# Imperatives Under Coordination

Jespersen (1909, 1924) describes a conditional meaning arising in conjoined sentences whose first conjunct appears to be an imperative (Jespersen 1909, p. 475):

(1)  Take honor from me, and my life is done. (Shakespeare 1836, p. 365)

    ≈ If you take honor from me, my life is done.

This type of imperative, which Jespersen (1909) calls a **pseudo-imperative**,[1] differs slightly in both syntactic and semantic properties from other imperatives and has therefore inspired much research, including works by Bolinger (1967), Davies (1979, 1986), van der Auwera (1986), Hamblin (1987), Han (2000), Franke (2005), Schwager (2005), Russell (2007), and Jayez & Dargnat (2009).

    Most clauses whose main verbs show imperative morphology can generally only describe an action desirable to the speaker (2), cannot include NPIs such as *even* (3), and can include do-support for emphasis (4a) or negation (4b). As noted by Bolinger (1967), Davies (1986), Han (2000), Franke (2005), and Russell (2007), though, these properties do not obtain for certain pseudo-imperatives (for further review and discussion, see also Iatridou 2008, von Fintel & Iatridou 2009). For example, in conjunctions with undesirable second conjuncts (5), the clause with the imperative need not be desirable to the speaker (5a), can include NPIs (5b), and has been claimed to prohibit do-support in emphatic (5c) or negative (5d) contexts (Russell 2007, Scontras & Gibson 2011), though we refine the generalization regarding do-support below.

(2)  Be late! #I really don't want you to be late.

(3)  *Take even one more step.

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[1]Jespersen actually uses the term *pseudo-imperative* more broadly to indicate any non-canonical use of an imperative. Linguists following Jespersen, though, use the term to refer simply to uses of imperatives in compound sentences with conditional meanings.

(4)  a.  Do finish your work.          b.  Don't finish your work.

(5)  a.  Be late and you'll be fired. ✓I really don't want you to be late.

  b.  Take even one more step and I'll shoot.

  c.  *Do be late and you'll be fired.

  d.  *Don't you finish your work and you'll fail the class

Given the different syntactic and semantic behavior of imperatives under conjunctions with undesirable second conjuncts, Han (2000) and Russell (2007) argue that examples such as (5) do not involve imperatives in the first conjunct, but rather bare VPs, with only part (Han, 2000) or none (Russell, 2007) of the machinery specific to imperatives. This analysis is challenged, however, by von Fintel & Iatridou (2010), who systematically show that such examples display unambiguous imperative morphology in languages with distinctive imperative paradigms;[2] Kaufmann (2012) also argues that the relevant examples involve imperatives. However, neither von Fintel & Iatridou (2010) nor Kaufmann (2012) offer an explanation for the syntactic anomalies mentioned above.[3]

In this paper, we argue that pseudo-imperatives are in fact true imperatives, licensed by the same syntactic and pragmatic conditions as other clauses whose main verbs bear imperative morphology. (We retain the term pseudo-imperative purely as a descriptive convenience.[4]) To this end, we first offer additional evidence, in Section 1, that true imperatives are involved in pseudo-imperatives with undesirable second conjuncts, such as (5). In Section 2, we present our analysis of the phenomenon. This analysis crucially relies on the view that imperative

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[2]A similar point is found in Jespersen (1924, p. 314).

[3]Nor do they offer (as we do) a semantic proposal motivated entirely by independent properties of conditional conjunctions.

[4]Note that the conjunctions relevant for this paper have been termed IaD (Imperative and Declarative) by Schwager (2005), and Iatridou (2008) uses the terms Type I IaD to refer to refer to what we later term 'positive' pseudo-imperative conjunctions (in which the first conjunct can be straightforwardly paraphrased by an imperative); she terms all other pseudo-imperatives (which we will call 'neutral' and 'negative' pseudo-imperatives) Type II IaDs.

verbs are licensed by a higher operator in C, separate from the verb itself (see e.g. Rivero & Terzi 1995, Han 2001, Medeiros 2013). We argue that while the imperative verbs in (5) are within one clause of a conjunction below the CP level, the imperative operator in C scopes above both clauses of the lower conjunction. This syntactic structure explains the restrictions on do-support, which we show is properly understood as (only) a syntactic prohibition against T-C movement. Additionally, since the imperative operator takes the conjunction below it as its semantic argument, the imperative meaning conveyed encompasses the entire conjunction rather than just the first clause. This explains the apparent pragmatic problems that arise when only the first clause was considered to be part of the imperative meaning. Finally, in Section 3, we look at other conjoined imperatives with slightly different syntactic properties before concluding with Section 4.

