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Are asymmetries in imperative negation based in usage?

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Abstract

This article extends the study of (a)symmetries in negation to the domain of (negative) imperatives. It examines a balanced sample of the world's languages for distinctions in tense, direction/location and intersubjectivity and observes that, like with asymmetry in standard negation, they are often neutralized from positive to negative but not vice versa. Intersubjective marking is found to be somewhat exceptional in that the opposite situation does occasionally occur. The article also tests whether and confirms that these asymmetries are grounded in usage patterns, with a corpus investigation of English and Dutch (negative) imperatives. It proposes negation's discourse presuppositionality, which has been argued to account for neutralization in standard negation, as an explanation for most but not all of these typological and usage-based results in imperative negation too. It nevertheless makes a case for other, more imperative-specific motivations as well.

Keywords: asymmetry; Dutch; English; (negative) imperative; usage.

1. Introduction

The notion of asymmetry at the heart of this article comes from Miestamo's (2005) typological study of standard negation. He characterizes (a)symmetry in this way: domain *f(*x*)* is symmetric if its grammatical structures differ from those of x only in the presence of the *f()* marking; if there are more differences, *f(*x*)* is asymmetric (Miestamo 2005: 51–52). For imperative negation, symmetry is thus the situation

where the negation – i.e. *f()* – of the imperative – i.e. x – simply involves extra negative marking, as in Dutch in (1).

(1) Dutch (NLD; Germanic, Indo-European; personal knowledge)
ga (*niet*) *weg*
go.IMP NEG away
'(Don't) go away!'

Asymmetry can be constructional and/or paradigmatic (Miestamo 2005: 51–56). In Pite Saami, for example, all paradigmatic distinctions made in the imperative are also available in the negative imperative but the latter construction consists of a prohibitive auxiliary bearing the imperative marking and a non-finite "connegative" form of the lexical verb, as (2) shows.[1] We can say that the negative imperative in (2b) is constructionally asymmetric vis-à-vis its positive equivalent in (2a).

(2) Pite Saami (SJE; Saami, Uralic; Wilbur 2014: 152, 158, 180)
a. *dáhke-n dal d-a-v*
do-DU.IMP now DEM-DIST-ACC.SG
'You two do that now!'
b. *elle-n tsábme*
PROH-DU.IMP eat.CONNEG
'Don't you two eat!'

In Matsés, imperative negation does exhibit constructional symmetry: the imperative in (3a), marked by the absence of any inflection, and its negative counterpart in (3b) differ only in the prohibitive suffix *-enda*.

(3) Matsés (MCF; Panoan; Fleck 2003: 993)
a. *cun shubu-no nid*
1.GEN house-LOC go
'Go to my house!' (speaker *might* accompany addressee)

[1] The term "prohibitive" is sometimes used in place of or preferred to "negative imperative". We will stick to this second label and reserve the first one for markers dedicated to expressing 'don't!', like *elle* in (2b).

b. *cun* *shubu-no* *nid-enda*
1.GEN house-LOC go-PROH
'Don't go to my house!'

c. *cun* *shubu-no* *nid-ta*
1.GEN house-LOC go-N1.IMP
'Go to my house!' (speaker won't accompany addressee)

There is paradigmatic asymmetry, though. In the positive, the language has the option of adding *-ta*, as in (3c), to signal that the speaker will not join the addressee in the action. The imperative in (3a) leaves the speaker's involvement unspecified. Crucially, in the negative, this distinction is not available.

Applying this concept of (a)symmetry to standard negation has enabled Miestamo (2005) to uncover a range of recurring phenomena in the world's languages. He observes, for instance, that languages distinguishing realis and irrealis grammatically often feature additional irrealis marking, either compulsorily or optionally, in negative declarative verbal main clauses. Moreover, such sentences are never found to be realis-marked whilst their positive equivalents are irrealis-marked. This asymmetry is, in his view, motivated by the fact that, "semantically, negation belongs to the realm of the non-realized" (Miestamo 2005: 196; see Cristofaro 2012: 140–142, however, for examples of how irrealis arises in standard negation through diachronic processes unrelated to the domain of the non-realized). Another asymmetric phenomenon identified by Miestamo (2005) for standard negation is the frequent neutralization of positive tense-aspect-mood and person-number-gender distinctions in the negative. An example of his is Bagirmi. The positive construction in (4a) has a symmetric negative counterpart in (4b) but negation is incompatible with completive *ga* in (4c) and the aspectual distinction between (4a) and (4c) is therefore lost in (4b).

(4) Bagirmi (BMI; Bongo-Bagirmi, Central Sudanic; Stevenson 1969: 83, 91, 130)

a. *ma* *m-'de*
1SG 1SG-come
'I came.'

b. *ma* *m-'de* *li*
1SG 1SG-come NEG
'I didn't come.'

c. *ma* *m-‘de* *ga*
1SG 1SG-come COMPL
‘I have come.’

To account for this neutralization tendency, Miestamo (2005: 211) appeals to the idea of discourse presuppositionality: “Since negatives [e.g. *he didn’t break the rules*] typically occur in contexts where the corresponding affirmative [i.e. *he broke the rules*] is supposed or somehow present, many aspects of the negated content are known to the speakers, and there is less need to explicitly specify its different properties such as its temporal aspects or its participants.” This explanation centers around what it is basically an assumed discourse preference. As Miestamo et al. (2022: 135–136) argue, it would then have “conventionalized as grammatical constraints” in languages like Bagirmi but, importantly, one should/would expect its effects to “be present in all languages” – in patterns of usage to be precise, of grammatical as well as lexical expressions. In this regard, it is interesting to note Miestamo et al.’s (2024: 22–26) findings for declarative verbal main clauses in Korean, English and Finnish conversations: temporal adjuncts indeed occur less often in negative than in positive sentences, though only in the former two languages significantly so, and the same holds for the adjuncts of temporal position in particular (which locate a state of affairs in time, compared to those of duration, frequency or temporal relationship; see Hasselgård 2010: 204–206), though only in the latter two languages significantly so. Miestamo et al. (2024: 26–27) see these results as partial confirmation for the claim that tense neutralization is “motivated by the lower need for temporal specification in negatives”. Such bases in usage are what this article aims to examine for asymmetries not in standard negation but in imperative negation.

(Negative) imperatives have been studied and compared from a cross-linguistic perspective before (e.g. Xrakovskij 2001; Mauri & Sansò 2011; van der Auwera & Lejeune 2013; Van Olmen 2021). However, remarkably little attention has been paid to recurrent patterns of constructional or paradigmatic variation between the imperative and its negative counterpart. Even less research has looked at such patterns using the notion of (a)symmetry, despite Miestamo’s (2005: 238) call “to broaden the scope of the study [of (a)symmetries] into other areas of clausal negation, especially into non-declarative negation”. One of the exceptions is Miestamo & van der Auwera (2007). They consider just 30 languages, though, and they primarily seek to answer the question to what extent imperative negation exhibits the asymmetries known from

standard negation. For a more singular focus on imperatives versus negative imperatives, we can turn to Aikhenvald (2010: 165–197). She may not describe their (dis)similarities as (a)symmetries but she makes numerous observations that can quite easily be recast in such terms. She notes, for instance, that, "in many languages, … categories [relating to verbal action] are found in positive, but not in negative, imperatives" (Aikhenvald 2010: 181). Another way to formulate this observation would be to say that imperative negation frequently displays asymmetry of the paradigmatic neutralization type. Tucano in (5) is one of her examples and involves a tense distinction particular to (negative) imperatives across languages (Aikhenvald 2010: 129–131), i.e. between immediate compliance in (5a) and delayed compliance in (5b). The negative imperative in (5c) is said to correspond to both (5a) and (5b).[2]

(5) Tucano (TUO; Tucanoan; West 1980: 51; Aikhenvald 2010: 183)
   a. *ba'á-ya*
      eat-IMM.IMP
      'Eat now!'
   b. *ba'a-apa*
      eat-DEL.IMP
      'Eat later!'
   c. *ba'a-tikaya*
      eat-PROH
      'Don't eat!'

Aikhenvald (2010: 183) adds that languages may also retain the distinction between immediate and delayed compliance in negative imperatives. No indications of the frequency of (non-)neutralization are provided, though, and the (im)possibility of tense being marked only in the negative imperative is simply not discussed. It therefore seems warranted to have another, closer look at this asymmetry, which is precisely what the present study seeks to do. Immediate versus delayed compliance is, however, not the sole feature that merits revisiting. We will investigate two further types of distinctions: directional-locational ones (e.g. 'go and …!') and intersubjective ones (e.g. illocutionary force). There are, of course, many others that might be of

[2] We are following Aikhenvald's (2010: 183) analysis here. West (1980: 51) does mention the delayed negative imperative *ba'a-tí-cã'-apa* (eat-NEG-EMP-DEL.IMP) 'at a later point, don't eat!', alongside *ba'a-tí-cã'-ña* (eat-NEG-EMP-IMM.IMP) 'don't eat, now!'.

interest (e.g. number marking or (im)perfective aspect in (negative) imperatives). Our focus on the three types of distinctions just mentioned is motivated in part by space limitations. A more significant reason is that, in many languages, these distinctions are specific to or, put differently, made solely in (negative) imperatives but their (dis)similarities in the positive and the negative have only been explored cursorily (see Aikhenvald 2010: 133–138, 183–184, 189–190, 203–223).

In short, we want to examine in this article (i) whether imperative negation exhibits any systematic asymmetries in tense, directional-locational and intersubjective distinctions and, if so, how (often) they manifest themselves cross-linguistically and (ii) whether and in what way any such asymmetries can be accounted for by considering usage data. To answer (i), we will take a typological perspective in Section 2 and look at a balanced sample of 160 of the world's languages. To answer (ii), we will adopt a usage-based perspective in Section 3 and investigate corpus data of both English and Dutch. Section 4, finally, will contain our conclusions.

2. Typological perspective

This section will first discuss our sample (Section 2.1). Then, we will focus on the marking in imperative negation of tense (Section 2.2), direction and/or location (Section 2.3) and intersubjectivity (Section 2.4). An interim summary will be given at the end (Section 2.5).

2.1. Sample

For our typological study, we rely on a 160-language sample that follows Miestamo et al.'s (2016: 256–259) genus-macroarea sampling method with a predetermined sample size. This method produces a variety sample, which primarily serves to reveal as much diversity as possible in how the languages of the world convey some functional domain, like imperative negation. To be reliable, it should "represent all the world's linguistic groupings – areal, genealogical and other – as well as possible", since "connections between languages increase the possibility that they are similar to each other" (Miestamo et al. 2016: 235). If such representation is attained by eliminating potential biases in a consistent way, the variety sample may even be used to make claims about, for example, cross-linguistic frequency (Miestamo et al. 2016: 251–252).

To limit genealogical bias, the present method takes Dryer's (1989) concept of genus as its point of departure. Genera are linguistic groupings for which one can reconstruct a common ancestor that is normally between 3,500 and 4,000 years old (Dryer 1989: 267). A genus may belong to a bigger language family (e.g. Sinitic), make up an entire language family itself (e.g. Mayan) or be an isolate (e.g. Warao[3]). Starting from genera for a sample's genealogical classification has the benefit that, unlike many language families, they constitute groupings of languages that are quite generally accepted as related (Miestamo et al. 2016: 238–239). Dryer (2013) lists 521 such groupings for the world's languages and our sampling method stipulates that none of these genera can be represented by more than one language. In theory, the choice of language could/should be arbitrary but, in practice, it is obviously affected by the (un)availability of sufficient information. Lack of data has an impact on the selection of genera too. There is many a genus of which no language has been adequately documented (yet) and that cannot but be excluded from the sample. Moreover, such genera tend to be more common in some areas (e.g. Australia) than in other ones (e.g. Europe) (Miestamo et al. 2016: 250). The former would be underrepresented and the latter overrepresented in a sample that simply included a language from any genus with enough information. Some geographical stratification is therefore needed.

To mitigate areal and bibliographical bias, Miestamo et al. (2016: 256) draw on Dryer's (1992) six so-called macroareas, the more or less continent-size zones of Africa (Af), Australia and New Guinea (A&NG), Eurasia (EuAs), North American (NoAm), South America (SoAm) and South East Asia and Oceania (SEA&O). Their method requires that the relative amount of genera, and thus languages, in the sample for a macroarea is comparable to the relative amount of genera that the macroarea accounts for in the entire world, as in Table 1, where the numbers in the bottom two rows represent our present sample.

		Af	**A&NG**	**EuAs**	**NoAm**	**SEA&O**	**SoAm**	**Total**
world	# genera	74	140	43	92	66	106	521
	% genera	14.20	26.87	8.25	17.66	12.67	20.35	100.00
sample	# languages	23	43	13	28	20	33	160
	% languages	14.38	26.88	8.13	17.50	12.50	20.63	100.00

Table 1: Genus-macroarea sampling with a predetermined sample size of 160 (cf. Miestamo et al. 2016: 259)

[3] WBA; Isolate, South America.

