

# **Address and the Semiotics of Social Relations**

**A systemic-functional account of address forms  
and practices in Australian English**

**Cate McKean Poynton**

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## Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the realm of the interpersonal: broadly, those linguistic phenomena involved in the negotiation of social relations and the expression of personal attitudes and feelings. The initial contention is that this realm has been consistently marginalised not only within linguistic theory, but more broadly within western culture, for cultural and ideological reasons whose implications extend into the bases of classical linguistic theory. Chapter 1 spells out the grounds for this contention and is followed by two further chapters, constituting Part I: Language and Social Relations. Chapter 2 identifies and critiques the range of ways in which the interpersonal has been conventionally interpreted: as style, as formality, as politeness, as power and solidarity, as the expressive, etc. This chapter concludes with an argument for the need for a stratified model of language in order to deal adequately with these phenomena. Chapter 3 proposes such a model, based on the systemic-functional approach to language as social semiotic. The register category tenor within this model is extended to provide a model of social relations as a semiotic system. The basis for the identification of the three tenor dimensions, power, distance and affect, is the identification of three modes of deployment or realisation of the interpersonal resources of English in everyday discourse: reciprocity, proliferation and amplification.

Parts II and III turn their attention to one significant issue in the negotiation of social relations: address. The focus is explicitly on Australian English, but there is considerable evidence that most if not all of the forms discussed in Part II occur in other varieties of English, especially British and American, and that some at least of the practices discussed in Part III involve the same patterns of social relations with respect to the tenor dimensions of power, distance and affect.

Because most varieties of contemporary English do not have a set of options for second-person pronominal address, as is the case in many of the world's languages, English speakers use names and other nominal forms which need to be described. Part II is descriptive in orientation, providing an account of the grammar of VOCATION in English, including a detailed description of the nominal forms used. Chapter 4 investigates the identification and functions of vocatives, and includes empirical investigations of vocative position in clauses and vocative incidence in relation to speech function or speech act choices. Chapter 5 presents an account of the grammar of English name forms, organised as a paradigmatic system. This chapter incorporates an

account of the processes used to produce the various name-forms used in address, including truncation, reduplication and suffixation. Chapter 6 consists of an account of non-name forms of address, organised in terms of the systemic-functional account of nominal group structure. This chapter deals with single-word non-name forms of address and the range of nominal group structures used particularly to communicate attitude, both positive and negative.

Part III is ethnographic in orientation. It describes some aspects of the use of the forms described in Part II in contemporary address practice in Australia and interprets such practice using the model of social relations as semiotic system presented in Part I. The major focuses of attention is on address practice in relation to the negotiation of gender relations, with some comment on generational relations of adults with children, on class relations and on ethnic relations in nation with a diverse population officially committed to a policy of a multiculturalism. Part III functions simultaneously as a coda for this thesis, and a prologue for the kind of ethnographic study that the project was originally intended to be, but which could not be conducted in the absence of an adequate linguistically-based model of social relations and an adequate description of the resources available for address in English.

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## Notational Conventions

### Systemic networks

The networks appearing in Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6 below employ standard systemic notational conventions:

[ = a or b

{ = a and b

where a and b are features sharing a common entry condition (which may be single or multiple). Each such set of features comprises a SYSTEM and each feature, either alone or in combination with other features, may constitute the entry condition for further systems. A set of interrelated systems constitutes a system network.

] = a or b

} = a and b

where a and b are features functioning either disjunctively or in combination as the entry conditions for further systems within a network. System networks are normally identified by an 'address', which labels them by name, by rank, by stratum and (if appropriate) by communicative plane.

### Orthographic representation of morphological forms

Conventional orthography has been used in Chapter 5, in preference to phonetic notation, for representing the range of suffixes constituting diminutive or hypocoristic forms of personal names, since they are discussed as morphological rather than phonological phenomena. Likewise, name forms containing a string of such items will be represented in a conventionalised orthography.

