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# Positioning and functioning of vocatives: casework in historical pragmatics (1)\*

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## Abstract

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In this paper, pragmatic functions of vocatives in the Early Modern English period will be discussed in relation to syntactic and semantic properties of vocatives, socio-cultural attributes of the interlocutors, and communicative needs of the interlocutors.

In the current English speaking world, first-name is the norm to address people unless the speaker wishes to add some particular implications to the utterance, such as threat, humour, deference, etc. In those pragmatic situations, the syntactic position of a vocative in the clause and the semantic implications of the vocative form may suffice to explain the pragmatic functions of vocatives. In historical data, however, social status and social roles seem to influence the usages of vocatives differently from today, and the choice of vocative form looks much wider than today to accommodate hierarchically complicated human relationships in the past. In my research, I will analyse pragmatic functions of vocatives in a corpus of selected English gentry comedies in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Theoretically, my study draws on Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory, Brown and Gilman's (1960) study of address terms, and Brinton's (1996) concept of pragmatic markers. I assume that a corpus-based study of vocatives in a perspective of historical pragmatics will shed some light on pragmatic roles of address terms which have been neglected.

Due to some editorial condition, the original paper is divided into two and this is the first half of the paper.

**Keywords:** historical pragmatics, vocatives, a corpus-based approach, pragmatic functions

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## 1 Introduction

Vocatives perform various pragmatic functions such as to attract attention, identify the addressee and to maintain and reinforce the interlocutors' relationship (Quirk *et al.* 1985, Biber *et al.* 1999, Leech 1999). Leech (1999) relates the position of vocative to those pragmatic functions. Other linguistic or sociological factors, however, such as collocations with speech acts and discourse markers might be related to the pragmatic functions of vocatives (e.g. Aijmer 1987, 1988, 2002; Brinton 1996, 1998; Busse 1999; Culpeper and Kytö 1999; Fludernik 1995, 2000; Fraser 1988, 1990; Jucker 1993, 1996; Redeker 1990; Schiffrin 1987; Shiina 2002; Stein 1985; Watts 1988). What is more, some vocatives may have more than one pragmatic function. In this paper, I will first discuss the positioning of vocatives and examine the pragmatic functions of vocatives according to the following categories: (1) interpersonal management

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functions; (2) conversational management functions; (3) information management functions; and (4) illocutionary force management functions. These functions are not mutually exclusive but overlap with each other. Therefore, an example cited for one function may also have another function. I aim to answer the following research questions:

- (1) What pragmatic functions do vocatives perform?
- (2) Are their pragmatic functions related to their positions?
- (3) Are there any relations between pragmatic functions and their forms?

The data used in this paper come from an original corpus exclusively focussed on vocatives. This corpus consists of twelve extracts of gentry comedies written between 1640 and 1760. See Appendix for the texts included in the corpus.

## 2 Vocative position in the C-unit

For various reasons, vocative position has been problematic. As Leech (1999: 115f) explains, it is difficult to define where an utterance starts and ends. In authentic spoken data, analysis depends on transcription, because speech is unpunctuated. Needless to say, it is the transcriber not the speaker who adds punctuation. In the case of Early Modern English (henceforth, EModE) drama, there is a problem with orthography and punctuation, because the writing system had not yet been standardised. According to Salmon (1999: 44), the Restoration marks ‘the beginning of a new era in the history of English orthography’. However, there was still ‘a major discrepancy between the orthography of printers and their compositors’, and that of private individuals. Spelling books and dictionaries aided the process of uniformity, and treatises on a detailed analysis of punctuation and capitalisation appeared for the first time. The function of punctuation was understood to be rhetorical in that it represented the intonation and pauses of speech in writing. Salmon claims that most of the punctuation marks commonly used now were known in the EModE period, and that capitalisation also developed in this period (1999: 50).

In order to bridge the differences between texts due to the inconsistency of the orthography and punctuation in my corpus, I have developed a set of broad guidelines as a working model. I regard the full stop, question mark, exclamation mark, semicolon, colon, and dash as representing a pause or syntactic break, and take it as a speech units boundary. I do not regard the comma or capitalisation as a marker of a speech unit, because commas are often used to show the syntactic structure, e.g. apposition, rather than a pause, and nouns were often capitalised in that period.

