had a party and there are still many people in the house. You have given milk to the baby and you try to get him to sleep. A visitor sympathizes and says:

   (5) A: bebeği uyu-t simdi işin yok-sa di-mi?
           baby.ACC sleep-CAUS.IMP now something.2SG.POS not.exist.COND TAG
           Lit: `Put her to sleep now if you don't have anything to do, right?'

       B: **Yok ya**, uyur şimdi. Hemen uyuyor.
           `No-no, she will sleep soon. She usually falls asleep right away.'

3. DIs can be uttered in contexts where the speaker does not express any desire/preference/permission for the prejacent to be realized.
   Context: John is watching the news on the TV and there are two politicians from two different parties quarrelling with ridiculous arguments against each other. Then the man can utter disappointed:

   (6) Gel de inan böyle politikacı-lar-a
        come.IMP IMP trust such politician-PL-DAT
        Lit: `Come and trust such politicians!' ↝ *It is difficult to trust such politicians.*

4. DIs are also found in other languages, too: Greek, Bulgarian and possibly Russian (Oikonomou 2016). The Greek examples in (7) seem to pattern with DIs in Turkish, both a particle like *ande 'hadi'* and a particular intonation pattern is necessary for the DI reading. Interestingly, the DI reading in Greek surfaces not only with the imperative form but also with the subjunctive form.

   (7) a. **Ande** diavase **tora** me tetjo thorivo. b. **Ande** na diavasis **tora** me tetjo thorivo
           Come.on study.IMP now with such noice Come.on SUBJ study.2SG now with such noice
           ↝ *It is difficult to study with this noise…*

- DIs seem to pattern more like declaratives in the sense that they can be judged as true or false. Therefore we are left with two possibilities:

I. The imperative form is truly polysemous: a single form conveys two distinct readings (DIs vs. CIs)

II. The imperative form has a minimal meaning (not involving any imperative operator, see Portner 2004, 2007) and the various meanings are derived by combining this minimal expressions with different operators.

- We follow the second path, arguing that the imperative form is a **mood-Phrase** with a special imperative **[+IMP] mood feature** (Oikonomou 2016) which provides certain restrictions for the interpretation of the prejacent.

- In the spirit of Villalta (2008), we analyse **[+IMP]**-feature as introducing a requirement that a modal operator with comparative semantics combines with the $Mood_{IMP}P$.

 → In CIs comparative semantics is contributed by a prioritizing ordering source (Kaufmann 2012, Condoravdi & Lauer 2012)

 → In DIs the culprit is an operator conveying relative *difficulty,* with the meaning in (8) (e.g. Keine & Poole 2015; Gluckman 2017).

(8) Meaning for the DI-operator

$$[\![OP]\!]^j = \lambda p_{<st>}.\ \lambda s.\ \forall s', s'' \subseteq DOX_{<j,s>}\ such\ that\ p(s') = 1\ \&\ p(s'') = 0\ \&\ MIN(s')(s'')$$
$$MAX(\lambda d.TOUGH(d)(j)(s')) > MAX(\lambda d.TOUGH(d)(j)(s'')),$$
where $MIN(s')(s'') =_{def} s'\ and\ s''\ are\ minimally\ different\ from\ each\ other$

[OP] is interpreted relative to a judge (j) parameter (Lasersohn 2005). [OP] combines with a proposition p [mood_IMP P] and returns the proposition that all situations consistent with the doxastic alternatives of the judge j and where p is true are more difficult to j than situations where p is false, granting that the compared situations are minimally different.

- The DI in (1) has the meaning that *all situations consistent with the speaker's beliefs in which the subject studies with this noise are more difficult than those in which he doesn't.* However, this meaning, being identical with its declarative counterpart, doesn't capture the contrast between (9a) an (9b) in a context where it is known that p will not be actualized.

Context: *John's friends are discussing whether he is coming to the party or not. One of them says "John called, he won't be able to come". Another one says:*

(9) a. # Hadi   şimdi   anneyi ikna   et   işin yoksa.   b. Anneyi ikna   etmek zor.

    Come.on now   mother convince.3SG.IMP   if.you.dont.have.any.work   mother convincing dificult

   Lit: "Convince the mother now if you don't have anything to do"   "It is difficult to convince the mother."

- In order to capture the contrast between the DI and its declarative counterpart, it suffices to introduce **epistemic uncertainty condition** as defined in Kaufmann (2012), as a general condition posited by imperative mood across all the environments it appears in:

(10) Epistemic Uncertainty Condition: *S* holds possible some future courses of events where p comes about and some where ¬p does.

CONCLUSION AND BEYOND

- The availability of DIs (not only in Turkish but also in Greek, Russian, Bulgarian and probably other languages) posits a challenge to analyses which treat the imperative form as the spell-out of a distinct speech-act (e.g. Han1998, Portner 2004).

- Instead, we argue that the imperative form is the spell-out of a distinct verbal mood-phrase which shares common properties with the subjunctive mood (see a.o. Portner 1997, Stegovec 2018).

- In this sense, the proposal builds on Portner's (2004, 2007) minimal approach (see von Fintel & Iatridou 2017 for a similar insight for *Imperative and Declarative constructions* - IaDs).

- On the other hand, our account is *not* minimal since a covert modal operator eventually combines with the imperative form. But this is only as a consequence of the requirement of the imperative mood. This allows for the necessary flexibility to derive the differences between CIs and DIs.

- However, this flexibility can also lead to an overgeneration problem, since Villalta's (2008) theory is designed for the distribution of subjunctive mood in Spanish which can combine with many different predicates.

- Although we have no decisive answer for the overgeneration problem, our point of departure is that the there are additional restrictions on the distribution of imperative mood (e.g. *epistemic uncertainty*) and restrictions associated with their embeddability.

- Depending on what we define as 'the imperative form' cross-linguistically we might be able to detect more non-canonical functions/interpretations of imperative forms which can contribute to our overall understanding of imperative mood.

- So far, the only non-canonical meaning which has been discussed in detail for imperatives is IaDs. As it appears, the availability of DIs does not correlate with the availability of IaDs (e.g. Turkish lacks IaDs, Palestinian Arabic has IaDs but not DIs, Greek has both).

- Lastly, even though we assume that the idiomatized expressions (along with the specific melody of DIs) to be PF-indicators of the covert DI-operator,. future research might reveal that they are more compositional than we have assumed here. (e.g. `now' might be an indicator of Epistemic Uncertainty)

- We believe that by investigating non-canonical uses of imperatives, we can gain important insights on mood selection in general.

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