## A Note on Style

Certain linguistic choices have been made in this thesis for which it seems appropriate to preface some explanation, since they are not conventionally found in a thesis. Such choices include the intermittent use of gradable forms such as modals, rather than the binary/polar forms 'it is/it isn't' so, and the consistent use of the pronoun *I* referring to the writer, rather than *we* or the avoidance of any implication of human agency/responsibility by resorting to the (agent-deleted) passive.

The use of modality reflects the speculative nature of much that is contained in this thesis, an appropriate choice indicating that 'knowledge' is not final but always partial and contingent. The use of *I* acknowledges part of the contingency of that 'knowledge': I, in all the specificity of my multiple social identities, am responsible for its production.

I could have made a simple decision to avoid such forms, i.e. to make other choices and conform entirely to the conventional expectations for thesis style. But that would have been to play a double game: to write a thesis about the interpersonal and how it has been marginalised while eschewing the use of interpersonal forms, thereby contributing, albeit in a small way, to maintaining that marginalisation.

In a world which did not so rigidly separate mind and body, reason and emotion, the cognitive and the affective, such an explanation would hardly be necessary. But we do not inhabit such a world. Yet.

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grateful for the invaluable experience of participation in a joint research enterprise, through the Register Working Group, under Jim's leadership.

Various parts of this thesis were published prior to, in tandem with or subsequent to its submission and examination. These publications are detailed below.

**Part I.** Chapter 1, Linguistic legitimacy: the case of the interpersonal, was published, substantially in the form that appears in this thesis, as:

The privileging of representation and the marginalising of the interpersonal: a metaphor (and more) of contemporary gender relations. In *Feminine/Masculine and Representation*, ed. Terry Threadgold & Anne Cranny-Francis. Sydney: Allen & Unwin. 1990: 231-55.

An earlier version of parts of Chapter 3, Towards a semiotics of social relations, was published in:

Chapter 6, Social relations through grammar. *Language and Gender: making the difference*. Geelong: Deakin University Press. Republished 1989 by Oxford University Press. 1985/1989: 76-86.

**Part II.** An earlier version of parts of Chapter 5, The grammar of names, was published as:

Names as vocatives: forms and functions. *Nottingham Linguistic Circular*, 13 (1984): 1-34.

A version of Chapter 6, The grammar of non-name vocatives, was subsequently published as:

Amplification as a grammatical prosody: attitudinal modification in the nominal group. In *Meaning and Form: Systemic Functional Interpretations. Meaning and Choice in Language: Studies for Michael Halliday*, ed. Margaret Berry, Christopher Butler, Robin Fawcett & Guowen Huang. Norwood, NJ: Ablex. 1996: 211-227.

**Part III,** Towards an Ethnography of Address in Australia, consisting of three short chapters focused respectively on address practices in relation to generation, gender and class is based on three earlier publications:

The linguistic realization of social relations: terms of address in Australian English. *Collected Papers on Normal Aspects of Speech and Language, 52nd ANZAAS Conference*. North Ryde: Speech and Language Research Centre, Macquarie University (Occasional Papers). 1982: 253-69.

The politics of address. In Chapter 6, Social relations through grammar. *Language and Gender: making the difference*. Geelong: Deakin University Press. Republished 1989 by Oxford University Press. 1985/1989: 80-84.

Terms of address in Australian English. In *Australian English: the language of a new society*, ed. Peter Collins & David Blair. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press. 1989: 55-69.

## **PART I: LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL RELATIONS**

## One

### Linguistic legitimacy: the case of the interpersonal

Il est, selon nous, dangereux d'établir d'avance une distinction entre des éléments grammaticaux d'un côté et certains autres qu'on appelle extra-grammaticaux, de l'autre, entre un langage intellectuel et un langage affectif. Les éléments dits extra-grammaticaux ou affectifs peuvent en effet obéir aux règles grammaticales, en partie peut-être à des règles grammaticales qu'on n'a pas encore réussi à dégager. (Hjelmslev 1928: 240, cited from Stankiewicz 1964: 241)