In order to describe a unit of speech designated by punctuation marks, Leech uses the notion of C-unit (Communication unit) in his investigation of vocatives. Leech explains the C-unit as follows:

In educational linguistics, the C-unit has evolved on the model of Hunt’s (1965) T-unit as a measure of syntactic complexity in children’s written language. One attempt to define [it] is that of Chaudron: a T-unit is ‘any syntactic main clause and its associated subordinate clauses’, whereas a C-unit (or communication unit) is ‘an independent grammatical predication; the same as a T-unit, except that in oral language, elliptical answers to questions also constitute complete predications’ (Chaudron 1988: 45) This definition, however, still appears to be influenced by written language norms, and in second language acquisition research, efforts have recent-

ly been made by Tonkyn and others to firm up the definition of a C-unit as a syntactically free-standing unit of spoken language. (Leech 1999: 108f)

In my analysis, I use the notion of the C-unit presented by Leech though the actual practices are not exactly the same. In Leech (1999), commas are counted as C-unit boundaries whilst in my analysis commas are not treated as C-unit boundaries<sup>1</sup>. The merit of using the C-unit is that it can deal with elliptical segments of phrases which are typical of spoken language. I define it as a stretch of utterance, either clausal or non-clausal, which is syntactically free and separated from other parts of the utterance by a pause of some kind; thus it can be a word, phrase, clause or sentence, as long as it is recognized as one independent segment (cf. Biber *et al.* 1999:1079).

Before analysing my corpus data, I will briefly review Leech's (1999) analysis of vocatives in present-day English. He observes that the length of the associated C-unit is related to the functions of the vocatives as well as to their position in the C-unit. Leech (1999: 116) notes that the length of the C-unit preceding the finally positioned vocative is shorter than that following the initially positioned vocative. This means that the utterance tends to be short when the addressee is not specified at the beginning but at the end. In other words, a vocative is positioned finally as an end-weight. On the other hand, with an initial vocative, the peak of distribution comes in the 4-6 word range. At the same time, it is also evenly spread in both the 1-3 and 7-9 word ranges, and there are quite a few instances of even 13 or more words. Here, a vocative is positioned initially as a head-weight.

Leech relates the length of the associated unit to the functions of a vocative. He suggests that an initial vocative is used as an attention getter as well as a signal to identify the appropriate addressee. A final vocative, on the other hand, seems to have the dual functions of identifying someone as an addressee and maintaining and reinforcing social relationships.

These different functions, related to different vocative positions, seem to explain the difference in the length of the associated C-unit. A final vocative is used when the addressee is already clear. In practical terms, there is no need to identify the addressee, and so it must be used for pragmatic reasons, e.g. to maintain and reinforce the relationship between the interlocutors. Sometimes, a final vocative is put after a short fixed phrase such as *Yes, No, Good bye, Hello*<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, an initial vocative is used to attract the attention of the addressee before the speaker gives any information. As my data and Leech's data are of different nature in terms of authenticity and time, I will use his analyses only as references.

### 3 Vocative position in my corpus

There are some linguistic features worth noting concerning vocative positioning.

<sup>1</sup> In my corpus, most of the vocatives are followed by commas. It is partly because punctuation practices are different in the 17th century, compared with transcription practiced now.

<sup>2</sup> These words and phrases can be defined as discourse markers.

3.1 Distribution of the vocative position in the C-unit

Table 1 shows the distribution of vocatives in terms of their position in the C-unit in my corpus:

Table 1: Distribution of vocative position in the C-unit

Position in the C-unit	Shiina's corpus	
	Token	Percentage
Initial	286	13.2
Medial	895	41.4
Final	811	37.5
Stand-alone	168	7.8
Total	2160	99.9

In my data set, the medial position is the most frequent and the final position is the second most commonly used position, whilst the initial position and the stand-alone position are dispreferred. This pattern is different from that observed in Leech's (1999) data, in which the final position is by far the preferred position, i.e. 68%. This may be due to the genre difference between two data sets besides the time difference. However, this may also be due to a different way of segmentary dialogue into C-units. As stated in 2, in Leech (1999), commas are counted as C-unit boundaries, though they are not treated as such in my analysis (see example (3) below). In any case, punctuation practices are different in the seventeenth century, compared with the transcription of the *British National Corpus* (Leech 2005, p.c.)

In the first place, why and how are vocatives used in drama? Besides pragmatic factors in “real” conversation, are there any particular reasons for the use of vocatives in drama text? First, vocatives are exploited to indicate clearly the relationship between the interlocutors within the utterance so that the audience can see which characters are interacting on the stage. Second, the playwright exploits vocatives as a characteristic of spoken language to make the constructed written text sound more like spoken language. I surmise that the characters in drama use medially positioned vocatives to keep the attention of the addressee and of the audience, because utterances tend to be long in drama.