We can use Eurasia to illustrate this principle. In Dryer (2013), this macroarea represents 8.25% of the world's genera (43/521). Accordingly, our 160-language sample should contain thirteen Eurasian languages – each from a different genus, of course – since the macroarea would then make up the similar proportion of 8.13% of the data (13/160).

Our sampling method takes two further steps, where possible, to reduce bias. First, when picking languages for a macroarea, priority is given to languages from genera that are not part of the same language family (Miestamo et al. 2016: 253). This step aims to ensure that smaller families, sometimes comprising only one genus, are represented – if the necessary information is available. Eurasia can again serve as an example: since our sample features Icelandic (ISL; Germanic, Indo-European), and we possess data for twelve entirely unrelated Eurasian languages, no other Indo-European genus/language is covered. However, it is not always feasible to eschew related languages. A selection of twenty languages from South East Asia and Oceania, for one, is highly likely to contain more than one Sino-Tibetan and Austronesian language, just because these language families account for the majority of genera in the macroarea. Second, the sampling method tries to avoid including any geographically adjacent languages (Miestamo 2016 et al. 2016: 249). To demonstrate this step, we can turn to Icelandic once more. One reason why this language is chosen to represent Germanic and not Swedish (SWE; Germanic, Indo-European) or Norwegian (NOR; Germanic, Indo-European) is that our sample also features Pite Saami, a Uralic language spoken in Sweden and Norway. It is not always desirable, though, to exclude neighboring languages altogether. For small regions with substantial linguistic diversity that forms a large proportion of a macroarea's genera (e.g. the Northern Territory in Australia), strict adherence to this second step would mean missing out on whole genera. We therefore go with Miestamo (2005: 32) in such situations and give precedence to genealogical rather than geographical variety.

The final prerequisite for a language to be part of the sample is particular to our study: it must possess both an imperative and a negative imperative. This requirement may seem trivial but Miestamo & van der Auwera (2007), for instance, consider North Slavey for their investigation into (a)symmetry in imperative negation. This language has a construction, in (6a) with the prohibitive marker *ʔehdḿí*, that is dedicated to expressing 'don't!'. In other words, there is a negative imperative in North Slavey. The primary way to get someone to do something in the language, however, is (6b). This construction is actually a declarative that is being used directively (cf. *you are*

going home! with a certain intonation in English) and North Slavey possesses no alternative that is more specialized to conveying 'go home!' or, put differently, no imperative. Relying on such a language for research into imperative negation does not seem felicitous: any (a)symmetries that would be established exist not between imperative and negative imperative but between negative imperative and positive declarative.

(6) North Slavey (SCS; Athapaskan, Na-Dene; Rice 1989: 1109)

a. *ʔehdńí ʔį̀yę hahʔá*
   PROH meat eat.2PL.IPFV
   'Don't y'all eat the meat!'

b. *ʔáradįła*
   go.home.2SG.IPFV
   'Go home!' or 'You are going home.'

To exclude languages like North Slavey, one should ideally have clear cross-linguistic definitions/comparative concepts of the imperative and the negative imperative. As Jary & Kissine's (2016) in-depth discussion about imperatives shows, though, developing such definitions is far from straightforward. Going into the pros and cons of any proposal would take a considerable amount of space – which the present article, unfortunately, does not have (but see Van Olmen 2024: 212–220). The following characterization and examples will have to suffice here. For us, the (negative) imperative is a distinct grammatical construction, in morphological terms (see Tucano) and/or syntactic ones (see English *eat!*), that has no other prototypical function than to express an attempt by the speaker to get their addressee(s) (not) to do something (see also van der Auwera 2005: 565; Aikhenvald 2010: 1–2; Jary & Kissine 2016: 132). Consider now Ghomara in (7) and Lokono in (8). In the first language, there exists a construction that is dedicated to conveying directivity. This imperative in (7a) is marked by the lack of any inflection in the singular and the suffix *-w* in the plural. However, Ghomara's most basic strategy to issue a negative directive does not count as a negative imperative. The construction in (7b) has another typical function, i.e. the expression of the future declarative. The second language possesses neither an imperative nor a negative imperative. The constructions in (8a) and (8b) may be the primary ways in Lokono for a speaker to get an addressee (not) to do something but, like (6b), they tend to serve as present declaratives too.

(7) Ghomara (GHO; Berber, Afro-Asiatic; Mourigh 2015: 148)

a. *hala-ø(/w)*
come-2SG.IMP/2PL.IMP
'(Y'all) come!'

b. *ma ya kerz-et ši*
NEG IRR plough.AOR-2SG NEG
'Don't plough!' or 'You will not plough.'

(8) Lokono (ARW; Antillean Arawakan, Arawakan; Patte 2008: 105, 145)

a. *bu-shika da-mun no*
2-give 1-DAT 3.F
'Give it to me!' or 'You give it to me.'

b. *ma-iya-n b-a*
NEG/PRIV-cry-NMLZ 2SG-AUX
'Don't cry!' or 'You don't cry.'

Languages such as North Slavey, Ghomara and Lokono should, in our view, not be part of any study of (asymmetries in) imperative negation and they are indeed skipped in the compilation of the present article's sample.

For an overview of our sample, we refer to the Appendix 1. It provides, for each language, the following information: its macroarea, the language family that it belongs to, its genus and its Glottolog and ISO 639-3 codes.

2.2. Tense

As Aikhenvald (2014: 206) points out, "the most frequently attested grammaticalized time reference in imperatives is that of immediate versus delayed" compliance. Of the 160 languages in our sample, eighteen or 11.25% are found to make this type of distinction in their imperatives. In ten of them, it is expressed by the addition of a marker, like *-ri* in (9a),[4] and, in another five, by imperative markers that are in complementary distribution to each other, like *-git* and *-na* in (9b). West Greenlandic is

[4] The question whether such markers/distinctions relate to any declarative ones (of futurity) is the subject of Aikhenvald's (2014: 207–211) investigation and is of no concern to us here, as it has to do with (a)symmetry between imperatives and declaratives.

the sole language in our data with both strategies. Its complementary imperative suffixes occur only in the intransitive second person singular, however.

(9) West Greenlandic (KAL; Eskimo, Eskimo-Aleut; Fortescue 1984: 25–26)
   a. *uja(-ri)-sigik*
      look.for-DEL-2PL > 3PL.IMP
      'Y'all look for them (later)!'
   b. *ingin-niear-git(/na)*
      sit.down-CON-2SG.IMM.IMP/2SG.DEL.IMP
      'Sit down (later)!'

The way that Menggwa manifests the distinction is by means of different stems (for those verbs allowing the alternation, that is). As (10) shows, its imperative is characterized by the absence of tense-aspect-mood inflection and *sama* 'cook' is replaced by *dama* to express delayed compliance.

(10) Menggwa (KBV; Senagi; de Sousa 2006: 382)
   sama(/dama)-wa-a-ø
   cook/cook.FUT-2SG-3SG.F-IMP
   'Cook it (later)!'

Chinantec Lealao in (11), lastly, is somewhat unique in our sample. Not only does the language distinguish immediate from temporally vague (including delayed) compliance, it also draws on two completely different constructions to make the distinction.

(11) Chinantec Lealao (CLE; Chinantecan, Oto-Manuean; Rupp 1989: 93)
   a. *ŋia*^{M} *la*^{M}
      come.2SG.COMPL here
      'Come here (now!).'
   b. *ʔi*^{M} *ha*^{LM}*i*
      REL come.2SG.PROG
      'Come (sometime)!'

Both (11a) and (11b) are grammatically distinct: the first one's completive verb form does not ordinarily appear without further inflection and the second one's relative

marker *ʔiM* requires an antecedent normally. They are also both dedicated to conveying directivity. The difference between the two imperatives is that (11a) presumes a direct response and (11b) does not.

Eight of these languages retain the tense distinction in their negative imperative and, like Kunuz Nubian in (12), they all do so with the same marking as in their imperative – except for Edolo in (13), which has prohibitive counterparts to its immediate and delayed imperative suffixes.

(12) Kunuz Nubian (KZH; Nubian, Eastern Sudanic; Abdel-Hafiz 1988: 161–163)
   a. *ju(:-ka)-ø*
      go-DEL-2SG.IMP
      'Go (later)!'
   b. *jom(-kam)-me-ø*
      hit-DEL-NEG-2SG.IMP
      '(At a later point,) don't hit!'

(13) Edolo (ETR; Bosavi; Gossner 1994: 49)
   a. *molö gobe-mo(/malo)*
      food cook-IMM.IMP/DEL.IMP
      'Cook food (later)!'
   b. *ama-mabu(/mabio)*
      do-IMM.PROH/DEL.PROH
      '(At a later point,) don't do that!'

Koasati also preserves its positive contrast between immediate and delayed compliance in the negative, as (14a) and (14b) show. The language makes a rare additional distinction, however, with its further delayed imperative in (14c) and this construction has no negative equivalent.

(14) Koasati (CKU; Muskogean; Kimball 1991: 270–271)
   a. *ip-ø(-aḥ)*
      eat-2SG.IMP-DEL
      'Eat it (later)!
   b. *is-p-án(-naḥ)*
      2SS-eat-PROH-DEL
      '(At a later point,) don't eat it!'

c. *ip-ø-ạ́:hah*
eat-2SG.IMP-FUR.DEL
'Eat it much later!'

Complete neutralization occurs in seven of the eighteen languages. Most of them are like West Greenlandic in (15) and (9) in that their negative imperative does not resemble their imperative at all constructionally. The West Greenlandic one employs the negative contemporative forms of the verb, which are normally found in dependent clauses and whose independent use is dedicated to expressing 'don't!'. In just two languages do we see neutralization in a negative imperative that is similar to the imperative. Kolyma Yukaghir in (16) is one of them.

(15) West Greenlandic (Fortescue 1984: 27)
patin-nanga
hit-2SG > 1SG.NEG.CONTEMP
'Don't hit me!'

(16) Kolyma Yukaghir (YUX; Yukaghir; Maslova 2003: 140)
a. *jaqa-ŋi(-ge)-k*
arrive-PL-DEL-IMP
'Y'all arrive (later)!'
b. *el-l'aqa-ŋi(*-ge)-le-k*
NEG-arrive-PL-DEL-PROH-IMP
'Don't y'all arrive!'

For two more languages, finally, the available material does not allow us to determine whether the distinction between immediate and delayed compliance that exists in the positive is possible in the negative.

On the whole, roughly half of the languages in our sample with a tense distinction in the imperative neutralize it in the negative imperative. Moreover, no language seems to distinguish immediate from delayed compliance solely in its negative imperative. These observations suggest that there is a systematic asymmetry of neutralization from positive to negative here. One potential counterexample comes from a language that is not part of the present sample, Nyankore in (17) (see Van Olmen et al. 2023: 201–202).

(17) Nyankore (nyn; Bantu, Niger-Congo; Morris & Kirwan 1972: 10)

a. *o-ta(-ri)-gyend-a*
2SG-NEG-REM.FUT-go-FV
'(At a much later point), don't go!'

b. *mu-rya-gyend-a*
2PL-REM.FUT-go-FV
'Y'all go much later!' or 'Y'all will go much later.'

Its negative imperative in (17a) can convey delayed compliance by inserting the remote future marker. There does exist a positive equivalent to the construction with *-ri* but, as (17b) makes clear, it "is the same in form as the indicative far future" (Morris & Kirwan 1972: 10, who also point out that the negative imperative differs from its indicative counterpart in the position of the negative prefix). One may therefore argue that it does not constitute a "proper" imperative (see Section 2.1). It seems sensible, though, not to attach too much importance to the situation in Nyankore, since its interpretation depends heavily on what one takes (negative) imperatives to be.

2.3. Direction and/or location

As Aikhenvald (2010: 133–138) shows, imperatives frequently make space-related distinctions, often but not always as the only clause type in a language. They may indicate that the addressee is expected to move toward or away from the speaker to do something. These directions can be called andative and venitive respectively and are illustrated in (18). Imperatives may also signal that the addressee is supposed to do something close to or far from the speaker or simply at a different place. An example of such a location-specifying construction is Trio's so-called "dislocative" imperative with *-ta* in (19a). It tries to get the addressee to carry out the action elsewhere and is in complementary distribution with the ordinary and venitive imperative suffixes *-kë* and *-mïï* in (19b) (Carlin 2004: 307 explicitly writes that the latter is not a purely proximal imperative).

(18) Ese Ejja (ese; Tacanan; Vuillermet 2012: 666)
ixya(-ki/wa)-kwe
eat-AND/VEN-IMP
'(Go/come to) eat!'

