Arapaho Imperatives in Syntax Land

Data: The system of imperative markers in Arapaho has two unique features: 1. 'indirect imperatives' (INDIR.IMPER), inflectional markers that denote a deferment of the intended action from the addressee to a third:

(1)

(2) bii3(i)híhee!
     eat-3SIA-INDIR.IMPER
     'Make him/her eat!'

2. the embeddability of these indirect imperatives under other imperatives (Cowell & Moss Sr 2011), most notably prohibitives (PROHIB):

(3) ceebéhniitonéí3i,   heebéh'ésnonéé!
     ceebeh-niiton-ei3i   eebeh-esinonee
     PROHIB-hear(TA)-3/2S.INDIR.IMPER POTENT-angry(AI)
     'Don't let her hear you; she might get angry.'

In my talk, I will situate Arapaho in the wider landscape of syntactic accounts of imperatives and try to find an explanation for the quirkiness of INDIR.IMP

Background: Major syntactic accounts of imperatives come from Han (2000), who assumes a reduced functional spine for imperative utterances, combined with an imperative force operator, Zanuttini, Pak & Portner (2012), who take imperative force to arise as a pragmatic inference from second person agreement with the subject, and Medeiros (2013), who extends Zanuttini, Pak & Portner (2012)'s analysis with an imperative force operator.

Application: Since INDIR.IMP in (2) carries imperative force, Zanuttini, Pak & Portner (2012) would predict it to involve some sort of second person marking as well. This is not the case, as INDIR.IMP clearly shows third person marking. This marking makes it also hard for Han (2000), who would predict no person agreement.

The case of (3) brings more problems. An agreement-based account like Zanuttini, Pak & Portner (2012) could theoretically cast (3) in terms of concord-as-agreement, but without matching features between the PROHIB and the INDIR.IMP, this is impossible. Medeiros (2013) offers these by way of an imperative force feature, but needs some tweaking to be able to account for INDIR.IMP on its own.

Proposal: Along the lines of Medeiros (2013), the functional spine contains an [iImp] feature, which values an [uImp] feature on both imperative markers, creating a concord configuration. On INDIR.IMP, the addressee is encoded pragmatically– given valuation for imperative force, a second-person addressee is just assumed, resolving the problem of marking INDIR.IMP for third person only.