3.2 Length of the associated C-unit

I will now analyse the length of the associated C-unit in different vocative positions. Table 2 compares the proportional use of vocatives in relation to the length of the associated C-units in my corpus. The first two rows in Table 2 focus on final and initial vocatives and compare the length of the C-unit before and after the vocative, and the last two rows focus on medial vocatives and show the length of the C-unit before and after the vocative.

Table 2: Length of the associated C-unit

Position	Length of the C-unit before or after a vocative					
	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13 and over	Total
Final	49.8 (404)	31.1 (252)	10.5 (85)	4.3 (35)	4.3 (35)	100 (811)

Initial		23.4 (67)	25.5 (73)	18.5 (53)	10.1 (29)	22.4 (64)	99.9 (286)
Medial	before	70.3 (629)	20.9 (189)	5.0 (45)	1.9 (17)	1.9 (17)	100 (895)
	after	13.1 (117)	24.6 (220)	18.9 (169)	12.7 (114)	30.7 (275)	

Note: The chi-square test has been conducted for the first two rows:  $\chi^2(4) = 27.11$ ,  $p < .01$  For the last two rows:  $\chi^2(4) = 725.38$ ,  $p < .01$  For the first and third rows (Final and Medial before),  $\chi^2(4) = 78.65$ ,  $p < .01$  For the second and fourth rows (Initial and Medial after)  $\chi^2(4) = 21.48$ ,  $p < .01$  For all the four rows,  $\chi^2(4) = 924.19$ ,  $p < .01$  The distribution is significant in all rows.

Table 2 shows that a phrase before a vocative tends to be short and a phrase after a vocative tends to be a little longer. With initial vocatives, 4-6-words are predominant, with 1-3-words coming next. With final vocatives, the shortest phrase is preferred and the frequency decreases as the length increases. Interestingly, however, a longer phrase (13 words and over) accounts for as much as 22.4 % with initial vocatives. This result implies that an utterance tends to be short before the addressee is specified, whereas after the addressee is indicated, a speaker tends to make a long utterance. This pattern is clearly seen in the distribution pattern of medial-positioned vocatives: the shortest phrase accounts for 70% when used before the vocative, whilst the longest unit accounts for 30% after the vocative.

Here are some stereotypical examples of the three types of positioning (vocatives are in bold):

Example (1): Initial vocative  
[Young Bellair talks to his lover, Emilia.]  
[Young Bellair] **Emilia**, this early visit  
Looks as if some kind Jealousie wou'd not let you  
Rest at home. (Etherage: p.18)

Example (2): Final vocative  
[Lady Thrivewell talks to Alicia, the tradesperson.]  
[Lady T.] Is all put up into this Box?  
[Alicia] All **Madam**. (Brome: p.C2V<sup>3</sup>)

Example (3): Medial vocative  
[Bevil Junior talks to his friend, Charles.]  
[Bevil Junior] Well **Charles**, why so much Care in thy  
Countenance? Is there any thing in the World deserves  
it? You, who used to be so Gay, so Open, so Vacant! (Steel: p.30)<sup>4</sup>

In (1), the speaker first attracts the addressee's attention with an initial vocative before making a long statement. In (2), the speaker gives a short response to her partner before a final vocative. In (3), a medial vocative is placed after the discourse marker *Well*, before a long main phrase.

<sup>3</sup> In some texts compiled in the corpus, pages are indicated with numbers and alphabets. In the examples cited, the pages are indicated as they are indicated in the original texts.  
<sup>4</sup> In Leech (1999), this would have been counted as final, not medial, vocative (Leech 2005, p.c.).

#### 4 Interpersonal management functions

The choice of a certain vocative form, in itself, acts as an interpersonal management function. For example, deferential vocatives are used to indicate the speaker's respect or deference towards the addressee as well as to maintain social distance between them. Familiar vocatives, on the other hand, indicate intimacy. In my view, vocatives are multi-functional and their primary function is interpersonal management. In the following examples, I emphasise all the vocatives in bold face. When there is more than one vocative in an utterance, the vocative in question is underlined>. Here are some examples from the corpus:

Example (4): [Aimwell, a traveller, is talking to the inn owner, Bonniface.]

[Aimwell] What is he?

[Bonniface] A Clergyman, as the saying is.

[Aimwell] A Clergyman! is he really a Clergyman? or is it only his travelling Name, as my Friend the Captain has it.