(19) Trio (tri; Cariban; Carlin 2004: 307, 313)

a. *ene-ta*
look-DISLOC.IMP
'Look somewhere else!'

b. *ene-kë(/miï)*
look-IMP/VEN.IMP
'(Come) look!'

It is important to add here, with Aikhenvald (2014: 211–212), that tense distinctions in imperatives may acquire locational/directional connotations. A delayed imperative, for instance, can imply distance too. In some languages, the marking is even entirely vague between a temporal and a spatial interpretation. The Arawá suffix *-jahi* in (20) is a case in point and would have to be considered in this section as well as in Section 2.2. However, the language is not part of the present sample, which contains no similar cases.

(20) Arawá (aru; Arauan; Aikhenvald 2014: 211)

otara *noki* *ti-jahi*
1EXCL.OBJ wait 2SG-DEL/DIST.IMP.F
'Wait for us (in some distant time or place)!

Of the languages in our data, thirteen or 8.13% feature space-related distinctions like the above in the imperative. Most resemble Ese Ejja in that there is extra marking in the regular construction, like *-ki* and *-wa* combining with the imperative suffix *-kwe* in (18), to add a direction or a location to the directive. In the other six languages, we find marking that replaces the ordinary exponent of the imperative, as in Trio in (19), but half of them still possess the Ese Ejja strategy too. Nuuchahnulth in (21) can serve as an example.

(21) Nuuchahnulth (nuk; Southern Wakashan, Wakashan; Davidson 2002: 271, 296–297)

a. *haťi˙s=csu:*
bathe=2PL.AND.IMP
'Y'all go and bathe!'

b. *hič-ma-(č)i:ɬ-šiƛ = ʾiˑč(-ak)*
illuminate-thing-make-PFV = 2PL.IMP-VEN
'Y'all (come and) make torches!'

The language substitutes andative imperative clitics, *=csu:* in (21a), for the regular ones, *=ʾiˑč* in (21b), to express 'go and ...!'. The venitive meaning 'come and ...!', by contrast, is marked by simply attaching the suffix *-(a)k* to the normal imperative clitics, as in (21b).

Let us now turn to the negative imperative. We have only indirect evidence, in the form of an example, for just one of the thirteen languages above of a space-related distinction made in the positive also appearing in the negative: the Ese Ejja andative in (18a) and (22).

(22) Ese Ejja (Vuillermet 2012: 470)
a'a *akwi-kwi-jeyo = jo* *sowa-ki-xi*
PROH tree-plant-slippery = LOC go.up-AND-PROH
'Don't go up on this slippery plant!'

Similarly, for no more than two of these languages do we know, beyond reasonable doubt, that the negative imperative neutralizes the choices present in its positive equivalent. Djingili is one of them. Pensalfini (2003: 232) explicitly states that the only acceptable (negative) imperative forms in the language are those in (23): the regular imperative in (23a) (the absence of subject marking makes this irrealis construction dedicated); the andative one in (23b); and the negative one in (23c). In other words, the option in the positive of indicating a direction does not appear to exist in the negative.

(23) Djingili (jig; Djingili, Mirndi; Pensalfini 2003: 232)
a. *ngaja-mi*
look-IRR
'Look!'
b. *ngiji-yirri*
look-AND.IMP
'Go and look!'

c. *ngiji-ji*
look-PROH
'Don't look!'

The descriptions of the ten remaining languages do not address or are insufficiently clear about the question whether the space-related distinctions in the imperative are possible in the negative imperative. Carlin (2004: 309–311), for instance, writes that, in Trio, negative imperatives consist of a negated non-finite form of the lexical verb and the imperative of 'be', like in (24). For 'be', she explicitly mentions the regular imperative suffix *-kë* in (19b) but does not specify that the dislocative and venitive imperative endings in (19) are ungrammatical. One could interpret this information as pointing to neutralization (cf. Aikhenvald 2010: 184) but the evidence is far from conclusive.

(24) Trio (Carlin 2004: 309)
in-ene-ø-wa *eh-kë*
3-see-NFIN-NEG be-IMP
'Don't look at it!'

It is nevertheless worthy of note that, for so many languages, directional and/or locational differentiation is discussed only for the imperative and, furthermore, that no language in our sample appears to make such distinctions just in the negative imperative. It is also interesting that there is a common cross-linguistic path of change from 'go', whose meaning then bleaches, to imperative marking (see Mauri & Sansò 2011: 3497–3500) but that, to our knowledge (e.g. Aikhenvald 2010: 351–362), no path from '(not) go' to negative imperative marking has been established. Together, these observations can, in our view, still be argued to be indicative of an asymmetry of neutralization of space-related distinctions from positive to negative, as postulated by Aikhenvald (2010: 183–184) too.

2.4. Intersubjectivity

It should come as no surprise that, as inherently addressee-oriented constructions, imperatives in the world's languages often exhibit formal variation that one could characterize as intersubjective in nature. Intersubjective meaning is understood here as the

"explicit expression of the SP[eaker]/W[riter]'s attention to the 'self' of addressee/reader in both an epistemic sense (paying attention to their presumed attitudes to the content of what is said)" and, more importantly for us, "a more social sense (paying attention to their 'face' or 'image needs' associated with social stance and identity)" (Traugott 2003: 128). It manifests itself in the imperative as distinctions marking the interpersonal relationship between speaker and addressee (Aikhenvald 2010: 212–223) and/or the directive's illocutionary strength (Aikhenvald 2010: 203–212).

An example of an interpersonal distinction can be found in Kurtöp. The imperative suffix *-le* in (25a) is described as informal. It is employed between friends and people of similar social status or to issue directives to children. The so-called polite imperative ending *-lu* in (25b), by contrast, is used when the addressee has higher status or the speaker just wants to evoke a sense of respect.

(25) Kurtöp (xkz; Bodic, Sino-Tibetan; Hyslop 2011: 571, 568)
a. *gi-lu*
go-INFML.IMP
'Go!'
b. *dot-le*
sleep-POL.IMP
'Sleep!'

An example of a distinction in illocutionary strength comes from Kwazá in (26).

(26) Kwazá (xwa; Isolate, South America; Van der Voort 2004: 305)
koreja'ro *wa'ja-nỹ(-ca)-'ra*
pan bring-REFL-EMP-IMP
'(I'm telling you,) bring here the pan (I've asked you before)!'

The imperative in this language is indicated by the suffix *-'ra*. The marker *-ca* can be inserted before this ending and it has the effect of rendering the directive more emphatic or forceful, as the translation inside the parentheses in (26) aims to suggest.

Two comments are in order. First, languages do not always use dedicated markers, such as those in (25) and (26), to make intersubjective distinctions in the imperative. They also often co-opt other grammatical categories to express them (Aikhenvald 2010: 219–223). In Tukang Besi, for instance, the imperative differs from other clause types

in its lack of a subject prefix. A bare case like (27a) is perceived as slightly brusque, though. One way to soften the directive is to attach the perfective aspect suffix *-mo* with an exaggerated fall in pitch at the end, like in (27b). In the same vein, delayed imperatives are sometimes repurposed to convey less forceful and/or more polite directives, compliance with which need no longer be situated in the future (see Aikhenvald 2014: 210–211 too). Take Nungon, for instance: in this language, "the Delayed Imperative is politer than the Immediate Imperative" (Sarvasy 2017: 235) and, as evinced by (28), where immediate compliance is clearly expected, such intersubjective considerations may be the only motivation for the use of the delayed imperative.

(27) Tukang Besi (khc; Celebic, Austronesian; Donohue 1999: 453, 525)
a. *koka*
peel
'Peel!'
b. *kede-mo*
sit-PFV
'Sit down!'

(28) Nungon (yuw; Finisterre-Huon, Trans-New Guinea; Sarvasy 2017: 236)

karup,	*yii*	*ma-irök*	*mama-na,*	*wo-rok*
quick	vine	cut-2SG.DEL.IMP	mom-1SG.POSS	that-SEMB

'Quick! Cut the vine, my mom, that's it.'

Second, intersubjective distinctions in imperatives are not always simply a matter of adding or replacing some marker. They may also be expressed by distinct constructions. In Shangaci, for example, both the verb form missing a subject prefix in (29a) and the independent main clause use of the subjunctive verb form in (29b) are specialized for conveying directivity and constitute imperatives. They fulfill a different intersubjective function, however: (29b) is regarded as more polite than (29a) (see also Van Olmen et al. 2023: 206–210).

(29) Shangaci (nte; Bantu, Niger-Congo; Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 10, 15)
a. *khol-á*
grasp-FV
'Grasp!'

b. *u-khól-e*
2SG-grasp-SBJV
'Grasp please!'

What is crucial here is that these phenomena in Tukang Besi, Nungon and Shangaci are, in our view, as central to intersubjectivity in the imperative as the forms and variation found in Kurtöp and Kwazá. Accordingly, the present section will take all such patterns into account to see how (a)symmetric imperative negation is when it comes to intersubjective distinctions.

In our data, we have evidence for thirty-eight languages of imperatives marking such distinctions. They total 23.75% of our sample, a comparatively high percentage (cf. Sections 2.2 and 2.3) that could be seen as indicative of how central intersubjective concerns are to the imperative. Of these languages, twenty-two resemble Kwazá in (26) in that distinctions are made by adding markers, eleven are like Kurtöp in (25) in using markers that are in complementary distribution with one another and six are similar to Shangaci in (29) in employing different constructions. Looking at their imperatives' negative equivalents, we can observe that fifteen of the languages preserve the intersubjective distinctions in imperative negation. Perhaps unsurprisingly, in all but four of them, the negative imperative is constructionally symmetric vis-à-vis the imperative. Kurtöp in (30), with the negative prefix *ma-*, is a case in point.

(30) Kurtöp (Hyslop 2011: 318, 565)
a. *ma-lang-u*
NEG-be.full-INFML.IMP
'Don't be full of …!'
b. *ma-chak-e*
NEG-step-POL.IMP
'Don't step!'

An example of a language where there is no such symmetry but intersubjective distinctions are still maintained is Kayardild. In its imperative, the verb is marked in the same way as the "positive actual" but subject pronouns are optional in the construction and its case marking of objects is highly idiosyncratic (Evans 1995: 256), as the nominative third person singular in (31a) suggests. In its negative imperative in (31b),

the verb carries the prohibitive suffix *-n(a)* instead of "imperative" *-ja*. Crucially, *barri* 'just' can be appended to both constructions to soften the directive, as (31) shows, and this particle is, in fact, only found in (negative) imperatives.

(31) Kayardild (GYD; Tangkic; Evans 1995: 384)
  a. *barri* *wuu-ja* *ni-y*
     just give-IMP 3SG-NOM
     'Just give it back to him!'
  b. *barri* *kuliya-kuliya-n*
     just fill-REDUP-PROH
     'Just don't give me too much food!'

In fourteen other languages, however, the intersubjective distinctions made in the positive are neutralized in the negative. Perhaps not unexpectedly, nine of the languages have a negative imperative that is constructionally asymmetric vis-à-vis its positive counterpart. In Aguaruna, for instance, the regular imperative is marked by *-ta*, as in (32a), and the familiar imperative, which tends to be used with relatives and children, by singular *-kia* or plural *-khua*, as in (32b). None of these suffixes occurs in the negative imperative, which shares the ending *-i* with the apprehensive but differs from it in featuring the extra second person marker *-pa*, as in (32c). The construction makes no familiarity-based distinction.

(32) Aguaruna (AGR; Jivaroan; Overall 2017: 70, 72, 75)
  a. *su-sa-ta-hum*
     give-PFV-IMP-2PL
     'Y'all give!'
  b. *yu-wa-khua*
     eat-PFV-2PL.FAM.IMP
     'Y'all eat!'
  c. *ihu-i-pa-hum*
     stab-APPR-2-2PL
     'Don't y'all stab!'

In the five languages with constructional symmetry, neutralization may be a matter of the negative imperative simply not tolerating an intersubjective element that can

appear in the imperative (e.g. Telban 2017: 275 on Karawari's[5] intensifying marker *karka*). It may also concern the lack of a negative equivalent to one of the positive constructions. For example, of the options in (29), Shangaci can only negate the one deemed more polite, like in (33), but, in the negative, this subjunctive construction has no particular intersubjective associations anymore. Haida is another case in point. This language possesses an imperative marked by the clitic *=hl@* on the clause's first constituent and a familiar imperative marked by the affix *-.alaa*, as shown in (34a) and (34b) respectively. The former has a negative counterpart, like in (34b), but the latter does not.

(33) Shangaci (Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 24)
u-si-khol-e
2SG-NEG-grasp-SBJV
'Don't grasp!'

(34) Haida (HAI; Isolate, North America; Enrico 2003: 121, 126)
a. *daa=hl@* *gyaaxa*
2SG=IMP stand
'You stand up!'
b. *ga* *taa-.alaa* *gwáa*
INDF eat-FAM.IMP Q
'Eat, hey?'
c. *sgawsid-aay=hl@* *gam* *kidahl-rang*
potato-DEF=IMP NEG mash-NEG
'Don't mash the potatoes!'