# 1   New Data

We begin by presenting new data which shows that pseudo-imperatives, even those with undesirable second conjuncts, actually do involve true imperatives. First we present a pseudo-imperative example with a third-person (quantifier) subject that binds a second-person pronoun; this odd person-shift is a property which Zanuttini (2008) argues is diagnostic for English imperatives.[5]

(6)   a.   Anybody$_i$ touch your$_i$ phone and I'll shoot you$_i$.

  b.   * Anybody$_i$ touches your$_i$ phone and I'll shoot you$_i$.

(7)   a.   Everyone$_i$ keep running your$_i$ mouth and I'll lock you$_i$ up.

  b.   * Everyone$_i$ keeps running your$_i$ mouth and I'll lock you$_i$ up.

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[5]Although Russell (2007) claims that speaker-undesirable pseudo-imperatives cannot have subjects and Scontras & Gibson (2011) present empirical evidence these types of pseudo-imperatives are degraded when they have overt subjects, we find (6) – (8) perfectly acceptable. Independent of imperatives, conditional conjunctions have quite stringent felicity conditions (see Bolinger 1967, among others). These felicity conditions are beyond the scope of this paper, but even if certain examples are degraded, it suffices for our point that one such acceptable example exists.

(8)    a.    Nobody$_i$ lend your$_i$ poor mother a hand and we'll be here all night.

      b.    * Nobody$_i$ lends your$_i$ poor mother a hand and we'll be here all night.

The (a) examples show the irregular binding, which contrasts with the similar non-imperative (b) cases.

Second, just like other clauses with imperative morphology, pseudo-imperative examples that are not addressee-oriented or ones that present actions beyond the addressee's control are not felicitous, as shown in (9); addressee-orientation has long been thought to be an obligatory property of (at least) English imperatives (Downing 1969, Zanuttini et al. 2012). The minimally different cases in (10), with full clauses in place of imperatives, sound much better.[6]

(9)    a.    # Be too rainy and they'll probably cancel the festival. (So, let's check the weather before we go.)

      b.    # Anyone be even one inch too short and the whole group is barred from the roller coaster. (So fess up if you're too short!)

(10)    a.    It's too rainy and they'll probably cancel the festival.[7] (So, let's check the weather before we go.)

      b.    Anyone's even one inch too short and the whole group is barred from the roller coaster. (So fess up if you're too short!)

Finally, pseudo-imperatives with undesirable second conjuncts allow do-support (contra Han 2000) and emphatic *do* (contra Russell 2007 and Scontras & Gibson 2011), so long as T-C movement does not apply.[8] Russell (2007) shows that do-support in syntactically negative contexts is allowed, so long as T-C movement does not apply; in (11), *do* is disallowed when T-C movement has applied,

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[6]An anonymous reviewer notes that so-called OM-sentences (Culicover 1972) like *One more drop of rain and they'll probably cancel the festival* also do not require addressee-orientation.

[7]A reviewer questions the acceptability of this sentence. We find it acceptable but note that it requires the distinctive prosody described by Krifka (2004), Keshet (2013), etc. to disambiguate it from a traditional conjunction. See also the perfectly acceptable OM-sentence in footnote 6.

[8]While Scontras & Gibson (2011) presents experimental evidence for their position, they do not include any examples of the type SUBJECT-DO-IMP (discussed below) in their test items.

such that *do* precedes the subject. At the same time, Russell (2007) argues that emphatic *do* is disallowed in all pseudo-imperatives with undesirable second conjuncts on the basis of (12), citing this as evidence that pseudo-imperatives with undesirable second conjuncts do not involve true imperatives. However, (13) (in which a possible utterance context is supplied in italics) shows that emphatic *do* is fine so long as T-C movement has not applied. Therefore, apparent restrictions on periphrastic *do* are likely not based on the pragmatics of pseudo-imperatives with undesirable second conjuncts, but rather reflect a syntactic restriction on T-C movement.