[Bonniface] **O, Sir**, he's a Priest and Chaplain to the French Officers in Town. (Farquhar: p.28)

Example (5): [Lord Froth talks to Careless, to which Brisk, Careless' servant, responds.]

[Lord Froth] **O foy, Mr. Careless**, all the World allow Mr.

Brisk to have Wit; my Wife says, he has a great deal. I hope you think her a Judge ?

[Brisk] **Pooh, my Lord**, his voice goes for nothing. -

I can't tell how to make him Apprehend, - take it t'other way. (Congreve: p. 9)

In those examples, vocatives are used with interjections. In (5), Brisk responds negatively to Lord Froth's unkind comment about him. Interjections, in general, not only express the speaker's 'emotions, attitudes and mental processes' but they are also directed at the addressee 'to acquire a desired reaction, for example to stop an action, or they may serve communicative intentions more broadly' (Taavitsainen 1995: 439). In (4) and (5) the speakers use a combination of an interjection and a vocative to express an emotion provoked by their partners' utterance before giving an objection. Those vocatives are used in critical scenes not to destroy but to maintain the interpersonal relationship between the interlocutors.

Frequency of vocative use seems to be related to the power relationship between interlocutors. The characters with less power use more vocatives per utterance to those with more power than the other way around (Shiina 2002). In Hoadly's text, for example, a maid uses eight vocatives in eleven utterances (73%) to her mistress, who uses six vocatives in twelve utterances (50%), and a servant uses four vocatives in six utterances (67%) to his master, who uses two vocatives in six utterances (33%). Another servant who is sent as a messenger to his master's friend's house uses two vocatives in four utterances (50%) to his master's friend, who uses only one vocative in six utterances (17%). This is also true of

other hierarchical relationships such as between apprentice and customer, and between ward and guardian.

In Brome's text, I have found the same pattern between tradesperson and customer, between maid and mistress, and between nephew and aunt: characters with less power use more vocatives than those with more power. This linguistic phenomenon links up with the virtually obligatory use of vocative by powerless people like servants addressing their mistresses. However, it is not always the case, especially with comic characters. For example, Careless, a playful young master, uses more vocatives than his servant or maid, i.e. eight vocatives in twenty-nine utterances (36%) to a nurse, who uses seven vocatives in twenty-four utterances (29%), and eleven vocatives in twenty-two utterances (50%) to his servant, Wat, who uses seven vocatives in twenty utterances (35%). In Brome's text, high frequency of vocative use seems a sign to indicate a comic character, e.g. Thomas, a stereotypical cuckold, uses fifteen vocatives in seventeen vocatives (88%) to his nagging wife, Alicia, who uses twelve vocatives in fourteen utterances (86%). In other words, the high frequency of vocative use has also to do with characterisation and normal rules of interaction do not apply to comic characters. They can use sarcastic or inappropriate vocatives for comic effect as will be observed in Example (7) below.

Characters of equal status use vocatives to maintain the interpersonal relationship between them.

Example (6) [Bellamy and Frankly are close friends. Bellamy is introduced to Frankly's rich friend, Jack Meggot. Jack Meggot invites them to have lunch at his house and leaves. Now Frankly and Bellamy are talking about Jack Meggot.]

[Bellamy] Now you say something. It is the Heart,

**Frankly**, I Value in a Man.

[Frank] Right! - and there is a Heart even in a

Woman's Breast that is worth the Purchase, or my

Judgment has deceiv'd me. **Dear Bellamy**, I know your

Concern for me. See her first, and then blame me, if

you can. (Hoadly: p.15)

In (6), the characters have been talking for some time, and thus there is no need to identify the addressee. *Dear Bellamy* in the middle of the utterance is used to maintain and reinforce the friendly relationship of the interlocutors. It focuses on the politeness import of the following utterance, i.e. a positive politeness strategy. Such an intention is fortified by a modifier of endearment, *Dear*. In addition, the vocatives in this rather long line can be taken as turn-holders, i.e. signals that the speaker has not yet finished his remark.

Vocative examples discussed here are all used to maintain the relationship between interlocutors. This implies that vocatives can also be used negatively, i.e. to destroy the relationship between interlocutors. Conventional vocative forms are used to maintain the usual relationship, but at the same time vocatives shift to non-conventional forms when the characters wish to negotiate their relationship.