Besides the twenty-nine languages discussed so far, we have nine for which intersubjective distinctions are mentioned just for the imperative. Four of them possess a constructionally asymmetric negative imperative, five a constructionally symmetric one. The descriptions, however, do not contain any information about or any examples of the positive distinctions being made in the negative. Consider Tukang Besi in (27) and (35) and Sandawe in (36).

[5] tzx; Lower Sepik, Lower Sepik-Ramu.

(35) Tukang Besi (Donohue 1999: 454)
bar(a) *(')u-kede* *i* *atu*
PROH 2SG.REAL-sit OBL there
'Don't sit there!'

(36) Sandawe (sad; Isolate, Africa; Steeman 2011: 105, 173, 259)
a. *pèé-é=kò*
put.SG-3=2SG.IMP
'Put it down!'
b. *í=↓kwáá*
come.SG=2SG.IMP
'Please come!'
c. *mèé=kò* *bô*
PROH=2SG.IMP say
'Don't say …!'

We do not know whether Tukang Besi *-mo* in (27b) can be attached to (35) too or whether, like the enclitic in (36a), Sandawe's "less imperative" alternative in (36b) can occur in the negative imperative in (36c) (Steeman 2011: 105).

In short, there is evidence for a tendency to neutralize intersubjective distinctions in (negative) imperatives and, in line with what is known from standard negation, it seems to go from positive to negative. Yet, our sample also includes four languages where such distinctions are made only in the negative (see Aikhenvald 2010: 189–190 too). Páez is one of them. The constructionally asymmetric negative imperative with *-nu* in (37a) has an equally asymmetric but less usual and more emphatic substitute marked by *-puʔn*, like in (37b). These options do not exist in the language's imperative in (37c).

(37) Páez (pbb; Isolate, South America; Jung 2008: 87–88)
a. *uʔx-nu-we*
go-PROH-2PL
'Don't y'all go!'
b. *vit-puʔn-we*
lose-EMP.PROH-2PL
'Don't y'all lose (it)!'

c. *m-dex-we*
IMP-sleep-2PL
'Y'all sleep!'

This type of neutralization occurs in 21.05% of the languages in our data with intersubjective distinctions in the negative imperative (i.e. four like Páez versus fifteen like Kurtöp). Neutralization in the other direction *is* much more frequent, though – arising in 48.28% of the sample languages with intersubjective distinctions in the imperative (i.e. fourteen like Aguaruna versus fifteen like Kurtöp). For that reason, although there is clearly no unidirectional asymmetry of neutralization in the intersubjective domain, we can still conclude that, cross-linguistically, this type of asymmetry is more likely from positive to negative than vice versa.[6]

2.5. Interim summary

The findings of this section's typological survey confirm that tense in imperative negation exhibits a systematic asymmetry of neutralization from positive to negative. Distinctions in the imperative to do with the time of compliance may and often do indeed disappear in the negative imperative but the reverse does not seem to happen. Our results are highly suggestive too of a similar asymmetry in the marking of direction and/or location in imperative negation. Distinctions concerning the addressee's movement or the place of compliance are typically mentioned only for the imperative and never just for the negative imperative. For a couple of languages at least, we also have clear indications of actual neutralization from positive to negative. For intersubjectivity in imperative negation, lastly, the results are more ambiguous.[7] As already

[6] One reviewer rightly indicates that the difference between neutralization from positive to negative and neutralization from negative to positive is not statistically significant. However, the result of their Fisher's exact test, i.e. $p = 0.073$, can still be interpreted as a trend, which may be seen as receiving some further support from the fact that there are an additional nine languages for which intersubjective distinctions are mentioned for the imperative but simply not discussed for its negative counterpart.

[7] One of the reviewers wonders whether "one reason" is "that negation itself is intersubjective in nature". We do not at present have an obvious answer to this interesting question (or, for that matter, a clear explanation for the findings on intersubjectivity in general, as discussed in Section 3.4) but do wish to mention that, to us, any intersubjectivity of negation would seem quite different from the types of distinctions of concern here: 'don't!' does not directly mark either interpersonal relations or illocutionary strength.

shown by Aikhenvald (2010: 189–190) with Manambu (mle; Ndu, Sepik), negative imperatives can make more intersubjective distinctions than imperatives. Our numbers still suggest, however, that such asymmetry does not occur as frequently in the world's languages as its opposite.

3. Usage-based perspective

This section will first discuss our corpus material (Section 3.1). Next, we will examine whether the asymmetries in tense (Section 3.2), direction and/or location (Section 3.3) and intersubjectivity (Section 3.4) have any basis in usage. An interim summary will be given at the end (Section 3.5).

3.1. Corpus data

For our usage-based perspective, the focus will be on two languages, i.e. English and Dutch. While we acknowledge that this choice has its limitations, in that the languages are very closely related and their cultures are probably quite similar too, our motivation for it is two-fold. First, a study examining the ways that (negative) imperatives are employed in discourse requires extensive familiarity with the languages under investigation, which we have for English and Dutch (e.g. Van Olmen 2011, 2019). Second, research exploring whether cross-linguistic grammatical differences between imperatives and negative imperatives have a basis in usage should ideally look at languages where those differences are not part of the grammar. English and Dutch fit this description, for the most part. Neither language makes grammatical distinctions in its (negative) imperative between immediate and delayed compliance or relating to the location of compliance. The expression of the addressee's movement, by contrast, does seem to have grammaticalized to some extent. Nicolle (2009: 187–189, 196–200) shows for English that *go/come*-V(erb) in (38a) is a different construction than *go/come-and*-V in (38b) (e.g. *she went and visited him* versus **she went visited him*). He also argues that "*go*-V developed diachronically from *go-and*-V in the context of imperative clauses (like 38c), whilst *come*-V may have developed either by analogy with *go*-V or as a result of an independent development from *come-and*-V" (Nicolle 2009: 204) and that *go/come*-V has undergone subjectification – in the sense of Langacker (1990) – as "the subjective component of meaning [i.e. the

speaker as the deictic center of the movement] … is incorporated into the representation of the whole event" (Nicolle 2009: 203–204).

(38) a. She will go/come visit him.
b. She will go/come and visit him.
c. Go (and) see it!

The question crucial for our purposes, though, is whether *go/come*-V, as well as *go/come-and*-V and other similar constructions, is restricted to imperatives or, put differently, whether there is a grammatical asymmetry here. The corpus examples of negative imperatives in (39) suggest that the answer is no.

(39) a. Don't go see this movie based on the fact it's labeled a thriller.
(enTenTen20: 2593103)
b. Don't come read with me. I am mad at you, and I will tuck my own self in.
(enTenTen20: 44173818)
c. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here.
(enTenTen20: 22372049)
d. A fantastic pub right in the heart of soho. Don't come and ruin it.
(enTenTen20: 8371733)

In the same vein, English and Dutch (negative) imperatives do not exhibit any conventionalized differences in intersubjective marking either, to our knowledge. The linguistic elements known to be able to modify illocutionary force and/or mark interpersonal relationships – such as *please* and tag questions in English (e.g. Wichmann 2004; Kimps & Davidse 2008) and modal particles and the formal second person imperative subject *u* in Dutch (e.g. Vismans 1994; Fortuin 2004) – can all appear in both the imperative and the negative imperative. Probably the only obvious exception is *do*-support in English. It is an option in imperatives and tends to emphasize whatever function they are fulfilling (cf. the offer *do have a cookie!* and the order *do shut up!*; De Clerck 2006: 330–332) but, in negative imperatives, *do* is simply required by *not* and it does not contribute anything to their meaning. It is important to bear in mind, however, that *do*-support is very infrequent in the imperative (see De Clerck 2006: 172, who detects it in just 1.90% of his 1,580 corpus attestations) and its impact on any usage data will therefore be limited.

Our data comes from two main sources. The first one is Van Olmen's (2011) earlier study of the illocutionary functions of (negative) imperatives in comparable corpora, one of speech and one of plays. The former consists of the spoken part of the International Corpus of English Great Britain (ICE-GB; Survey of English Usage 2006) – ca. 600,000 words of different types of private and public dialogue and scripted and unscripted monologue from the 1990s – and a selection of the Northern Dutch files of the Corpus Gesproken Nederlands (CGN; Nederlandse Taalunie 2004) that closely mirrors the composition of the ICE-GB – ca. 300,000 words from the late 1990s and early 2000s (see Van Olmen 2011: 55–56, 59–61). The latter is made up of plays all written by different speakers of British English and Northern Dutch and all translated by different speakers of Northern Dutch and British English respectively. This last feature was essential for Van Olmen (2011), who also exploited the plays as a parallel corpus, but restricted the number of works to choose from considerably. As an inevitable result, only one of the ten plays is authored by a woman and the corpus spans over 30 years, from 1974 to 2004 (see Van Olmen 2011: 115–117). These weaknesses notwithstanding, we can and will still use the source texts (i.e. not the translations) – totaling ca. 96,000 words for English and 70,000 for Dutch – as a comparable corpus here, inter alia, because they feature a comparatively high amount of (negative) imperatives, as Table 2 makes clear.

	Speech		**Plays**		**Total**	
	English	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**
Imperatives	738	250	596	288	1,334	538
Negative imperatives	119	15	131	74	250	89

Table 2: Absolute frequencies of the (negative) imperative in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data.

These cases will constitute the core dataset of the present study. Note, though, that they do not include what Van Olmen (2011), following De Clerck (2006: 44– 45), calls "minor" (negative) imperatives. This group comprises instances that look like and originate from full-fledged (negative) imperatives but lack the ability to appear as autonomous, discursively prominent utterances and/or exhibit little formal and functional flexibility. Space does not allow an in-depth discussion of the distinction (see Van Olmen 2011: 34–36, 2019: 148–149). We hope therefore that the following list of examples will give the reader an adequate idea of the discourse markers, idiomatic phrases and such excluded from Table 2: English *come on!* 'oh no!', *don't mention*

it 'you're welcome' and *say* 'for instance', Dutch … *en noem maar op* '… and all the rest' (lit. '…and just name any!'), *kijk/zeg,* … 'look/say, …' and *pak hem beet* 'approximately' (lit. 'grab him!').

Our second source of data is the TenTen corpus family (Jakubícek et al. 2013) and will be used mainly for automated searches. It contains large bodies of texts, with billions of words, that "can be regarded as comparable corpora" as the same "technology specialized in collecting only linguistically valuable web content" is applied to build a corpus for each language in the family.[8] TenTen's diversity of discourse types (e.g. not only Wikipedia pages and newspaper articles but also online fiction and discussion forums) and sheer magnitude guarantee a certain degree of representativeness and a substantial number of hits for any queries. The corpora also have the benefit of being tagged with parts of speech, which makes it much easier to look for constructions like the (negative) imperative. Relying on web-crawled data comes with drawbacks too, of course. It is, for instance, hard to control for language variety (e.g. British/American English, (non-)native Dutch) or time. Still, to ensure at least some level of comparability with Van Olmen's (2011) corpora, we will restrict our searches of the enTenTen20 and nlTenTen20 data (both collected in 2020) to, respectively, .uk domains (2,899,739,619 words) and .nl domains (4,439,356,346 words).

Before looking at the corpus data in detail, let us draw attention to an interesting difference between the imperative and its negative counterpart in Table 2: in both English and Dutch, the negative imperative occurs much less often than its positive equivalent. Dutch speech displays the largest disparity, with approximately seventeen imperatives for each negative imperative, and the Dutch plays the smallest one, still with a ratio of almost four to one. If this difference in frequency is a trait of (negative) imperatives across the world's languages, it might partially explain the asymmetries of neutralization discussed in Section 2. As Miestamo (2005: 205–206) argues, "the lower frequency of marked categories (in this case negation) may have the effect of shaving off distinctions or preventing them to arise in the first place" since "it is not as economic to maintain a large number of distinctions in an infrequency category than it is in a more frequent one" (see also Haspelmath 2008, 2021). However, this potential impact of (in)frequency is difficult to prove and it remains fairly vague as a motivation. Moreover, one could also easily contend that economy can work against neutralization in particular for common distinctions in a language. If its negative imperative – unlike its imperative – did not allow them, it would actually be "an extra burden for language

[8] See https://www.sketchengine.eu/documentation/tenten-corpora/ (accessed 2023.04.28).

users to remember this special restriction with [this] … particular category" (Miestamo 2007: 308). It therefore seems sensible to consider (in)frequency as a possible contributing factor to our asymmetries rather than as *the* explanation for them.