(11)    a. Don't tithe and you'll go to hell.

        b. #Don't you tithe and you'll go to hell. (Russell, 2007)

(12)    #Do steal from the church and you'll go to hell. (Russell, 2007)

(13)    *This is a robbery. Nobody better move! Don't touch your phones, especially!* Anybody DO touch your phone and I'll shoot you dead.

Given the data in this section, we conclude that imperative verbs always retain their syntactic and pragmatic properties, even when in conjunctions.

# 2    Analysis

The intuition behind our analysis is that in cases such as (5a), the entire utterance acts pragmatically as an imperative. Although imperative morphology is only licensed on the first clause of the conjunction, both clauses together encode the imperative speech act being conveyed. It is the structure of the conjunction that explains the unexpected syntactic and semantic behavior of pseudo-imperatives.

One note before we begin: we concentrate here only on issues germane to imperatives in conditional conjunctions. We will introduce all the concepts relevant for our proposal, but of course there is much more to say on these topics. For

a larger discussion of full conditional conjunctions and potentially related phenomena like sufficiency modal conjunctions, conditional conjunctions of a noun phrase and a sentence, and NPIs, modals, and tense in conditional conjunctions, we refer the reader especially to Culicover & Jackendoff (1997), Keshet (2013) and references therein. For a larger discussion of the semantics and pragmatics of imperatives, we refer the reader to Hamblin (1987) and especially Kaufmann (2012) and references therein. Finally, for more information on the syntax standardly assumed for imperative clauses, we refer the reader to Rivero & Terzi (1995) and Zanuttini (2008).

## 2.1 Syntax

Several theories of imperatives are compatible with our analysis, but the following elements are crucial. (i) There must be some element in the left-periphery relating to the imperative speech act. We will call this element Imp and place it in $C^0$ position. We adopt the proposal due to Kaufmann (2012) that Imp enforces a bundle of presuppositions (see also Han 2000 for related proposal) pragmatically restricting the use of an imperative. (ii) As Bennis (2006) and Zanuttini (2008) argue, a $2^{nd}$ person feature that case- and phi-agrees with the subject must be represented in the CP domain of a clause with an imperative ($T^0$ being defective) in order to derive binding facts such as (6a).[9] We assume that Imp carries this feature, although this is not crucial. (iii) Following Keshet (2013), we assume there must be some modal element scoping above any conditional conjunction.[10] (iv)

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[9]Zanuttini (2008) remains agnostic as to the presence of $T^0$ in clauses with imperatives, but has their subjects represented in the specifier of a functional head above vP (from which the subject raises). Agreement of English imperative subjects with a $2^{nd}$ person feature in the left-periphery accounts for $2^{nd}$ person pronoun binding for $3^{rd}$ person subjects generally:

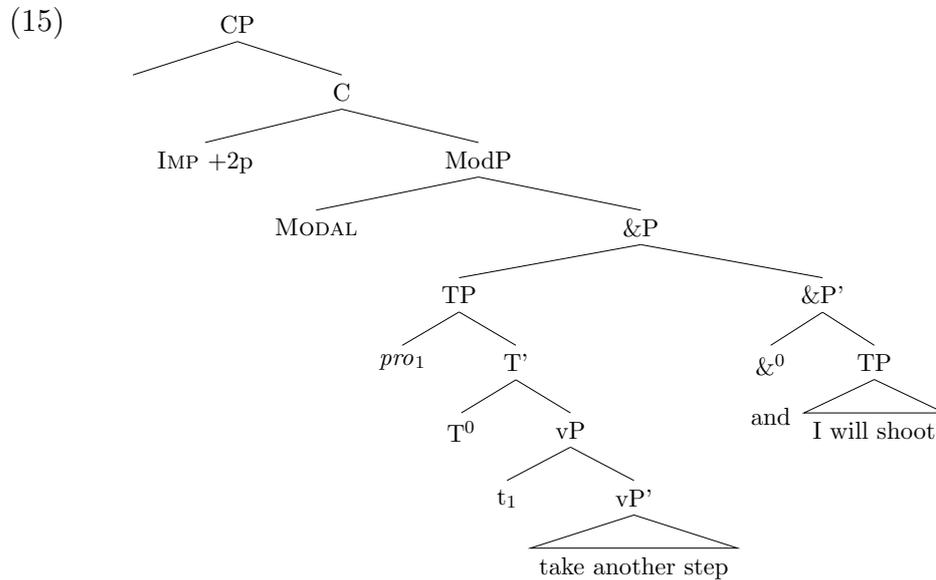(1)   Kids, Gabriel$_i$ comb your$_i$ hair, Dani$_j$ put on your$_j$ shoes!