Here is an example in which the wife uses vocatives strategically to have power over her husband. It is not only the choice of the form but also high frequency which contribute to the subversion of the conventional power relationship between spouses, Alicia and Thomas in Brome's *A Mad Couple Well*



*Match'd*. One expects human relationships to be fairly stable; especially among those we live together or meet each day. Alicia and Thomas' relationship is far from being stable. They use an unusual vocative form with each other, and as the vocative changes their relationship also seems to change. Here is an extract of their dialogue. In the first half, they use the default vocatives which they use throughout the drama, but in the latter half, they decide to use another vocative, which alters their relationship completely.

Example (7) [Thomas Saleware comes back and finds his wife, Alicia, and a young male customer, Bellamy, talking in a friendly way in the shop. Thomas flatters Bellamy but Bellamy does not respond to it as he expects. Immediately after Bellamy leaves, Thomas accuses Bellamy of lacking manners and wit. Alicia then says:]

[Alicia] **Thomas** your hopes are vaine, **Thomas** in seating mee here to overreach, or underreach any body. I am weary of this Mechanick course **Thomas**; and of this courser habit, as I have told you divers and sundry times **Thomas**, and indeed of you **Thomas** that confine me to't, but the bound must obey.

[Saleware] Never the sooner for a hasty word, I hope **sweete Ally**; Not of me nor of my shop I prethee at seasonable times **Love**. But for thy habit (though this be decent on a Citizens wife) use thine owne fancy, let it be as Courtly, or as Lady-like as thou pleasest, or my Lords desires.

[Alicia] Then I am friends agen.

[Saleware] Troth, and I'll call thee friend, and I prethee, let that be our familiar and common compellation: friend it will sound daintily, especially when thou shalt appeare too gallant to be my Wife.

[Alicia] Then let it be so **friend**.

[Saleware] Intruth it shall, and I am very much taken with it. **Friend** I have found a Customer to day that will take off my rich parcell of broad Bed-lace, that my Lord Paylate bespoke, and left on my hands, for lack of money.

[Alicia] I have sold it already **friend**, with other Laces at a good rate.

[Saleware] And all for ready money friend?

[Alicia] Yes, **friend**, a hundred pounds, and somewhat more.

[Saleware] Who would be, or who could live without such a friend, in such a shop? This money comes so pat for a present occasion, to stop a gap. It has stopt a gap already **friend**.

[Alicia] I have dispos'd of the money, the odd hundred pound for apparrell, **friend**, and other accommodations

for my selfe.

[Saleware] Never the sooner for a hasty word I hope

**friend.**

[Alicia] I have done it **friend**, whereby to appeare more

Courtly, and Ladilike as you say, to gaine you more

custome to your Shop.

[Saleware] Uuch **friend** - Is it so?

[Alicia] And **friend** you must not be angry, or thinke much

of it, if you respect your profit **friend.**

[Saleware] I were no friend but a wretch if I would. No let

it goe **friend**, and - *Sapientia mea mihi* is my word, I

must not grudge at my friend in any thing.

[Alicia] Then **friend**, let your shop be your own care for

the rest of this day, I have some busines abroad.

[Saleware] Whither **sweet friend**?

[Alicia] Is that a friendly question?

[Saleware] I am corrected **friend**, but will you not take a

Man to wait upon you?

[Alicia] To watch me, shall I? and give you account of my

actions? was that spoke like a friend?

[Saleware] I am agen corrected **friend.**

Doe your own pleasure, you'l returne to supper.

[Alicia] Yet againe?

[Saleware] And agen, I am corrected **friend.**

[Alicia] Neither to supper, nor to bed perhaps.

[Saleware] Never the sooner for a hasty word I hope.

[Alicia] But if I chance to stay, you cannot be a faithfull

friend and aske mee where, or in what company,

friendship you know allowes all liberty. [Exit.] (Brome: pp.C7R-C7V)

In term of vocative forms, the norm is not flouted and the assumed hierarchy seems maintained at the beginning, because both the husband and wife are using the default forms, i.e. the husband uses a shortened first name with a premodifier of endearment, and the wife uses the first name in full. But the frequency of vocative use is far beyond the average. The average frequency of vocative use in this sample text is 48%, i.e. there are 48 vocatives in 100 utterances. Between Alicia and Thomas, however, the frequency is over 85%, thus foregrounded. It might be the case that they use vocatives frequently as tradespersons not only on duty in a drapery shop but also off duty as spouses. Their incessant use of vocatives creates comic effects in the play. Indeed Thomas's frequent use of vocatives show his attentiveness and obedience to Alicia but Alicia's frequent use of vocatives shows her aggressiveness rather than anything else. What is more, Alicia's repetitive use of vocatives controls the dialogue, keeps her turn, and leaves no room for her husband to intervene.