3.2. Tense

As discussed in Section 1, Miestamo (2005: 211) attributes the frequent neutralization of tense-aspect-mood and person-number-gender distinctions in standard negation to discourse presuppositionality: as negative declaratives tend to be uttered in discourse environments where their positive equivalents are assumed or present in some way, the speech participants may be taken to be familiar with the 'when', 'who' and the like of their content already and there is less of a need to spell out those features. Intuitively, this explanation seems to be relevant for imperative negation as well: when one says 'don't X!' to someone, they are typically already Xing, in the context, or one has reason to think, based on the context, that they mean to X (see Miestamo & van der Auwera 2007: 71–72 too). In other words, discourse presuppositionality may also be a motivation for asymmetry in tense established in Section 2.2.

Importantly, discourse presuppositionality's role in negation is, in essence, a presumed discourse preference. With Miestamo et al. (2022: 135), we would therefore expect it to manifest itself in every language, at least in usage. A more specific hypothesis relating to tense in imperative negation, echoing Miestamo et al.'s (2024: 11–12) suggestion for standard negation, would then be that negative imperatives feature fewer temporal expressions than imperatives. To put it to the test, we can count how many of the (negative) imperatives in Table 2 contain lexical items or longer structures indicating a time of compliance in one way or another.[9] Table 3

[9] One of the reviewers finds this characterization of the expressions in question "rather imprecise" and, relatedly, takes issue with *quickly* in (40c). We acknowledge that our definition is fairly loose but believe that *quickly* nicely illustrates why it is phrased in this way. In Hasselgård's (2010: 39) semantic classification of (English) adjuncts, this adverb probably belongs to the category of manner instead of that of time. It would therefore have to be ignored if we restricted ourselves to temporal adjuncts in the strict sense (as Miestamo et al. 2024: 39 appear to do). However, discounting *quickly* in (40c) does not seem felicitous to us. In this example, the adverb does not express that having a look should happen in a fast way (at any point in time). Rather, the speaker uses it to urge the addressee to have a look at the time of speaking. In other words, *quickly* constitutes an expression of immediate compliance here and should be taken into account in our view. Our loose definition allows for its inclusion, just like it allows for the inclusion of the majority of cases that would count as straightforward adjuncts of time and of temporal position in particular, like those in (40a), (40b) and (40d).

gives the results in absolute numbers and percentages and (40) offers some English and Dutch examples.

	Speech		Plays		Total	
	English	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**
Imperatives	50 / 738	9 / 250	9 / 596	8 / 288	59 / 1,334	17 / 538
	6.78%	3.60%	1.51%	2.78%	4.42%	3.16%
Negative imperatives	10 / 119	0 / 15	2 / 131	0 / 74	12 / 250	0 / 89
	8.40%	0.00%	1.53%	0.00%	4.80%	0.00%

Table 3: Temporal expressions in the (negative) imperative in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data

The numbers in Table 3 are, all in all, relatively low. To access more data, we can consult enTenTen20 and nlTenTen20. Locating (negative) imperatives in these corpora is not straightforward, though. The reason is that the English and Dutch constructions possess no dedicated morphology and can essentially only be defined in syntactic terms that, even in part-of-speech-tagged data, are hard to operationalize (e.g. the typical absence of the subject; verb-first word order; see Van Olmen 2011: 17–31). More open-ended searches are therefore bound to produce (too) many irrelevant hits (to be reliable without manual checking). At the same time, to ensure that only actual (negative) imperatives are retrieved, one cannot but fall back on more specific queries that will inevitably exclude relevant instances too. In our view, this second approach is the more suitable one for our purposes. Our rationale is two-fold. First, it allows us to collect data in an automatic way. Second, if the query for negative imperatives incorporates the same constraints as that for imperatives and if those constraints do not affect the phenomenon under investigation (e.g. the occurrence of temporal expressions), we can still compare the two constructions.

For imperatives in enTenTen20, for instance, we started with the query in (41a). It looks for the "base" form of all verbs (e.g. *go* and not *goes*, *went* and the like) except for *let*, to avoid non-second-person constructions such as *let's go*. Note that it rules cases like *let me go* 'allow me to go' out as well, of course. In addition, the SENTence-break punctuation at the beginning limits the search to verb-first sentences and *please* immediately preceding the verb restricts the hits further to likely imperatives (although it obviously excludes uses of the construction that are incompatible with the adverb). Next, to remove any negative imperatives from the results for (41a), we filtered out the hits corresponding to (41b). This query mirrors the one for imperatives

(i.e. the initial punctuation, the presence of *please*, the base form of *do*) but adds *not* and it was also used afterward to search for negative imperatives in enTenTen20 separately. Crucially, to keep the results as similar as possible, we then did away with all hits for this separate query of (41b) that feature *let*: since (41a) does not look for cases like *let me go*, we should not include cases *don't let me go* either.

(41) a. [tag = "SENT.*"] [lemma = "please"] [tag = "VV.*|VB.*|VH.*" & lemma! = "let"]
b. [tag = "SENT.*"] [lemma = "please"] [tag = "VV.*" & lemma = "do"] [lemma = "not"]

These searches produced 237,651 results for the imperative and 11,643 for the negative imperative in the .uk domain of the corpus. As a final check of their validity, we looked at a random sample of one hundred hits for each dataset and they were all found to be, respectively, imperatives and negative imperatives.

For (negative) imperatives in nlTenTen20, numerous attempts and modifications aimed at reducing the number of irrelevant hits while maintaining a substantial recall resulted in the query in (42). It essentially looks for sentences that are no longer than eleven words, begin with a verb stem and finish with an exclamation mark. Cases where the second word was *ik* 'I' were filtered out and, for imperatives, so were cases containing *niet* 'not', *geen* 'no', *niemand* 'nobody', *niets/niks* 'nothing', *nooit* 'never' or *nergens* 'nowhere'. The latter were taken to be the negative imperatives.

(42) <s> [tag = "verbpressg.*" & lemma! = "laten|kunnen|mogen|moeten|zullen|danken" & word! = ".*t|.*T|ben|BEN|Ben|bEn|beN|BEn|bEN|BeN|is|IS|Is|iS"] [tag = "adj.*|adv.*|det.*|int.*|noun.*|num.*|partte.*|prep.*|pron.*"]{0,10} [word = "\!"] </s> within <s/>

The searches yielded 195,567 results for the imperative and 7,066 for the negative imperative in the .nl domain of the corpus. These hits still include some false positives, such as (43).

(43) a. *Klaar voor de star!*
'Ready for the star!'
(nlTenTen20: 9987488)

b. [*Ik*] *Heb er zooo geen zin in!*
'[I] Am sooo not in the mood for it.'
(nlTenTen20: 9610555)

Note, however, that, in a random sample of one hundred instances for each dataset, we only found three that did not constitute an imperative and two that were not negative imperatives.

To compare the occurrence of temporal expressions in these (negative) imperatives, we focused on a selection of items – i.e. English *later*, *immediately, soon*, *today*, *tomorrow*, *tonight* and *when* and Dutch *later* 'later', *onmiddellijk* 'immediately', *gauw* 'soon', *vandaag* 'today', *morgen* 'tomorrow', *overmorgen* 'the day after tomorrow' and *vannacht* 'tonight' – and filtered the hits that contain them.[10] For English, the search window was kept narrow, to minimize the risk of irrelevant hits: a maximum of two words after the string in (41a) (e.g. *please visit her today*) and three words after the string in (41b) (e.g. *please don't visit her today*). For Dutch, we looked between the initial stem and the final exclamation mark of the query in (42). Table 4 presents the results in absolute terms and proportions and (44) gives some examples.

	English	**Dutch**
Imperatives	2,422 / 237,651	3,403 / 195,567
	1.02%	1.74%
Negative imperatives	28 / 11,643	6 / 7,066
	0.24%	0.08%

Table 4: Temporal expressions in the (negative) imperative in enTenTen20 and nlTenTen20

[10] We agree with one of the reviewers that, ideally, this selection should have been based (at least partly) on frequency data on temporal adjuncts. This information does exist at a general level (e.g. Biber et al. 1999 and Hasselgård 2010 on English) but, to our knowledge, there is little data on adjuncts of time in the (negative) imperative specifically (the fact that they are very infrequent there, as Table 3 shows, may play a role). Therefore, the current selection – though in part inspired by the expressions attested in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data – has to remain somewhat intuitive. Relatedly, certain readers may wonder why 'now' and 'then' are not included here. The reason is that they are highly multifunctional items in both English and Dutch (negative) imperatives and, instead of conveying a temporal meaning, it frequently has intersubjective effects (see also Miestamo et al. 2024: 16–17). Consider, for instance, affectionate *now* in *don't worry now* or reinforcing *nou* in the delayed imperative in (40d).

(44) a. Please apply **immediately** to be considered for the role.
(enTenTen20: 2515462)

b. *Probeer het **morgen** weer!*
'Try again tomorrow!'
(nlTenTen20: 561207)

c. Please don't beat me **when I get home**.
(enTenTen20: 28675637)

d. *Neem **vandaag** zeker geen GSM s mee!*
'Definitely don't take any cellphones with you today!'
(nlTenTen20: 5796445)

Relatively speaking, the numbers are again quite low, with percentages ranging from 0.08% to 1.74%. However, in both English and Dutch, the negative imperative is found to occur significantly less often with temporal expressions than the imperative (respectively, χ^2 (df 1) = 69.15 with $p < 0.00001$ and χ^2 (df 1) = 112.95 with $p < 0.00001$). This fact could be seen as a reflection in usage of negation's discourse presuppositionality and thus, indirectly, as an explanation for the asymmetry in tense established for imperative negation cross-linguistically in Section 2.2.

Let us nevertheless have a more in-depth look at immediate versus delayed compliance. In our view, the most suitable corpus for such an investigation is the English and Dutch plays: they offer the explicit context necessary to determine time of compliance, do not contain any unintelligible passages and, for Dutch in particular, have a reasonable number of negative imperatives. For each language, we thus analyzed all negative imperatives in the plays and a random sample of imperatives of the same size. Examples in which the (negative) imperative involves immediate and delayed compliance are given in (45) and (46) respectively.

(45) a. Annie: Touch me then. They'll come in or they won't. Take a chance. **Kiss me**.
Henry: For Christ's sake.
Annie: Quick one on the carpet then.
(English plays, Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*)

b. *Vader:* *(wil het geld van Jurgen afpakken)*
Jurgen: *(weert Vader af)* ***Raak me niet aan***-
Vader: *(duwt Jurgen achteruit)*
'Father: (wants to take the money from Jurgen)
Jurgen: (fends off Father) Don't touch me-
Father: (pushes Jurgen back)'
(Dutch plays, Jeroen van der Berg's *Blowing*)

(46) a. Olive: Are the – er – are the Emersons coming round?
Anthea: Ah. Thereby hangs a tale. Possibly. I've asked them.
Olive: Oh, are they …?
Anthea: Oh dear. Well, [...] If they do come, **don't whatever you do ask after Christopher**.
(English plays, Alan Ayckbourn's *Joking Apart*)

b. *Hannah:* *Hij ging op het bed zitten, het kistje tussen zijn benen, ik knielde voor hem op de grond …*
Athalie: *En?*
[…]
Theodor: *Laat haar met rust. Jij begrijpt ook niets van vrouwen. […]* ***Zeg tegen Sylvia dat ze die man er niet meer in laat.*** *Hij is gevaarlijk. Hoor je me?*
Athalie: *(die naar Hannah luisterde) Ja … ik luister.*
'Hannah: He sat on the bed, the little box between his legs, I knelt on the floor in front of him …
Athalie: And?
[…]
Theodor: Leave her alone. You don't understand women at all. […] Tell Sylvia [who is not present] not to let that man in again. He is dangerous. Do you hear me?
Athalie: (listening to Hannah) Yes … I'm listening.'
(Dutch plays, Lodewijk de Boer's *The Buddha of Ceylon*)

There are, however, also numerous cases where the time of compliance is vague. In (47a), for instance, David's request to act as usual around his mother relates not to

any specific moment but to any future interaction with her. The negative imperative in (47b) too pertains to a longer (technically infinite) stretch of time.

(47) a. Xenia: You will tell me what I can do? Nursing, washing, anything.
David: Thank you, but there is nothing.
Xenia: […] We mustn't stay here gossiping. She must have rest and quiet.
David: You've forgotten what else I said. **Please behave as you normally would**. Otherwise you'll frighten her and aggravate her condition.
(English plays, Edward Bond's *Summer*)

b. *Sjaak:* *Hij maakt zich hier totaal onmogelijk! Ik begrijp ook niet dat jij dat maar steeds weer goed praat. Je bent toch niet blind Rooie…?*
De Rooie: *Misschien verandert-ie nog wel…*
Sjaak: *Ik heb geen enkele hoop. Rooie,* ***laat die jongen nooit 'n aanleiding worden dat er tussen ons een breuk komt.***
'Sjaak: He is making himself completely unbearable here! I also do not understand why you are always making excuses for that. You are not blind, are you, Rooie…?
De Rooie: He might still change…
Sjaak: I have no hope. Rooie, never allow that boy to become the reason for a rift between us.'
(Dutch plays, Gerard Lemmens's *Souvenirs*)

The distribution of the types in (45) to (47), in absolute and proportional terms, is presented in Table 5, separately for English and Dutch and for the imperative and its negative counterpart.