Zanuttini includes *kids* in (1) to show that the proper name subjects in (1) are not vocatives.

[10]It is possible that Imp itself provides this modal (cf. Kaufmann's proposal, which assumes Imp is a necessity modal). We assume that whatever adequately captures the semantics and pragmatics of a more ordinary imperative is in effect here. If that means the Imp is a modal,

Last, also following Keshet, we assume that a conditional conjunction is between two phrases lower than CP but at or higher than TP; this structure explains certain focus and modal properties of the construction noted by Keshet and Culicover & Jackendoff (1997).[11]

With these elements in place, we propose that pseudo-imperative cases such as (5a) and (5b), repeated here as (14) involve the structure shown in (15).

(14)    a.  Be late and you'll be fired.        b.  Take another step and I'll shoot.

(15)

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                        CP
                       /  \
                          C
                        /   \
                 IMP +2p    ModP
                           /    \
                     MODAL        &P
                               /       \
                             TP         &P'
                            /  \       /   \
                        pro_1   T'    &^0    TP
                               /  \    |    / \
                             T^0   vP  and  I will shoot
                                  /  \
                                t_1   vP'
                                     /  \
                              take another step
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As modeled by (15), and assuming (downward) agreement as defined by Pesetsky & Torrego (2007), independent principles of Agree (i.e. closest c-command between the imperative verb and the $2^{nd}$ person features in $C^0$) explain why only the first-clause verb appears as an imperative; and this verb will be unambiguously imperative in languages with such morphology (for relevant evidence, see

then the structure of a pseudo-imperative would contain two modals. If, as one reviewer suggests, Kaufmann's proposal better captures the data using just her presuppositions without the modal (or with a separate, lower modal), then the pseudo-imperative would have only one modal.

[11]For example, the first clause of a conditional conjunction cannot convey new/focussed information and the only modal meanings available in conditional conjunctions are so-called root modals (taken to be low syntactically). See Keshet (2013) for details. Keshet also points out that the two clauses of a conditional conjunction cannot generally have different tenses from one another; we take this to be a property of sequence-of-tense stemming from the modal in ModP (cf. Abusch 1997).

von Fintel & Iatridou 2010).[12] With respect to pronoun binding, we correctly predict that 3$^{rd}$ person subjects in cases like (6a) can bind 2$^{nd}$ person pronouns, again because true imperatives are involved (cf. Zanuttini 2008).[13] Accounts like Han's and Russell's that do not posit full imperatives do not explain why these imperative-specific pragmatic, morphological, and syntactic properties carry over to the atypical cases.

The syntactic anomalies regarding periphrastic *do* and NPIs, which motivate Han's and Russell's non-imperative analyses, are also explained by the structure of the conjunction. As we argued above, apparent restrictions on *do* are correctly understood as a prohibition on T-C movement. This movement is correctly blocked, since T$^0$ is unable to head-move outside of its conjunct due to the coordinate structure constraint. Additionally, the licensing of NPIs in the first clause of such conjunctions is entirely independent of the imperative facts.[14] As noted by Russell in reply to Han, any conditional conjunction can host an NPI (such as "lift a finger") in the first clause:

(16) George lifts a finger to help us find the lost kitten and he'll demand an equal share of the reward. (Russell's 18f)

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[12]A reviewer asks about additional cases of C-agreement with only one conjunct of TP-conjunction. Since phi-agreement in C is relatively rare, an exact parallel was not discovered. However, Haegeman & van Koppen (2012) show similar agreement patterns in Limburgian, in which C-agreement is active for 2$^{nd}$ person singular subjects. When an NP subject in a coordinate stucture, only the first conjunct of the NP agrees with C (1).

