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Imperative Subordination in Slovenian

One of the most typical syntactic properties of orders is their formal inability to persist in subordinate constructions; if syntactically embedded, imperative forms mostly show a change of mood, as soon as a conjunction appears, or they are replaced by an infinitival construction;

(1) a) Mum said: "Eat!" b) *Mum said that eat!
b') Mum said (that) You should eat.
b'') Mum said You to eat.

This is strikingly different in Slovenian, where imperatives can generally be embedded and are often found in subordinate clauses (2 (b)), even though speakers can replace them by using indicative mood instead of the imperative form (b');

(2) a) *Mama je rekla: "Jèj!"*
Mum aux ppaf: IMP2Sg
"Mum said : "Eat!""

b) *Mama je rekla, da **jèj**!*
Mum aux ppaf, that IMP2Sg
"Mum said, that You should eat."

b') *Mama je rekla, da jéš!*
Mum aux ppaf, that IND2Sg
"Mum said, that You should eat."

The most frequent cases of embedded imperatives in Slovenian are those after the conjunction *da* (that, see (2b)), followed by those licensed by interrogative (3) or relative (4) pronouns appending object (4a) or subject (4b) supplements, as further sources of their clausal subordination; the analysis of those forms, their use and occurrence is the aim of our presentation. The research includes spoken language as well as written sources.

(3) *Mu* *bo* *povédala,* *kaj* ***stòri*** *in* *kam* ***pójdi****?*
Cl.3.Dat.Sg aux3 tell ppaf Q do IMP2Sg and Q go IMP2Sg
"Will she tell him what You should do and where You should go?"

(4) a) *Tó* *je* *móž,* *ki* *se* *ga* ***bój****!*
Dem be3 man rel refl Cl.3.Gen.m fear IMP2Sg
"This is a man You should be afraid of."

b) *Ti* *si* *móž,* *ki* *se* ***ožèni*** *z* *mano!*
You be2 man, rel refl marry IMP2Sg prep Pron1.Ins.Sg
"You are the man who should marry me."

Except in the *kajkavian* dialect of *Croatian* (which is closely related to *Slovenian*) embedded imperative clauses are missing in all other Slavonic languages as well. As the 2. person seems to rule out the optative particle *naj* in Slovenian, this fact could be interpreted as the primary origin of this typologically unusual ability and role of imperatives in this language (5);

(5) a) Právi, (da) naj prídem. "S/he says that I should come."
b) *Právi, (da) naj prídeš. "S/he says that You should come."
c) Právi, (da) naj príde. "S/he says that s/he should come."