This thesis takes as its starting point a range of linguistic phenomena which have not always been paid adequate attention descriptively and/or theoretically, looked at from the perspective of a systemic-functional model of language as social semiotic. From this perspective, the phenomena in question are identifiable as related in terms of both structure and meaning, or function in context, under the general label of the interpersonal. They include: the organisation of conversation in terms of speech or conversational roles, including the relation of congruence or incongruence between speech function (speech act) choices, such as Statement or Command, and the grammatical (mood) choices which realise them; a range of aspects of lexical choice, including terms of address, slang, swearing and attitudinal lexis; and a range of 'expressive' phonological features, such as lengthening, speech rate, voice quality, pitch range in intonation contours and loudness or intensity, coding what has variously been referred to as 'the expressive' or 'the emotive' (feeling, emotion, evaluation or affect).

Many of these features have, of course, been identified as significant in the negotiation of social relations. See the influential work of Brown & Levinson on politeness (Brown & Levinson 1978); the literature on language and gender (v. Thorne, Kramarac & Henley 1983 for an extensive annotated bibliography and McConnell-Ginet 1988 for a recent overview); and the now extensive literature on address, following in the footsteps of the pioneering work of Roger Brown and his colleagues (Gilman & Brown 1958, Brown & Gilman 1960; Brown & Ford 1964. See Philipsen & Huspek 1985 and Braun, Köhler & Schubert 1986 for recent



bibliographies). While such features have been recognised, and their social significance acknowledged, however, this has frequently been on terms which either ignore the place of this work within a theory of language, or else which simultaneously acknowledge its significance and marginalise it by maintaining a rigorous boundary between the realms of 'syntax' and 'pragmatics', or 'linguistics' and 'sociolinguistics'.

Other interpersonal features have been identified as primarily personal, rather than interpersonal, under such labels as 'the expressive' or 'the emotive'. Central here are various 'expressive' aspects of phonology (stress, intensity, lengthening, etc.), of morphology (especially diminutive and augmentative affixation), and of lexis (slang, personal names, attitudinal lexis). Such features have not uncommonly been assigned a very marginal status indeed, if they have not been totally excluded as properly 'linguistic'. Concerning names, for example, Hudson suggests that, as the main markers of power and solidarity in English, they

might fairly be described as peripheral to the system of English as a whole, in the sense that proper names used as vocatives . . . could be handled in a separate section of the grammar with little or no consequence for any other parts of it. (Hudson 1980: 125)

And Markey makes a more far-reaching claim regarding their linguistic status, questioning whether names ought even to be regarded as linguistic items insofar as they

do not share the developmental properties of 'normal' grammatical items . . . (and) are peripheral to concerns which lie at the core of the theoretical investigation of language. (Markey 1982: 141)

From a much more sympathetic perspective, Edward Stankiewicz, in a paper which describes a range of expressive phenomena in a number of European languages, notes that what he calls 'the emotive function'

... and its peculiarities are still the least studied in linguistic works, despite repeated attempts on the part of some linguists to lift them from the limbo of grammatical appendices, footnotes or lists of exceptions. (Stankiewicz 1964: 240)

He sees part of the cause of this neglect as a tendency

to confuse the instinctive nature of 'sound-gestures' with what can properly be considered as the linguistic dimension of 'expressiveness' or of the emotive function. (p.239)

i.e. a failure to distinguish adequately between

an 'emotional' plane, which reveals itself in a variety of articulated or non-articulated 'forms' of a symptomatic nature, that is through signals which are inextricably bound to the situation which evokes them and which they evoke, and the 'emotive' plane, which is rendered through situationally independent, arbitrary symbols. (p.240)

He also suggests an historical basis for contemporary attitudes, going back to the 'neo-idealist' response to nineteenth-century Neogrammarianism:

The mistrust of the phenomenon called 'emotive language' can also be explained by the exaggerated attention it received in some linguistic quarters, which treated it as a panacea for all the shortcomings of nineteenth century linguistics.