(1) Ich dink de-s    [toow en  Marie] kump.
    I    think that-$_{2sg}$ you$_{sg}$ and Marie] come$_{pl}$
    'I think that you and Marie will come.'

While the entire NP triggers plural agreement on V, C only agrees with the first conjunct.

[13]We follow Zanuttini et al. (2012), Bennis (2006) and Jensen (2003) in assuming that imperative subjects, when null, are *pro*.

[14]Although Keshet (2013) does not note this, NPI licensing follows from his theory and von Fintel (1999). Since the first clause of a conditional conjunction acts semantically like an *if*-clause, it is Strawson downward-entailing as defined by von Fintel, and therefore licenses NPIs. Incidentally, this is why examples with *anybody* in the first clause of a conditional conjunction sound so much better than those with *somebody*. Just as in other downward-entailing environments, such as the *if*-clause of (1), NPIs are more felicitous than PPIs:

(1) If anybody/?somebody moves, I'll shoot.

Thus, the cases highlighted as atypical by Han and Russell are in fact better explained in a theory that treats them as true imperatives, via independent features of imperatives and conditional conjunctions.

## 2.2 Semantics

We adopt wholesale the semantic account of conditional conjunctions due to Keshet (2013), which holds that the focus structure of such cases always backgrounds the first clause. As discussed in Rooth (1985), such background information restricts the domain of quantifiers and modals in the same sentence. Therefore, the first clause of a conditional conjunction acts like an *if*-clause, restricting modal domains. Assuming a universal modal above the conjunction, this yields a denotation as in (17) for the ModP in (15):

(17)   All situations where you take even one more step are situations where (you take a step and) I shoot. ($\approx$ If you take even one more step, I'll shoot.)

Next, as mentioned above, imperatives impose certain felicity constraints on their contexts and often convey a commanding (or at least an advising or warning) speech act. We propose that however these constraints and speech act are generated for other imperatives, the same mechanism is in effect for pseudo-imperatives. For concreteness, though, we will follow the proposal in Kaufmann (2012), who represents these constraints via presuppositions, which also generate the appropriate speech act. These presuppositions, shown in simplified form in (18), effectively capture the range of imperative meanings and speech acts, from command (*Don't be late!*) to advice (*Try the steak!*) to warning (*Beware the Ides of March!*).

(18)   ⟦IMP $\phi$⟧ presupposes:

    a.  $\phi$ does not solely take place in the past.

    b.  The speaker is an authority on $\phi$, either socially or due to specific knowledge.

c. It was uncertain whether $\phi$ would take place (before the imperative was uttered).

d. $\phi$ implies some action of the addressee that achieves a relevant goal for the speaker *or* addresses a salient decision problem (in the sense of Zimmermann (2000))

Since the IMP operator scopes over the ModP of the conditional conjunction, this entire phrase (which dominates both clauses of the conjunction) provides the denotation for the $\phi$ relevant to the presuppositions in (18). Therefore, *be late* in (14a) is not the intended advice or warning; instead the warning is the meaning of the full conditional conjunction (essentially *if you're late, you'll be fired*). Even a speaker-undesireable antecedent can form part of a longer conditional warning or advice, as shown in these paraphrases of pseudo-imperatives:

(19)   Do something about the fact that . . .

a. . . . if you're late, you'll be fired.   b. . . . if anybody moves, I'll shoot.

The fact that the entire conditional meaning forms part of the imperative meaning also explains the contrast between (9) and (10). The cases in (9) fail the presuppositions in (18) (see also the discussion of addressee-orientation in Potsdam (1998)). In particular, (18d) is the condition that Kaufmann uses to rule out imperatives like the following:

(20)   a.  # John, rain!                    b.  # Be two inches taller!