## 5 Conversational management functions

I will rearrange Brinton's (1996: 37-38) inventory of pragmatic functions of discourse markers to accommodate multiple functions of vocatives which are related to conversational management: (1) to start an utterance; (2) to close an utterance; (3) to nominate the addressee; (4) to attract attention; and (5) to hold the floor.

### 5.1 *To start an utterance*

An initial-positioned vocative is often used to start an utterance by attracting the attention of the addressee and the audience. In my tagging system, the initial position refers to the top of a C-unit, which does not necessarily mean the first sentence of the utterance. However, 237 cases out of 251 initial positioned vocatives (94.4%) are put at the very beginning of the utterance. Here are examples of initial vocatives used as starters of conversations.

Example (8) [Aimwell and Archer (Mr. Martin) are staying in an inn run by Bonniface. When Aimwell and Archer are talking, Bonniface enters.]

[Enter Bonniface.]

[Bonniface] **Mr. Martin**, as the saying is -- yonder's an honest

Fellow below, my Lady Bountiful's Butler, who begs the Honour that you wou'd go Home with him and see his Cellar.

[Archer] Do my Baisemains to the Gentleman, and tell him I will do my self the Honour to wait on him immediately.

[Exit Bonniface.] (Farquhar: p.25)

Example (9) [After giving an aside, Archer asks Scrub, his servant, to introduce him to the ladies.]

[Archer] [Aside.] That Project, for ought I know, had been better than ours, **Brother Scrub** -- Why don't you introduce me.

[Scrub] **Ladies**, this is the strange Gentleman's Servant that you see at Church to Day; I understood he came from London, and so I invited him to the Cellar, that he might show me the newest Flourish in whetting my Knives. (Farquhar: p.32)

These vocatives are primarily used to make it clear to the audience who the characters are and what their relationship is (cf. Hess-Lüttich 1991), because they are often used when the speaker first appears on the stage, as in (8). But at the same time, these vocatives are used as a conversation management device for the speaker to get the floor and initiate a conversation, as in (9). When the characters are already on the stage, the initial vocative is used as a cue to start a conversation. If someone starts speaking abruptly, the audience might miss the line, but with a vocative as a starting cue, the speaker can be sure that s/he will be listened to. It is also used after an aside to indicate to the audience that a speaker is finishing a monologue and is coming back to a real conversation, as in (9) (cf. Goffman 1979, 1981).

### 5.2 *To terminate an utterance*

Final-positioned vocatives can be used to signal the end of an utterance and/or to give floor to another interlocutor. In the corpus, 457 out of 747 final vocatives (61.2%) are placed at the very end of an utterance to terminate it.

Example (10) [Bellmar and Marlove are lovers.]  
 [Bellmar] This is a way of Reasoning pardonable in none  
 but those ruin'd by Play. I hope no ill Run has turn'd  
 you Gamester, **Madam**.  
 [Marlove] No Matter: I shall never attempt repairing my  
 Loss by one who understands all the Game. You are in  
 no Danger, **Sir**. (Killigrew: p.27)

Example (11) [Mr. Rash and Sir Oliver are acquaintances, who are both visiting a beautiful widdow.]  
 [Rash] Save you **Sir Oliver**; save you, **sweet Sir Oliver**.  
 [Sir Oliver] As much to you **Sir; kind M. Rash**.  
 [Rash] You have bin with the Widdow; this melancholly  
 Lady already. Give you much joy of your faire hopes **Sir**  
**Oliver**. (Brewer: p.B1R)

In both examples, the interlocutors are talking with each other as equal partners: as lovers in (10) and acquaintances in (11). The speaker adds a vocative at the end to signal the end of the utterance and give the floor to the partners. These final vocatives are placed in the end-weight position, which also implies perhaps that the speaker is emphasising the importance of the addressee.

### 5.3 *To nominate the addressee or to take turns*

When there is more than one potential addressee, vocatives are used to single out the addressee (cf. Duncan 1972).