He goes on to give the following account:

The stylistic approach to emotive or 'expressive' language received a notable impetus with the crisis of the neogrammarian method. . . . The indictment of the deterministic and naturalistic program of the Neo-grammarians took a variety of directions in the work of the so-called 'neo-idealistic' students of language . . . All of them proclaimed the supremacy of individual innovation, the importance of psychological forces in the development of language, and the primacy of emotion over the 'intellectual', mechanical aspect of language and over the 'blindness' of the phonetic laws. . . . The rejection of the neogrammarian method was accompanied by an interest in those areas of grammar which seemed to 'leak'; i.e., in individual deviations from the norm, in substandard speech, in poetic language, in stylistics. All these areas of language were supposed to provide evidence for the superiority of emotive and subjective language over cognitive and objective language. Despite the undeniable merits of these scholars in accumulating stylistic and occasionally linguistic material pertaining to emotive language, the theoretical premises and philosophical mystique of the linguistic 'expressionists' must be considered wrong-headed from a modern point of view. The neo-idealists . . . ignored or blurred the

difference between language and speech, code and message, or, in de Saussure's terms, 'langue' and 'parole', directing the attention only to the latter.

The methodological impressionism of the neo-idealistic school, together with a programmatic insistence on the primacy and non-systematic character of emotion in the functioning and history of language, have actually stood in the way of recognising emotive language as a legitimate area of linguistic research. Its treatment as a kind of 'contre-grammaire', and its identification with individual deviations, were self-defeating for linguistics as a science. The harmfulness of this approach was voiced early by Hjelmslev: 'Il est, selon nous, dangereux d'établir d'avance une distinction entre des éléments grammaticaux d'un côté et certains autres qu'on appelle extra-grammaticaux de l'autre, entre un langage intellectuel et un langage affectif. Les éléments dits extra-grammaticaux ou affectifs peuvent en effet obéir aux règles grammaticales, en partie peut-être à des règles grammaticales qu'on n'a pas encore réussi à dégager.' ([Hjelmslev 1928]: 240)

To the opponents of the neogrammarian method, 'stylistics' seemed the road to the 'life' of language, to its quivering essence, but, in effect, they did not abandon the main tenets of the Neogrammarians: their historicism which viewed language only in a state of flux, their psychologism which recognized as 'real' only the speech of the individual, and the atomistic approach to linguistic facts. The question of emotive language was, in fact, posited not with relation to linguistic systems, but from the point of view of contextual variation, of the possibilities of the message. However, the expressive resources of the message must be distinguished from the expressive devices of the code, even if these do interact both synchronically and diachronically. The confusion of these two dimensions has not been avoided even by some structural linguists, who are inclined to treat all emotive phenomena as a problem of *parole*, rather than of *langue*. (Stankiewicz 1964: 240-242)

The contemporary marginalising of interpersonal features is hardly surprising given the negative value given to the emotions, the realm of feeling, in contemporary western culture and the primacy of the referential within linguistics itself. The effects have been unfortunate, most significantly in imposing arbitrary limits on notions of 'language' as a human phenomenon and of 'linguistics' as the study of that phenomenon. An arbitrary separation of the two faces of language - as code and as social practice, as system and process - has been fostered, with serious consequences for the adequacy of accounts of the code itself, long the primary focus of attention within linguistics. If, as Stankiewicz notes, the neo-idealists of the early twentieth century 'ignored or blurred the difference' between *langue* and *parole*, by focusing too exclusively on *parole*, then much of later

twentieth century linguistics has gone the other way, exaggerating the difference between them by valuing the cognitive at the expense of the emotive.

In terms of ontogeny, it seems clear that expressive and interactive meanings emerge earlier than cognitive meanings (in the sense of the referential or representational). Infants develop repertoires of signs for expressing interest, pleasure, displeasure and a desire for interaction itself, as well as for getting people to do things for them, well before they start using language more referentially by learning 'words' as 'labels'. The forms of these signs, at this proto-language stage, are not yet those of the adult language system that the child has yet to acquire, but they can be shown to be both meaningful (i.e. functional in context) and systematic (i.e. able to be mapped into sets of options organised paradigmatically). They certainly form the basis for the range of aspects of interpersonal meaning that the child later comes to be able to code simultaneously with representational or experiential meaning, by using the tri-stratal organisation of the adult linguistic system to map the structures realising interpersonal meaning onto the structures realising representational and textual meaning, thereby producing a single, multi-functional output. (See Halliday 1975, Painter 1984 for detailed accounts).