Since John can neither rain nor make it rain outside, (20a) does not imply an action for the addressee; and no addressee can control how tall they are, ruling out (20b) as well. Similarly, the cases in (9) describe states or activities beyond the control of the addressee and therefore fail to satisfy (18d).[15]

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[15]Both reviewers point out that this constraint is cancellable, e.g., in a scenario before a blind-date as shown in (1). One reviewer also notes that pseudo-imperatives operate the same way

# 3   Other Conjoined Imperatives

Most of the pseudo-imperatives examined so far have had second conjuncts that encode undesirable consequences (from the perspective of the speaker). Let us call these the **negative** pseudo-imperatives. Two other categories, though, are proposed by Clark (1993), Schwager (2005), and Iatridou (2008): **neutral**, and **positive** pseudo-imperatives. In this section, we will argue for an identical analysis for neutral cases as proposed above for negative ones; however, we will argue that positive cases can take either the syntactic analysis discussed above, or an alternative analysis, such that these are syntactically ambiguous.

Iatridou (2008) discusses neutral pseudo-imperatives such as (21) due to Clark (1993), in which the second conjunct is neither clearly desirable nor clearly undesirable:

(21)   (*Do) open the guardian and you'll find three misprints on every page.

Like the speaker-undesirable cases, neutral ones also resist T-C movement.

Now, under Kaufmann's presuppositional account, imperatives can be very mild advice or warning. For example, in response to the question *How do I get to Harlem?*, an imperative can be used as advice, even if other possibilities exist, such as a bus, while the same sentence with *must* does not allow the non-exclusive reading (22) (i.e. (22b) cannot be interpreted as advice).

(22)   a. Take the A-train. But you can also take a bus.

b. You must take the A-train. #But you can also take a bus.

In neutral cases, then, we argue that the presuppositional contour of imperatives is satisfied according to the account of non-conjunctive imperatives in Kaufmann

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(2); the other suggests that speaker knowledge is relevant in these cases via the condition in 18c.

(1)   Oh, please be more handsome than the last guy!

(2)   Be as ugly as the last guy and I won't even say hello!

(2012). Just as the speaker of (22a) can give advice without truly desiring the addressee to follow it, a strict, principled vegan (who doesn't believe that anybody should eat meat) can still make the claim that a certain sushi restaurant will serve a good meal (i.e. will taste good) with a pseudo-imperative, but not with a similar sentence containing *must*:

(23)   a. Go to Sukiyabashi Jiro for sushi and you'll have a great meal (although I don't think you should be eating meat at all).

   b. #You must go to Sukiyabashi Jiro for sushi and if you do, you'll have a great meal (although I don't think you should be eating meat at all).

The paradigm case of neutral pseudo-imperatives, (21), can likewise be read as the mildest of warnings, for example as a warning to be aware that the Guardian has poor copy-editing.

In contrast to the other types, positive pseudo-imperatives generally have a desirable second conjunct, and they permit a simple paraphrase, as in (24). Furthermore, positive cases allow do-support in emphatic and negative contexts (25) and prohibit NPIs in the first conjunct (26), unlike the other cases.

(24)   a. Study hard and you will pass the class. =

   b. Study hard. If you do, you will pass the class. (Iatridou 2008)

(25)   a. Do study hard and you will pass the class.

   b. Don't ignore your homework and you will pass the class.

(26)   Take (*even) one more step and I'll give you your prize.

Therefore, positive pseudo-imperatives have generally been taken to represent a simpler construction as compared to their negative and neutral cousins, because the first conjunct behaves similarly to imperatives in non-conjunctive contexts. Nevertheless, there is no consensus regarding the structure of this type of conjunction, the paradigm example of which is (24a). While Han (2000) claims that

this type of pseudo-imperative does not involve a true imperative, Russell (2007) and Schwager (2005) argue that the first conjunct in a conjunction such as (24a), does contain an imperative and that the interpretation of the pseudo-imperative is brought about via modal subordination. We agree that the first conjunct of a positive pseudo-imperative has an imperative but we do not maintain the modal subordination account, which Iatridou (2008) shows to be problematic from the perspective of sequencing effects.[16]

Instead, we argue that the syntactic structure of a positive pseudo-imperative such as (24a) is ambiguous, allowing either the structure (15) proposed above for negative/neutral pseudo-imperatives, or the structure in (28). In (28), two CPs are conjoined directly, which allows T-C movement and, therefore, emphatic *do*. For an example similar to (24a) but with emphatic *do*, such as (27), (28) will be the only possible analysis for a positive pseudo-imperative.

