

Imperatives in Malagasy.
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In this talk, I will discuss the distribution of imperatives in Malagasy, a root construction, and present a preliminary syntactic analysis that accounts for their properties.

- Malagasy imperatives involve imperative morphology which is realized differently depending on voice. The imperative suffix with non-active voices is –u (or -i depending on further phonological conditions); elsewhere is it –a.
- Imperative constructions typically have silent “subjects”. Overt subjects are possible however, and show the (oblique genitive for non active voices, and nominative for active voices) .
- Active imperatives in simple transitive verbs show a definiteness effect: definite objects must be externalized, and correspondingly, theme topic voice, not active voice, must be used. Ditransitives externalize one argument, but the other internal argument can be definite.
- Malagasy does not have compositional negative imperatives: a different negative form (*aza*) must be used, and imperative morphology is excluded.
- Malagasy imperative clauses have fully developed left peripheries.

I will show how this distribution falls out from the building blocks in imperative clauses (the head where imperative morphology is merged, and the position where imperative interpretation arises), in conjunction with the regular syntax of Malagasy.