	English			**Dutch**		
	Immediate	**Delayed**	**Vague**	**Immediate**	**Delayed**	**Vague**
Imperatives	90	15	26	41	21	12
	68.70%	11.45%	19.85%	55.41%	28.38%	16.22%
Negative imperatives	71	12	48	40	8	26
	54.20%	9.16%	36.64%	54.05%	10.81%	35.14%

Table 5: Compliance in the (negative) imperative in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data for plays

In English as well as Dutch, the negative imperative differs significantly from its positive counterpart (χ^2 (df 2) = 9.11 with $p < 0.05$; χ^2 (df 2) = 10.00 with $p < 0.05$ respectively). What it has in common in particular in the two languages is a comparatively higher number of vague instances. In other words, the negative imperative appears to be used more often than the imperative for situations where the time of compliance is less specific (36.64% versus 19.85% in English, 35.14% versus 16.22% in Dutch). This phenomenon may be taken as an additional or alternative explanation to negation's discourse presuppositionality for the cross-linguistic tendency to neutralize tense distinctions in negative imperatives: immediate versus delayed compliance is simply less relevant for them. One can also make sense of this apparent property at a more general level. What a speaker essentially wants to accomplish with a negative imperative is a situation where their addressee is not doing something and the absence of an event is more likely to be a continuous or continuing state than the realization of an event (cf. Miestamo 2005: 195–196 on the stativity of standard negation). If your interlocutor expresses anxiety about something and you tell them not to worry about it, for example, your initial aim may be to reassure your addressee there and then but the state of non-worry that you wish to achieve in them is probably intended to extend into the foreseeable future.

3.3. Direction and/or location

Section 2.3 suggests that there exists a cross-linguistic asymmetry in the marking of direction and/or location between imperatives and negative imperatives. When an imperative makes such distinctions, its negative counterpart may make them too but does not typically seem to do so. Moreover, the opposite situation does not appear to occur at all. The question that we wish to answer here is whether this phenomenon reflects usage in English and Dutch.

Adopting the same approach as in Section 3.2, we count the number of (negative) imperatives in Table 2 containing expressions of a direction and/or location for the addressee's (non-)realization of the event. The results are given in Table 6 in absolute numbers and percentages and (48) offers some examples. It is probably important to add, though, that cases such as (49) are not included in our sums. This imperative may contain auxiliary *gaan* 'go' but, as it often does, the verb conveys transition ('up') rather than motion ('go and stand') here.

	Speech		Plays		Total	
	English	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**
Imperatives	22 / 738	9 / 250	14 / 596	12 / 288	36 / 1,334	21 / 538
	2.98%	3.60%	2.35%	4.17%	2.70%	3.90%
Negative imperatives	0 / 119	0 / 15	0 / 131	1 / 74	0 / 250	1 / 89
	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.35%	0.00%	1.12%

Table 6: Directional and locational expressions in the (negative) imperative in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data

(48) a. Well do it **somewhere else**.
(ICE-GB: S1A.010.154)

b. If you want to acquire stock, **go and** talk to her.
(English plays, Howard Brenton & David Hare's *Pravda*)

c. *Nee **kom** maar niet kijken.*
'No, just don't come and watch.'
(Dutch plays, Lodewijk de Boer's *The Buddha of Ceylon*)

(49) *Gaat u weer even staan, moeder.*
'Please stand up again for a moment, mother.'
(Dutch plays, Joop Admiraal's *You are my Mother*)

It is evident from the figures in Table 6 that the (negative) imperative rarely features directional or locational expressions in English or in Dutch. Given these frequencies, it is unsurprising that there also exist no statistically significant differences between the imperative and its negative counterpart, in either corpus or either language. The almost complete absence of such expressions in negative imperatives, compared to their occasional appearance in imperatives, is nevertheless striking and perhaps telling.

For the larger enTenTen20 corpus, we relied on the queries in (41) to extract (negative) imperatives and filtered the results first for those containing the string in (50) and then for those with the lemmas *here* and *there*. As in Section 3.2, both searches were limited to a window of two words after the hit for the imperative and three for the negative imperative.

(50) [lemma = "come|go"] [lemma = "and"]? [tag = "V.*"]

The former filter gives us an idea of the amount of (negative) imperatives conveying direction, the latter filter an idea of those expressing location in English. Table 7 presents the findings in absolute and proportional terms and some examples can be found in (51).

	Direction	**Location**
Imperatives	715 / 237,651	2,368 / 237,651
	0.30%	1.00%
Negative imperatives	9 / 11,643	40 / 11,643
	0.08%	0.34%

Table 7: Directional and locational expressions in the (negative) imperative in enTenTen20

(51) a. Please **go and** read it and then pop back here.
(enTenTen20: 116918513)
b. Please don't camp **here** as it rightly annoys the local inhabitants.
(enTenTen20: 80977002)

Like in Table 6, the numbers are very low, both for expressions of direction and for expressions of location. Still, the negative imperative has significantly fewer of them than its positive equivalent (χ^2 (df 1) = 19.16 with $p < 0.0001$ for direction; χ^2 (df 1) = 49.46 with $p < 0.00001$ for location), which suggests that the apparent differences in English speech and drama are probably not accidental either.

For nlTenTen20, we first looked at the (negative) imperatives from Table 4, searched for with the query in (42) and the additional steps described there, and filtered the results for those containing the locational lemmas *hier* 'here' and *daar* 'there'. This operation produced 17,420 hits for the imperative and 295 hits for the negative imperative. In many of them, however, *hier* and *daar* are part of a so-called pronominal adverb, standing in for a prepositional constituent, like *hier … aan* 'with this' in (52). We therefore checked all negative imperatives by hand and kept only the 85 instances where the adverbs actually convey location, as in (54a). We did the same for a random sample of 295 imperatives and extrapolated the 91.86% of relevant cases to the total number of hits, giving us the speculative number of 16,003. For direction, exploratory searches indicated that *gaan*'s potential aspectual meaning in (49) would make any comparison without an in-depth semantic analysis unreliable. We thus decided to focus on *komen* 'come' here. Moreover, as the query in (42) does not allow for the infinitives that follow this auxiliary, like *uitproberen* 'try out' in (54b), we ran the adjusted one in (53) (but

adopted the same procedure as before to separate positive and negative imperatives) and filtered the results for those featuring an initial *kom* and an infinitive somewhere in the hit. The findings are given in Table 8 in absolute numbers and in percentages.

(52) *Verspil je tijd **hier** niet **aan!***
'Don't waste your time with this!'
(nlTenTen20: 11855191)

(53) <s> [tag="verbpressg.*" & lemma!="laten|kunnen|mogen|moeten|zullen|danken" & word!=".*t|.*T|ben|BEN|Ben|bEn|beN|BEn|bEN|BeN|is|IS|Is|iS"] [tag="adj.*|adv.*|det.*|int.*|noun.*|num.*|partte.*|prep.*|pron.*|**verbinf.***"] {0,5} [word="\!"] </s> within <s/>

	Direction	**Location**
Imperatives	939 / 145,782	16,003 / 195,567
	0.64%	8.18%
Negative imperatives	7 / 6,004	85 / 7,066
	0.11%	1.20%

Table 8: Directional and locational expressions in the (negative) imperative in nlTenTen20

(54) a. *Graaf **hier** geen kuil!*
'Don't dig a hole here!'
(nlTenTen20: 10983847)
b. ***Kom** het maar eens uitproberen!*
'Just come and try it out!'
(nlTenTen20: 729259)

The directional and locational expressions' frequencies are again low but the imperative nonetheless possesses significantly more of them than its negative counterpart (χ^2 (df 1) = 25.91 with $p < 0.00001$ for direction; χ^2 (df 1) = 454.56 with $p < 0.00001$ for location). In other words, the scarcity of such expressions in the negative imperatives in Dutch speech and drama does not appear to be a coincidence.

In summary, the corpus data for English and Dutch suggests that there exists a discourse preference for less directional and/or locational marking in the negative imperative than in the imperative. The typological findings in Section 2.3, pointing to a tendency to neutralize such distinctions from positive to negative, can reasonably be argued to reflect this preference. One way to account for it, with Miestamo (2005), is negation's discourse presuppositionality. When you try and get someone not to do something, they are often doing it at the time or you believe that they are planning on doing it. In other words, the positive is somehow already present in the discourse and explicating all of its details, including its direction and location, is thus less necessary in the negative. This explanation is quite general, though, as it can be applied to any area of neutralization in negation. We would therefore like to add that the discourse preference at issue, as well as its associated cross-linguistic tendency, may also be motivated by the relative inconsequentiality of direction and location in negative directive speech acts. In our view, if you attempt to get someone to stop or refrain from doing something, it will typically be less important to you, or to them, *where* the action does not take place than the action simply not taking place. Admittedly, it is not impossible to think of situations where direction or location could be relevant in a negative directive. For instance, if a speaker wants their addressee to stay or move toward them and do something and if they really wish to exclude the alternative, they might conceivably say 'don't go and X!'. In the same vein, if a speaker wants their addressee to do something at a different location and they explicitly wish to prevent the other option, they might say 'don't X here!'. However, such speakers would be issuing comparatively convoluted directives and would probably be more likely to just say 'come and X!' and 'X there!'.

3.4. Intersubjectivity

As observed in Section 2.4, languages may make more intersubjective distinctions in the negative imperative than in the imperative but, cross-linguistically, neutralization of such marking is clearly more typical from positive to negative than vice versa. The follow-up question in this section, like in Sections 3.2 and 3.3, is whether or not this asymmetry tendency reflects usage at all, in English and Dutch.

The (negative) imperative in these two languages can be modified in a variety of ways to alter its illocutionary strength and/or manage interpersonal relations. Unfortunately, the present article does not have the space to discuss them in any detail.

Some examples in (55) and (56) and some references will therefore have to suffice here (but see Van Olmen 2011: 84–107, 120–127, 135–181). The strategies in English include – inter alia – *do*-support (see Section 3.1), *just* (e.g. Aijmer 2002: 153–174), *please* (e.g. Wichmann 2004), explicating *you* (e.g. De Clerck 2006: 356–397) and tag questions (e.g. Kimps & Davidse 2008), as illustrated in (55a) to (55e) respectively.

(55) a. **Do** hang your coat up if you'd like.
(ICE-GB: S1A.066.7)
b. Now **just** shut up and listen to me.
(ICE-GB: S1A.086.209)
c. Yes **please** don't bother for a moment.
(ICE-GB: S1B.070.138)
d. **You** be careful going back.
(ICE-GB: S1A.019.153)
e. Don't tell **will you**.
(ICE-GB: S1A.032.182)

(56) a. *Maar doe **alsjeblieft** niet meer dan tien.*
'But please don't do more than ten.'
(CGN: fn009146.15)
b. *Let op **hè**.*
'Be careful, won't you.'
(CGN: fn000320.138)
c. *Laat **u** mij nou even uitpraten.*
'You just let me finish talking now.'
(CGN: fn007126.154)
d. *Wees **nou maar** niet zo bang.*
'Just don't be so afraid now.'
(CGN: fn007228.188)
e. *Denk d'r **'ns** over na.*
'Just think about it.'
(CGN: fn007265.138)

The Dutch strategies comprise – among other things – *alsjeblieft* 'please', clause-final particles (e.g. Kirsner 2003) and the formal second person pronoun *u* (e.g. Fortuin

2004), as exemplified in (56a) to (56c) respectively, alongside an array of modal particles (e.g. Vismans 1994), like those in (56d) and (56e).

Usage in the two languages could be said to mirror the cross-linguistic tendency at issue if negative imperatives occurred less often with such intersubjective modification than imperatives. Accordingly, we counted how many (negative) imperatives in Van Olmen's (2011) data are modified. The absolute and relative figures are given in Table 9.

	Speech		**Plays**		**Total**	
	English	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**	**English**	**Dutch**
Imperatives	118 / 738	124 / 250	72 / 596	169 / 288	190 / 1,334	293 / 538
	15.99%	49.60%	12.08%	58.68%	12.24%	54.46%
Negative imperatives	12 / 119	5 / 15	17 / 131	23 / 74	29 / 250	28 / 89
	10.08%	33.33%	12.98%	31.08%	11.60%	31.46%

Table 9: Intersubjective modification in the (negative) imperative in Van Olmen's (2011) corpus data

There is substantially more modification in the imperative than in its negative equivalent in the Dutch plays (χ^2 (df 1) = 18.00 with $p < 0.0001$). In Dutch speech too, we find a higher proportion of modified imperatives but the very low number of negative imperatives makes it impossible to establish a statistically significant difference. We are in a similar position for English, because of its comparatively low rate of modification of (negative) imperatives (ranging from 10.08% to 15.99%, as opposed to 31.08% to 58.68% for Dutch).