Example (12) [When Bellamy and Ranger are talking, their mutual friend Frankly appears.]  
 [Enter Frankly.]  
 [Frankly] **My Boy Ranger**, I am heartily glad to see you.  
**Bellamy**, let me embrace you. You are the Person I want.  
 I have been at your Lodgings, and was directed hither.  
 [Ranger] It is to him then I am oblig'd for this Visit:  
 But with all my Heart - He is the only Man, to whom I  
 don't care how much I am oblig'd.  
 [Bellamy] Your very humble Servant, **Sir**. (Hoadly: p.4)

Example (13) [In Saleware's drapery shop, Alicia and a customer, Bellamy (a servant of another household) are talking in a friendly manner. Mr. Saleware comes back and is annoyed.]  
 [Enter Saleware.]  
 [Saleware] ... **Ally** how dost? **Mr. Bellamy** how ist? How dos my

noble Lord? You are sad methinks. Ha' you overbought  
 any thing here, and so repent your bargaine? Or cannot  
 my wife, and you agree upon't? you must use Mr. Bellamy  
 kindly **my sweet Ally**: hee is our noblest Lords most  
 speciall favorite, and must finde all faire dealing here, as  
 well when I am abroad as at home **sweet heart**.  
 [Bellamy] You heare not mee complaine **sir**, fare you  
 well. [Exit.] (Brome: pp.C6V-C7R)

Example (14) [A conversation which takes place after Example (9) above. Bellamy is now leaving Alicia's drapery shop. He has spent quite a long time talking with Alicia without purchasing anything, which has annoyed the apprentice.]

[Bellamy] You have school'd mee fairely, I am humbled,  
**Lady** - [Going.]  
 [Alicia] Dee heare, dee heare **sir, Mr. Bellamine**,  
 One word before you goe.  
 [Apprentice] What would hee buy **Mistris**? can you take his  
 money? **Sir** dee heare?  
 [Alicia] Pray attend you the tother end o' th' Shop,  
 If I cannot handle a Customer, why dos your Master  
 trust me? Could a frowne fright you? Let a smile then  
 cheare you. (Brome: p.C5R)

In the examples above, there are three characters present in the scene. In (12), Frankly speaks to his friends one at a time, and his friends take turns to respond to him. The speaker uses vocatives to nominate the addressee one at a time, and this nomination determines the order of the responses. In (13), Saleware talks to Alicia and Bellamy in one turn. Saleware uses vocatives to indicate which part of his speech is addressed to whom, i.e. the first vocative is addressed to Alicia, the second to Mr. Bellamy and the third to Alicia again. (14) is an exceptional case, because vocatives are abused pragmatically. There are Alicia, Mr. Bellamy and the apprentice in the shop. The apprentice is annoyed by the male customer who is dallying with his mistress without purchasing anything. First he complains about this customer to his mistress using a rhetorical question, which is apparently overheard by Bellamy. Although the apprentice is superficially talking to Alicia by nominating Alicia as his addressee, his utterance is, in fact, directed to Bellamy. By doing so, he escapes blame. The apprentice then speaks to Bellamy by addressing him as Sir. Although this is an honorific vocative, it sounds abrupt and rude. This is an example of mimicry: the honorific vocative is not rude in itself, but it is rude because he imitates his mistress and repeats what she says. These examples also exemplify the tendency that vocatives with proper names, i.e. first name or surname, are preferred when vocatives are used to single out an addressee between equals or downwards, but not upwards. The speaker of lower rank uses an honorific to address the addressee of higher rank.

#### 5.4 To attract attention

Vocatives are used as attention getters, when the speaker wishes to attract the addressee's attention to the utterance or to the speaker him/herself. These vocatives are often used with a phrase which contains the second person pronoun. In the following examples, pronoun address terms are also in bold.

Example (15) [Lady Thrivewell is talking to her nephew, Careless.]

[Lady Thrivewell] **George Carelesse**, I would speak with **you**. (Brome: p.D7R)

Example (16) [Mr. Dormont is speaking to Sir Fopling]

[Dormont] **Sir Fopling** hark **you**, a word or two,

[Whispers.]

Look you do not want assurance. (Etherege: p.49)

Example (17) [Lady Thrivewell asks for a glass of beer in Alicia's shop after shopping.]

(Enter Prentice with Beere.)

Alicia: **Madam your** Beere. (Brome: p.C3V)

Nominating and attention getting are not the same. In (15) and (16), there are only two characters talking, and thus there should be no need to use a vocative if its function is to nominate the addressee. Here vocatives are used to attract the special attention of the addressee to the utterance. In (15), Lady Thrivewell is about to reprimand her nephew for his misbehaviour on the previous night. Here the full name is used without a title, which also anticipates the speaker's anger. In (16), Mr. Dormont is trying to get the attention of Sir Fopling, and this pragmatic function is reinforced by 'hark you', which is often used with a vocative. In (17), Alicia uses a vocative when the apprentice is handing a glass of beer to Lady Thrivewell. This clearly opens the conversation, and at the same time attracts the addressee's attention to the beer. Vocatives are often used when characters hand things to other characters so that things can be handed over without failure. The important point is that the attention-getting vocatives tend to occur in first position.