### **1.1 Assumptions underlying marginalisation of the interpersonal**

What, then, are the assumptions underpinning those models of language which have marginalised interpersonal structures and meanings? There are two interconnected aspects of such an exploration, one looking more narrowly at attitudes and beliefs focussed specifically on language; the other looking more broadly at ideological aspects of western epistemology, in particular the habit of dichotomising critiqued so pungently by Derrida (1976, 1978), with its concomitant privileging of one term and dismissal of the other, and by the ideology of individualism.

In terms of thinking about language, the central issues would seem to be:

(i) a too-exclusive focus on system at the expense of process (deriving from uncritical reliance on dichotomies such as langue/parole, competence/performance), one of the consequences of this imbalance being

(ii) the 'primacy attributed to referential meaning in the western positivist/empiricist tradition' (Quinn & Holland 1987:14);

(iii) constituency-based notions of linguistic structure which allow no room for alternative kinds of structure;

(iv) assumptions about the unpredictability/lack of systematicity of interpersonal features, deriving from privileging the categorical at the expense of the probabilistic.

Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole* lies behind both the contemporary focus on system, as well as the separation of competence from performance and ultimately syntax from pragmatics. If one understands the *langue/parole* distinction as a dichotomy, then the twentieth-century tendency has been to choose to focus attention on one or other of the terms and, in making that choice, implicitly to evaluate them in relation to one another. If linguistics is defined as the study of *langue*, then it is hardly surprising that *parole* becomes 'simply the evidence that you use and then throw away' (Halliday 1987: 603). Halliday, with Firth, finds little use for such dichotomies as *langue/parole* (and *competence/ performance*) (Halliday 1974). In a recent interview with Paul Thibault, he makes it clear that he wishes to value both terms, though the terms he prefers to use are not *langue/parole* but the Hjelmslevian *system* and *process*, or *system* and *text*:

M.A.K.H.: . . . I would see text as instantiation of the system; the two must be mutually determining. Hjelmslev says that you could, in principle, have a system without process - a system without it generating any text, but you couldn't have the process without the system; he presents it as a one-way determination. I prefer to think of these as a single complex phenomenon: the system only 'exists' as a potential for the process, and the process is the actualization of that potential. Since this is a language potential, the 'process' takes the form of what we call text.

P.J.T.: The Saussurean discussion of this relation has tended to disjoin system from text so that the ontological status of the system is privileged. The systemic-functional model, as well as the earlier work of Firth and Hjelmslev, has quite a different view of this relation. The systemic-functional model is oriented to both 'meaning' and 'text'. Can you explain this relation?

M.A.K.H.: I've always felt that it was rather a distraction in Saussure that he defined linguistics as the study of *la langue*, with *parole* being simply the evidence that you use and then throw away. I don't see it that way. Firth, of course, was at the other end of the scale, in that for him the phenomenon was the text. He wasn't interested in the potential, but rather, as I think I put it on one of my papers, in the

generalized actual, so that it was the typical texts that he was interested in. Firth tended to privilege the text as against the system. I don't want to privilege either. (Halliday 1987: 603)

If, on the other hand, one treats the relationship between pairs of terms such as *langue/parole* as dialectic rather than dichotomous, then one has to pay attention to both system and its instantiation in particular contexts, or, to look at the relation from the other direction, attend to actual instances of 'linguaging' in the real world as both the only guarantee of the existence of any system but also as themselves affecting, and ultimately changing, the system. (And note that ultimately one has to pluralise 'system', or be trapped by one's own reified terminology in a way that has a great deal in common with nineteenth-century notions of 'nation' and 'people': a particular 'language', with its 'system, is just as much a fiction as a nation is an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) - both are dreams or fantasies of desired unity in the face of actual diversity).