(27)   Do study hard and you will pass the class!

(28)
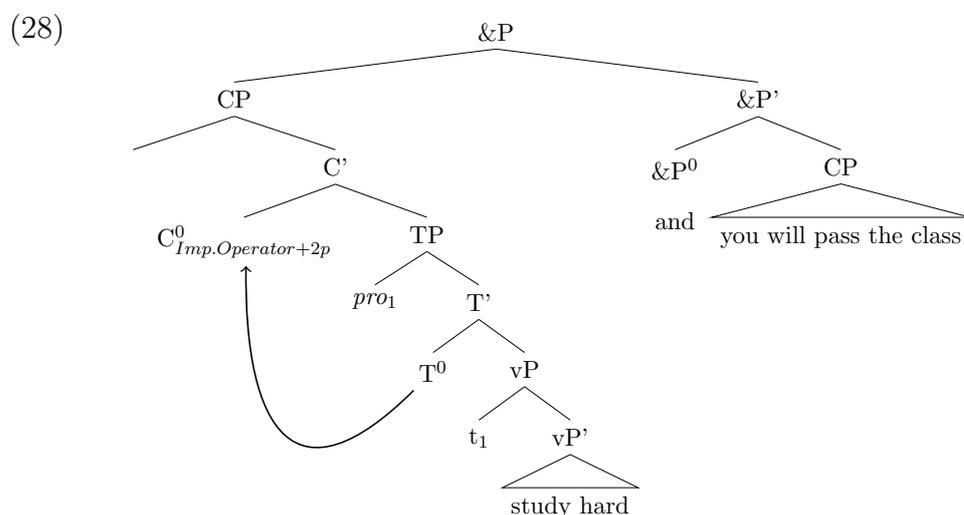


When a positive pseudo-imperative has the structure in (28), independent pragmatic principles suggest an interpretation in which the two conjuncts are

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[16]We suspect that the connection is the same sort of coherence relation (Hobbs 1979, Kehler 2002) found in any discourse. For instance, the two-sentence declarative discourse '*You studied hard all year. You'll pass the class.*' is most naturally understand as (implicitly) stating that the addressee will pass the class because they studied hard.

related. For example, it is easy for speakers to take the second conjunct in (29) as related to the first, although such an interpretation is not strictly required.

(29)  You must study hard and you will pass the class.

# 4  Conclusion

In this squib we have argued that speaker-undesirable and neutral pseudo-imperatives involve true imperatives, despite apparent differences between these conjunctions and non-conjoined imperatives. New evidence shows that restrictions on do-support in the first conjunct, which some have cited as evidence that that this conjunct does not have a true imperative, is properly understood as a restriction on T-C movement. This restriction follows from the structure of the conjunction that we propose. Addtional tests show that the first conjunct in the relevant construction must be addressee-oriented, which is not predicted by bare-VP analyses of negative pseudo-imperatives.

We propose that the entire conjunction is under the scope of an imperative operator. The conjunction conveys the meaning of a conditional, as described in Keshet (2013), and therefore this entire conditional meaning contributes to the imperative meaning. Under this analysis, the semantics and pragmatics of pseudo-imperatives are accounted for by appeal to independently motivated mechanisms which have been taken to account for conditional conjunctions. Positive pseudo-imperatives, which can be paraphrased with a simple imperative, can have either the conditional conjunction structure or the structure of a normal conjunction at the CP level. Under this analysis of (both types of) pseudo-imperatives, the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic properties of this construction which have been identified as anomalous follow entirely from independent properties of imperatives and conjunctions.

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