Vocatives collaborate with other attention getters to attract the attention of the addressee to the following words, as illustrated here:

Example (18) [Bellamy and Ranger are friends.]

[Bellamy] **Fy, Ranger**, - will **you** never think?

[Ranger] Yes, but I can't be always thinking. The Law

is a damnable dry Study, **Mr. Bellamy**, and without

something now and then to amuse, and relax, it would be too

sober Fellow grown - [...] (Hoadley: p.4)

In this particular example, a vocative is inserted between two statements, 'The Law is a damnable dry study' and 'without something now and then to amuse, and relax, it would be too sober Fellow grown'. The inserted vocative seems to draw the addressee's attention to what follows, and consequently helps to strengthen the speaker's persuasive power.

Vocatives are often used with the second person pronoun as follows:

Example (19) [Sir Credulous is talking to his brother, Heartwell.]

[Sir Credulous] **Brother, you**'ll be the Cause here of some Mischief.

[A few lines later]

[Sir Credulous] **Brother, you**'ll make me mad. -- I wish you had my Distemper, and then we should see if you would rattle at this rate. [...] (Miller: p.58)

Example (20) [Lord Froth and Sir Paul are friends. At a party, Sir Paul is completely drunk, and starts saying silly things.]

[Sir Paul] Nay, I protest and vow now, 'tis true; when Mr. Brisk Jokes, your Lordships Laugh does so become you, he, he, he.

[Lord Froth] Ridiculous! **Sir Paul** you're strangely mistaken, I find Champagne is powerful, I assure **you, Sir Paul**, I Laugh at no bodies Jest but my own, or a Ladies, I assure **you, Sir Paul**. (Congreve: p.7)

In these examples, *you* and the vocative both refer to the addressee. The speaker is making some kind of judgement or criticism of the addressee in (19) and (20). Although criticising the addressee is a serious face-threatening act, the speaker believes that s/he has to do so because it is important. The vocative is used to confirm that the addressee is listening. In other words, vocatives have a focussing function. The speaker does not make such an utterance abruptly, but makes sure that the addressee is paying attention. The vocatives may also have an element of politeness: 'Brother' reinforces a close kinship relationship, and 'Sir Paul' reinforces a hierarchical relationship of respect. The vocative is a signal for an important statement, as if to say 'Listen carefully; I am going to tell you something important concerning you'. Although the illocutionary force of the whole utterance depends on how the line is spoken, this use of a vocative also reinforces the illocutionary force.

## 6 Conclusion

In this paper, I have observed pragmatic functions of vocatives. The examples have shown that the positions and function of vocatives are closely related. As a vocative sometimes has more than one function, the relationship between the position and function is not clear but rather complicated. Out of the four pragmatic functions, I have discussed two pragmatic functions: interpersonal and conversational. The two other functions will be discussed in the second half of the paper.

Appendix: The texts included in the corpus

Time	Author	Title	No. of words
1647	Thomas Brewer	<i>The Covntrie Girle</i>	10,179
1653	Richard Brome	<i>A Mad Couple Well Match'd</i>	10,571
1675	William Wycherley	<i>The Country-Wife</i>	10,351
1676	George Etherege	<i>The Man of Mode</i>	10,251
1694	William Congreve	<i>The Double-Dealer</i>	10,236
1969	Mrs. Manley	<i>The Lost Lover; or, the Jealous Husband</i>	10,533
1707	George Farquhar	<i>The Beaux Strategem</i>	10,023
1719	Thomas Killigrew	<i>Chit-Chat</i>	10,067
1723	Richard Steele	<i>The Conscious Lovers</i>	9,596
1735	James Miller	<i>The Mother-in-Law</i>	10,182
1747	Benjamin Hoadly	<i>The Suspicious Husband</i>	13,083
1757	David Garrick	<i>The Male-Coquette</i>	11,203
Total			126,275

Note: This corpus is part of *A Corpus of English Dialogues 1560-1760*, compiled under the supervision of Merja Kytö(Uppsala University) and Jonathan Culpeper (Lancaster University).

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