Chomsky's reformulation of *langue/parole* as *competence/performance* not only involves a similar dichotomous view of the relation between system and process but also a strong emphasis on the cognitive, which he is quite explicit about (Chomsky 1965: Chapter 1. V. Chomsky 1988 for a recent restatement). What isn't always understood is what has been lost by such an orientation, i.e. a concern for not only the affective/expressive but also, ironically, the very social as against individual orientation to language that was one of the values of Saussure's *langue/parole* distinction. *Langue* was what we all shared as speakers, where *parole* was the individual use of that resource. What Chomsky does, with his cognitive orientation, is to tie the notion of system to the individual, albeit an individual who embodies the specifically human cognitive capacities evolved by the species. What this does, of course, is to side-step the whole question of the social. And to ensure, because of the hegemony of Chomskian linguistics from the 1960s, that when linguists wanted to get back to the social (as increasingly they have from the 1970s), there is a built-in hierarchy which gives priority to the cognitive and individual over the interpersonal and social.

Prioritising the cognitive has a long history in western ideas about language. Various commentators - almost invariably, however, from within those traditions or approaches to language with an interest in the social - have noted the preoccupation with the cognitive, referential, representational function of language: language representing and hence controlling the world. Waugh (1985: 144), speaking of Jakobson's set of language functions (Jakobson 1960), notes that

... the referential function seems to be that function which is the unmarked one in the system of six ... As evidence of the unmarked nature of the referential function, we may cite the fact that in many linguistic and philosophical studies of language, the referential function has been said to be the *only* function of language, or, if (some of) the other functions have been discerned, they have been declared to be 'deviant' or 'unusual' or needing special consideration. And even in our parlance about language, the referential function is spoken of as 'ordinary language'.

It is possible, however, to see the cognitive as constituting the 'central core' of language, and yet still to make a strong case for the inadequacy of a purely cognitivist orientation to language:

The linguist's primary concern with the cognitive elements of language is not surprising, because they constitute its central core. Yet even though the expressive elements are generally less apparent than the cognitive units, it would be deceptive to think that the former constitute a shapeless, subterranean stream buried under the structure of language. Absence of adequate descriptions is, as we know, not always determined by inaccessibility of empirical data; it is often the result of disinterest or of inadequacy of prevailing theories. And so long as linguists do insist on either/or solutions, or on a reductionism of all elements of language to a single cognitive level, they are bound to ignore those phenomena which do not fit their constructs, or to force the facts into ready-made schemes. (Stankiewicz 1964: 247)

Within the neo-Firthian tradition, Ellis notes 'the excessively referential conception of extra-linguistic components' in contrasting Firth's own emphasis on the importance of context (Ellis 1966: 89-90 (footnote 6)) and Halliday identifies the firm commitment of linguists 'in the psycho-philosophical tradition' to language as 'an ideational system' (Halliday 1979: 71).

Among those working within pragmatics, Levinson, having referred to work on the 'functions of speech', notes the utility of this work in reminding us that

contrary to the preoccupations of many philosophers and a great many semanticists, language is used to convey more than the propositional content of what is said.

and several pages later is more explicit in acknowledging

the philosophical and linguistic bias (no doubt reflected in this book) towards what Bühler (1934) called the *representational*, and Jakobson (1960) the *referential*, function of language. (Levinson 1983: 42, 46)

**Leech, in the earlier version of his work on the tact maxim (Leech 1980), though interestingly not in the later version (1983), takes up a related issue in seeing Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* as**

a milestone because it offered to release linguistic philosophy from the age-long tyranny of its preoccupation with the truth and falsehood of propositions. (Leech 1980: 79)

But despite the very clear acceptance in the earlier version of different but parallel kinds of meanings, in the later version, in fact, he insists on a hierarchy, privileging the representational as more centrally linguistic (and seriously misrepresenting Halliday's work in the process).

Behind this widespread cognitively-oriented conception of language, shared by linguist and lay-person alike, would seem to be two pairs of ideological dichotomies of profound importance to western epistemology: the dichotomy of 'objective' and 'subjective' and that of 'reason' and 'emotion'. In both cases, the first term is highly valued and the second devalued. Both of these pairs of terms have had obvious significance as epistemological preconditions for the development of the physical sciences in the west, but have been invoked in other, social, areas of control, particularly in relation to the subordination of women (Lloyd 1984, Poynton 1985/90: 18-19).