For more data, we looked at the TenTen corpora. Our English searches focused on (negative) imperatives that consist of just a verb (e.g. *go!*; *don't go!*; *don't!*) and on verb-only cases that contain *please*, *just* or a tag question (e.g. *go, please!*; *just don't!*; *don't go, will you?*) (see Appendix 2 for the queries).[11] Comparing their frequencies can give us some idea of the degree to which (negative) imperatives have intersubjective modification in the language. For Dutch, we filtered Table 4's dataset of (negative) imperatives for cases that feature one or more of the following items: *alsjeblieft*

[11] Emphatic *do* is not included here because it is not an option in the negative imperative. Explicit *you* is excluded because the 440 hits for our imperative query were rife with false positives (e.g. *you bet!*) and superficially ambiguous hits (e.g. *you decide!*) (note, though, that we only found five cases of *don't you …!*).

and its variants, the clause-final particle *hè* 'will/won't you?' and the (fairly untranslatable) modal particles *dan*, *toch*, *maar*, *eens/'ns*, *even/effe/eventjes, gerust* and *gewoon*.[12] Especially these last words are highly multifunctional and may thus well have a function other than mitigating or reinforcing the (negative) imperative in particular cases (e.g. *even* could still express its original meaning of 'for a short time'). In our view, however, such instances should largely cancel one another out when contrasting the imperative and its negative counterpart. The modal particles also constitute quite a productive category in Dutch and, hence, the present list may not be complete. We believe that it contains the most common ones, though (see Van Olmen 2011: 86–87, 121–122). The corpus findings for both English (.uk) and Dutch (.nl) are presented in Table 10 as the proportions of (negative) imperatives that are modified in absolute and relative terms. Some examples are given in (57).

	English	**Dutch**
Imperatives	634 / 6,994	43,568 / 195,567
	9.06%	22.28%
Negative imperatives	31/ 864	669 / 7,066
	3.59%	9.47%

Table 10: Intersubjective modification in the (negative) imperative in enTenTen20 and nlTenTen20

(57) a. **Please** go!
(enTenTen20: 83105880)

b. *Donder **toch** op met je vliegtuigen!*
'Just fuck off with your airplanes!'
(nlTenTen20: 52544)

c. **Just** don't ASK!
(enTenTen20: 56557670)

d. *Maak mij voor de mensen **toch** niet te schande!*
'Just don't disgrace me before the people!'
(nlTenTen20: 255769)

[12] Table 4's dataset does not cover (negative) imperatives with overt subjects, like (56c), and they are therefore not taken into account here. An additional reason for their exclusion is that they are hard to separate from interrogative clauses (e.g. *ga jij toch weg!* 'you just go away!' versus *ga jij toch weg?* 'are you nevertheless going away?').

The enTenTen20 results suggest that there is a difference in English after all: modified versus bare imperatives occur at a ratio of one to ten while modified versus bare negative imperatives only occur at a ratio of one to 27 (χ^2 (df 1) = 29.78 with $p < 0.00001$). Such a contrast is observed for both *please* (with respective ratios of one to thirteen and one to 35) and *just* (whose respective ratios are one to 50 and one to 119). Our single hit for tag questions occurs after an imperative. The findings from nlTenTen20 confirm those from the Dutch plays in Table 5: the imperative contains intersubjective modification significantly more frequently than its negative equivalent (22.28% versus 9.47%; χ^2 (df 1) = 655.76 with $p < 0.00001$).

In short, there appears to be usage data in English and Dutch supporting the typological tendency that intersubjective distinctions in the imperative disappear in the negative imperative. An obvious question that remains to be answered is why imperative negation exhibits this asymmetry. It might be tempting to invoke the discourse presuppositionality of negation again (see Section 1), as it can explain neutralization in other domains. We are not convinced, however, that it really applies to intersubjectivity in imperative negation or, in other words, that the contextual presence of the positive state of affairs would somehow weaken the wish or requirement to alter illocutionary strength and/or manage rapport in a negative imperative. It is unclear to us, for instance, why an interpersonal relationship that calls for the use of a polite imperative construction in some language/culture does not always create a corresponding "demand" for a polite negative imperative construction. One could possibly counter that the desire or need to get someone to quit doing something or to abstain from an expected course of action supersedes any intersubjective considerations of politeness and mitigation. Then again, this desire or need may equally well be said to motivate the (hypothetical) existence of more peremptory negative imperative than imperative constructions. Furthermore, certain scholars (e.g. De Clerck 2006: 279–282) have in fact argued that negative imperatives are, in general, more face-threatening than their positive equivalents. They risk damaging not only the addressee's "negative face" or "desire to be unimpeded in [their] actions" – like imperatives – but also their "positive face" or desire "to be approved of" (Brown & Levinson 1987: 13), since saying 'don't!' to someone implies a rejection of their current or anticipated conduct. If this argument is correct, it is actually somewhat strange that negative imperatives tend to exhibit fewer means for changing illocutionary strength and/or interpersonal management than imperatives.

It is probably clear from the discussion in the previous paragraph that, at present, we have no real explanation for the facts about intersubjectivity in imperative negation. A very tentative final hypothesis transcends the (negative) imperative and involves the wider range of (negative) directive strategies in a language. The above-mentioned possible difference in face-threatening potential may simply make speakers opt for less established, more novel strategies more often when performing a negative directive speech act than when performing a positive one. These strategies would then serve particular intersubjective purposes but, importantly, they would not necessarily grammaticalize into specialized negative imperative constructions. If they became frequent enough for such a development to take place, they would no longer be "useful": their value as a means to counteract the more serious face threat of a negative directive lies precisely in their lack of conventionality. Such strategies would – and should – not be part of any study of imperative negation proper (see Section 2.1) but their absence might account for its typical asymmetry in intersubjectivity. This suggestion is, of course, highly speculative and will have to remain so here. Support for it could come from research examining and comparing the whole range of positive and negative directive strategies in a variety of languages. This line of investigation is clearly beyond the present article's scope, however.[13]

3.5. Interim summary

The results of this section's corpus studies suggest that the usage of English and Dutch (negative) imperatives indeed reflects the cross-linguistic asymmetries of neutralization from positive to negative in the imperative domain. First, Section 2.2 concludes that, in the languages of the world, tense distinctions between immediate and delayed compliance often disappear from positive to negative but never the other way around. Correspondingly, Section 3.2 shows that the English and Dutch negative imperative tends to feature fewer expressions to do with the time of compliance than its positive equivalent. Second, the evidence in Section 2.3 suggests that, in the world's languages, distinctions of a directional and/or locational nature can be made in both positive and negative imperatives or just in positive ones but never only in negative

[13] Dutch might prove telling, though (see Van Olmen 2010: 478, Devos & Van Olmen 2013: 3–4). It has a history of directive strategies that compete with the negative imperative in particular but disappear fairly quickly. They include *wil niet treuren!* (lit. 'don't want to mourn!'), *niet te treuren!* (lit. 'not to mourn!) and *niet treuren!* ('not mourn!') 'don't mourn!'.

ones. The usage data in Section 3.3 is in line with this cross-linguistic trend, in that the negative imperative in English and Dutch is found to contain fewer directional and/or locational expressions than its positive counterpart. Third, and finally, we argue in Section 2.4 that, while it is possible in language for intersubjective distinctions in the imperative domain to disappear from negative to positive, neutralization in the opposite direction appears to be more common cross-linguistically. Section 3.4 confirms that, in English and Dutch too, the negative imperative features fewer intersubjective expressions than its positive equivalent.

The discourse presuppositionality of negation, invoked before for similar results in standard negation, can be taken as a possible explanation for these usage and typological facts about tense as well as direction and/or location. Yet, we hypothesize that they may also be motivated by more particular factors, such as the less "time-specific" nature of negative imperatives and the comparative inconsequentiality of direction and location in negative directives. Moreover, for the corpus and cross-linguistic results about intersubjectivity, the discourse presuppositionality of negation does not actually appear to be an especially satisfactory explanation. We do not at present have an alternative but believe that it could be fruitful to consider negative directive strategies more generally for an answer.

Of final note is a remarkable parallel between the frequencies with which languages across the world make temporal, directional/locational and intersubjective distinctions in the (negative) imperative and those with which (negative) imperatives in the two languages focused on contain such expressions: intersubjectivity is expressed much more often than tense and direction/location both cross-linguistically and in English and Dutch usage. This similarity is probably not a coincidence, pointing to the relative (un)importance of these distinctions for the imperative domain.

4. Conclusions

In this article, we have tried to respond to Miestamo's (2005) largely unanswered call to extend the study of (a)symmetry to non-declarative negation, by examining a balanced sample of the world's languages for asymmetries in imperative negation concerning three different types of distinctions. We have also attempted to address Miestamo et al.'s (2022) recent programmatic appeal to compare typological findings

with and interpret them in light of usage, by investigating how said distinctions manifest themselves in corpus data on English and Dutch (negative) imperatives. The results of our endeavors have been summarized in detail in Sections 2.5 and 3.5 and, for the sake of conciseness, they will not be repeated here. Instead, we wish to conclude our article with some considerations of a broader nature.

First, widening the study of (a)symmetry's scope to other domains of negation is invaluable, as it deepens our understanding of negation in general, but much work remains to be done in this area (e.g. interrogative negation). For this research, it is important to bear in mind any peculiarities of the domain in question (e.g. intersubjectivity as a dimension relevant to imperative negation; cf. Miestamo & van der Auwera 2007) and that the types of asymmetry known from standard negation may but need not occur in other domains (e.g. the possibility of neutralization from negative to positive here; see also Van Olmen 2024 on finiteness asymmetry in imperative negation).

Second, the relationship between typology and usage deserves to be explored further, for negation as well as for other domains. We are aware that such work should preferably involve more than the two very closely related languages focused on in the present article. This ideal can only become a reality, however, through a concentrated joint effort by numerous linguists. This type of collaboration between people highly familiar with a range of different languages is needed especially because comparing certain expressions' frequencies of occurrence in positive versus negative clauses is just a first step in the study of usage. Our more in-depth analysis of time of compliance, for instance, has revealed an apparent property of negative imperatives that may account for the cross-linguistic tendency to neutralize tense distinctions.

Third, and lastly, general functional explanations for typological tendencies, such as negation's discourse presuppositionality for neutralization from positive to negative, should be attempted and merit (more) serious consideration (than they are occasionally given; e.g. Cristofaro 2021). At the same time, caution is always warranted. They may not stand up to closer scrutiny (e.g. negation's discourse presuppositionality for the neutralization of intersubjective distinctions) and more specific motivations may be available (e.g. the less "time-specific" character of negative imperatives; see also van der Auwera & Devos 2012 on the role of diachrony in (ir)realis marking in imperative negation).

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Abbreviations

1 = 1st person
2 = 2nd person
3 = 3rd person
ACC = accusative
AND = andative
AOR = aorist
APPR = apprehensive
AUX = auxiliary
COMPL = completive
CON = conative
CONNEG = connegative
CONTEMP = contemporative
DAT = dative
DEF = definite
DEL = delayed
DEM = demonstrative
DISLOC = dislocative
DIST = distal
DU = dual
EMP = emphatic
EXCL = exclusive
F = feminine
FAM = familiar
FIN = finite
FUR = further
FUT = future
FV = final vowel
GEN = genitive
IMM = immediate
IMP = imperative
INDF = indefinite
INFML = informal
IPFV = imperfective
IRR = irrealis
LOC = locative
N1 = non-1st person
NEG = negation
NFIN = non-finite
NMLZ = nominalization
NOM = nominative
OBJ = object
OBL = oblique
PFV = perfective
PL = plural
POL = polite
POSS = possessive
PRIV = privative
PROG = progressive
PROH = prohibitive
Q = interrogative
REAL = realis
REDUP = reduplication
REFL = reflexive
REL = relative
REM = remote
SBJV = subjunctive
SEMB = semblative
SG = singular
SS = same subject
VEN = venitive

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Appendix 1

Find below the following information on each of the 160 languages in the sample used for Section 2: its macroarea, language, genus, Glottolog code and ISO 639-3 code.

Macroarea	Language Family	Genus	Language	Glottolog	ISO 639-3
Africa	Afro-Asiatic	Lowland East Cushitic	Somali	soma1255	som
		North Omotic	Wolaitta	wola1242	wal
		Semitic	Egyptian Arabic	egyp1253	arz
		West Chadic	Hausa	haus1257	hau
	Central Sudanic	Kresh	Kresh	gbay1288	krs
	Dogon	Dogon	Penange	pena1270	n/a
	Eastern Sudanic	Kuliak	So	sooo1256	teu
		Nilotic	Lango	lang1324	laj
		Nubian	Kunuz Nubian	kenu1236	kzh
	Gumuz	Gumuz	Northern Gumuz	gumu1244	guk
	Kadu	Kadulgi	Krongo	kron1241	kgo
	Khoe-Kwadi	Khoe-Kwadi	Nama	nama1264	naq
	Koman	Koman	Komo	komo1258	xom
	Kxa	Ju-Kung	Ju|'hoan	juho1239	ktz
	Maban	Maban	Maba	maba1277	mde
	Mande	Eastern Mande	Busa	busa1253	bqp
		Western Mande	Jalkunan	jalk1242	bxl
	Niger-Congo	Bantoid	Shangaci	nath1238	nte
		Defoid	Yoruba	yoru1245	yor

		Edoid	Degema	dege1246	deg
	Saharan	Western Saharan	Kanuri	cent2050	knc
	Sandawe	Sandawe	Sandawe	sand1273	sad
	Songhay	Songhay	Koyraboro Senni	koyr1242	ses
Australia & New Guinea	Anim	Marind	Marind	hali1245	mrz
	Border	Border	Imonda	imon1245	imn
	Bosavi	Bosavi	Edolo	edol1239	etr
	Dagan	Dagan	Daga	daga1275	dgz
	Darwin Region	Laragia	Laragia	lara1258	lrg
	Eleman	Tate	Kaki Ae	kaki1249	tbd
	Gaagudju	Gaagudju	Gaagudju	gaga1251	gbu
	Garrwan	Garrwan	Garrwa	gara1269	wrk
	Iwaidjan	Iwaidjan	Maung	maun1240	mph
	Kolopon	Kolopon	Kimaghama	kima1246	kig
	Lower Sepik-Ramu	Lower Sepik	Karawari	tabr1243	tzx
	Mangarrayi-Maran	Mangarrayi	Mangarrayi	mang1381	mpc
	Mangrida	Burarran	Gurr-goni	gura1251	gge
	Mirndi	Djingili	Djingili	djin1251	jig
		Wambayan	Wambaya	wamb1258	wmb
	Morehead and Upper Maro Rivers	Morehead and Upper Maro Rivers	Komnzo	wara1294	tci
	Pama-Nyungan	Northern Pama-Nyungan	Yidiny	yidi1250	yii
		Southeastern Pama-Nyungan	Ngiyambaa	wang1291	wyb
		Western Pama-Nyungan	Ritharngu	rita1239	rit
	Senagi	Senagi	Menggwa	dera1245	kbv
	Sentani	Sentani	Sentani	nucl1632	set
	Sepik	Middle Sepik	Manambu	mana1298	mle

		Sepik Hill	Alamblak	alam1246	amp
	Solomons East Papuan	Lavukaleve	Lavukaleve	lavu1241	lvk
		Savosavo	Savosavo	savo1255	svs
	South Bird's Head	Inanwatan	Inanwatan	suab1238	szp
	Sulka	Sulka	Sulka	sulk1246	sua
	Tangkic	Tangkic	Kayardild	kaya1319	gyd
	Timor-Alar-Pantar	Greater Alor	Adang	adan1251	and
		Makasae-Fataluku-Oirata	Makalero	maka1316	mkz
	Tiwian	Tiwian	Tiwi	tiwi1244	tiw
	Torricelli	Marienberg	Kamasau	kama1367	kms
	Trans-New Guinea	Madang	Kobon	kobo1249	kpw
		Asmat-Kamoro	Asmat	cent2117	cns
		Awju-Dumut	Korowai	koro1312	khe
		Binanderean	Suena	suen1241	sue
		Finisterre-Huon	Nungon	yaum1237	yuw
	Wagiman	Wagiman	Wagiman	wage1238	waq
	West Bomberai	West Bomberai	Kalamang	kara1499	kgv
	West Papuan	North-Central Bird's Head	Abun	abun1252	kgr
	Western Daly	Wagaydy	Emmi	amii1238	amy
	Worrorran	Worrorran	Gunin	kwin1241	gww
	Yareban	Yareban	Yareba	yare1248	yrb
Eurasia	Altaic	Tungusic	Evenki	even1259	evn
	Basque	Basque	Basque (Western)	basq1248	eus
	Burushaski	Burushaski	Burushaski	buru1296	bsk
	Chukotko-Kamchatkan	Southern Chukotko-Kamchatkan	Itelmen	itel1242	itl
	Dravidian	Northern Dravidian	Brahui	brah1256	brh

	Indo-European	Germanic	Icelandic	icel1247	isl
	Japonic	Japonic	Japanese	nucl1643	jpn
	Nahali	Nahali	Nahali	niha1238	nll
	Nakh-Daghestanian	Lezgic	Lezgian	lezg1247	lez
	Nivkh	Nivkh	Nivkh	nivk1234	niv
	Uralic	Saami	Pite Saami	pite1240	sje
	Yenesian	Yenesian	Ket	kett1243	ket
	Yukaghir	Yukaghir	Kolyma Yukaghir	sout2750	yux
North America	Algic	Algonquian	Plains Cree	plai1258	crk
	Caddoan	Caddoan	Wichita	wich1260	wic
	Eskimo-Aleut	Eskimo	West Greenlandic	kala1399	kal
	Haida	Haida	Haida	haid1248	hai
	Hokan	Pomoan	Southern Pomo	sout2984	peq
		Yuman	Maricopa	mari1440	mrc
	Iroquoian	Northern Iroquoian	Oneida	onei1249	one
	Keresan	Keresan	Acoma	west2632	kjq
	Kiowa-Tanoan	Kiowa-Tanoan	Kiowa	kiow1266	kio
	Kutenai	Kutenai	Kutenai	kute1249	kut
	Mayan	Mayan	Mam	mamm1241	mam
	Mixe-Zoque	Mixe-Zoque	Zoque (Copainalá)	copa1236	zoc
	Muskogean	Muskogean	Koasati	koas1236	cku
	Oto-Manguean	Chinantecan	Chinantec Lealao	leal1235	cle
		Popolocan	Mixtec Chalca-tongo	sanm1295	mig
	Penutian	Sahaptian	Nez Perce	nezp1238	nez
		Wintuan	Wintu	wint1259	wit

	Salishan	Interior Salish	Shuswap	shus1248	shs
	Siouan	Core Siouan	Lakota	lako1247	lkt
	Tarascan	Tarascan	Purépecha	pure1242	tsz
	Tonkawa	Tonkawa	Tonkawa	tonk1249	tqw
	Totonacan	Totonacan	Huehuetla Tepehua	hueh1236	tee
	Uto-Aztecan	Aztecan	Nahuatl Tetelcingo	tete1251	nhg
		Numic	Northern Paiute	nort2954	pao
	Wakashan	Southern Wakashan	Nuuchahnulth	nuuc1236	nuk
	Wappo-Yukian	Wappo	Wappo	wapp1239	wao
	Yuchi	Yuchi	Yuchi	yuch1247	yuc
	Zuni	Zuni	Zuni	zuni1245	zun
South America	Andoke	Andoke	Andoke	ando1256	ano
	Arauan	Arauan	Paumarí	paum1247	pad
	Araucanian	Araucanian	Mapudungun	mapu1245	arn
	Aymaran	Aymaran	Jaqaru	jaqa1244	jqr
	Barbacoan	Barbacoan	Awa Pit	awac1239	kwi
	Bororoan	Bororoan	Bororo	boro1282	bor
	Cahuapanan	Cahuapanan	Jebero	jebe1250	jeb
	Cariban	Cariban	Trio	trio1238	tri
	Chapacura-Wanham	Chapacura-Wanham	Wari'	wari1268	pav
	Chibchan	Rama	Rama	rama1270	rma
	Choco	Choco	Epena Pedee	epen1239	sja
	Guahiban	Guahiban	Cuiba	cuib1242	cui
	Huitotoan	Huitoto	Murui	muru1274	huu
	Jivaroan	Jivaroan	Aguaruna	agua1253	agr
	Kwaza	Kwaza	Kwazá	kwaz1243	xwa

	Matacoan	Matacoan	Chorote	iyow1239	crq
	Mosetenan	Mosetenan	Mosetén	mose1249	cas
	Mura	Mura	Pirahã	pira1253	myp
	Nadahup	Nadahup	Yuhup	yuhu1238	yab
	Páezan	Páezan	Páez	paez1247	pbb
	Panoan	Panoan	Matsés	mats1244	mcf
	Quechuan	Quechuan	Quecha Imbabura	imba1240	qvi
	Sáliban	Sáliban	Mako	maco1239	wpc
	Tacanan	Tacanan	Ese Ejja	esee1248	ese
	Trumai	Trumai	Trumai	trum1247	tpy
	Tucanoan	Tucanoan	Tuyuca	tuyu1244	tue
	Tupian	Tupi-Guaraní	Emerillon	emer1243	eme
	Uru-Chipaya	Uru-Chipaya	Chipaya	chip1262	cap
	Waorani	Waorani	Waorani	waor1240	auc
	Warao	Warao	Warao	wara1303	wba
	Yanomam	Yanomam	Sanuma	sanu1240	xsi
	Yaruro	Yaruro	Yaruro	pume1238	yae
	Yuracare	Yuracare	Yuracare	yura1255	yuz
South East Asia & Oceania	Austro-Asiatic	Aslian	Semelai	seme1247	sza
		Katuic	Pacoh	paco1243	pac
		Khasian	Khasi	khas1269	kha
		Khmer	Khmer	cent1989	khm
		Palaungic	Wa	para1301	prk
	Austronesian	Celebic	Tukang Besi	tuka1248	khc
		Central-Malayo-Polynesian	Kambera	kamb1299	xbr
		North Borneo	Begak	idaa1241	dbj

		North-West Sumatra Barrier Island	Batak Karo	bata1293	btx
		Oceanic	Vitu	mudu1242	wiv
		Paiwan	Paiwan	paiw1248	pwn
	Great Adamanese	Great Adamanese	Great Andamanese	akaj1239	akj
	Hmong-Mien	Hmong-Mien	White Hmong	hmon1333	mww
	Sino-Tibetan	Bodic	Kurtöp	kurt1248	xkz
		Burmese-Lolo	Burmese	nucl1310	mya
		Kuki-Chin	Daai Chin	daai1236	dao
		Qiangic	Qiang	sout2728	qxs
		Sinitic	Cantonese	yuec1235	yue
	Tai-Kadai	Kadai	Zoulei	aoua1234	aou
		Kam-Tai	Lao	laoo1244	lao

Appendix 2

Find below the enTenTen20 queries that we conducted to determine the frequency of intersubjective marking in English (negative) imperatives for Section 3.4.

(i) English bare imperatives

<s> [tag="VV.*|VB.*|VH.*" & word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.*iNG"] [word="\!"] </s>

(ii) English bare negative imperatives

<s> [word="do|DO|Do|dO"] [lemma="not"] [tag="VV.*|VB.*|VH.*" & word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.*iNG"]? [word="\!"] </s>

(iii) English imperatives with *please* or *just*

<s> [lemma="please|just"] [word="\,"]? [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" & word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.*iNG"] [word="\!"] </s>

<s> [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" & word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.*iNG"] [word="\,"]? [lemma="please"] [word="\!"] </s>

(iv) English negative imperatives with *please* or *just*

<s> [lemma="please|just"] [word="\,"]? [word="DO|Do|dO|do"] [lemma="not"] [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" & word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.*iNG"]? [word="\!"] </s>

<s> [word="DO|Do|dO|do"] [lemma="not"] [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" &
word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|
DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.
*iNG"]? [word="\,"]? [lemma="please"] [word="\!"] </s>

<s> [word="DO|Do|dO|do"] [lemma="not"] [word="\,"]?
[lemma="please|just"] [word="\,"]? [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" &
word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|
DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.
*iNG"] [word="\!"] </s>

(v) English imperatives with tag questions

<s> [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" &
word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|
DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.
*iNG"] [word="\,"]? [lemma="will|would|can|could"] [lemma="not"]?
[lemma="you"] [lemma="not"]? [word="\!|\?"]</s>

(vi) English negative imperatives with tag questions

<s> [word="DO|Do|dO|do"] [lemma="not"] [tag="VV.*|VH.*|VB.*" &
word!="done|Done|dOne|doNe|donE|DOne|DoNe|DonE|dONe|dOnE|doNE|DONe|
DoNE|dONE|DONE|.*ED|.*ed|.*Ed|.*eD|.*ING|.*ing|.*Ing|.*iNg|.*inG|.*INg|.*InG|.
*iNG"]? [word="\,"]? [lemma="will|would|can|could"] [lemma="not"]?
[lemma="you"] [lemma="not"]? [word="\!|\?"] </s>