These linked notions, of the objective and the rational, have undoubtedly served the interests of western expansionist capitalism extremely well, by, on the one hand, assuming the value of control (by force, by knowledge, by language itself) and, on the other hand, by devaluing not only those uses of language directed towards the social but those people who habitually use and value the interpersonal, those who apparently talk 'for talk's sake' rather than for 'getting things done'. The dichotomy implied between talk 'for talk's sake' and talk for 'getting things done' is, of course, a false dichotomy: talk always is a mode of 'getting things done', a mode of action, where what 'gets done' through the ongoing conduct of everyday social relations is the production/re-production of both social structure itself and of individual social subjects, socially situated. But in the ideological world of



conservative political values, where it is convenient to privilege the individual at the expense of the social, that is a most inconvenient insight.

The primary groups whose linguistic practices have been systematically devalued by attitudes which assume the validity of such a dichotomy, between talk 'for talk's sake' and talk for 'getting things done', have been so-called 'primitive' peoples, those in whose societies a central role of language lies in its interactive role and its role in ritual and myth. Such attitudes proved disastrous for the Aboriginal people of Australia after European settlement, particularly when linked with the politically convenient nineteenth-century doctrine of 'terra nullius', asserting that because the Aborigines had not made their mark on the land in ways that were recognisable to European eyes as settlement and use that therefore they had no claim to ownership of the land. What struck European eyes most forcibly was the poverty of Aboriginal material culture; what they were unable to understand, even to conceive of, was the possibility that

almost all of the human creative energy of a culture over tens of thousands of years old had been invested in the development of the society's spiritual, intellectual, and social life. (Sutton 1988: ix)

Within non-Aboriginal Australian society, and western societies generally, it has been women and children whose selves and whose language have been marginalised and devalued. Children, because however significant the representational must come to be for them if they are to be taken seriously as adult human beings, it is not 'one of the earliest [functions of language] to come into prominence' and 'it does not become a dominant function until a much later stage in the development towards maturity.' (Halliday 1973:16). If indeed, as Halliday goes on to note, in an oblique reference to the hegemony of representational notions of language, it ever does become the dominant function rather than the dominant model of language for anyone. Women and women's language have been devalued because competence in interactive genres, emphasising the interpersonal, is what they have been expected to demonstrate. Men's linguistic competence, on the other hand, has been expected to be in language as performance, as display, involving a significant focus on the representational, whether in the form of storytelling or the presentation of 'facts' (Maltz & Borker 1982, Poynton 1985/90: 27-8). And such linguistic behaviour does have a high value in our culture.

A third reason for the marginalisation of the interpersonal is the long-standing assumption shared by many who have had a serious concern with language, particularly philosophers and linguists influenced by philosophy, that there is only

one kind of linguistic structure: constituency structure. Hjelmslev, in the quotation heading this introduction, makes clear the possibility that 'affective elements' in language could well be subject to kinds of grammatical rules which have yet to be identified or described. Halliday (1979) has made a significant contribution to such an enterprise by distinguishing between three kinds of grammatical structure, coding three kinds of distinguishable semantic function. He distinguishes between: (i) constituency structure, realising experiential meanings ('meaning in the reflective mode'); (ii) prosodic structure, realising interpersonal meanings ('meaning in the active mode'); and (iii) culminative structure, realising textual meanings (meaning enabling 'the other two kinds [of meaning to] take on relevance to some real context').

Halliday makes the following comment concerning differences in the attention paid to these different kinds of structure:

If we consider the major traditions in linguistic thought, we find, not at all surprisingly perhaps, that those in the psycho-philosophical tradition, who are firmly committed to language as an ideational system, have usually worked with constituency models of structure: American structuralist and transformationalist theories, for example. By contrast, linguists in the socio-anthropological tradition, like Firth, who are interested in speech functions and stress the interpersonal aspect of language, have tended to develop prosodic models. Those in the literary tradition, concerned primarily with texture and text structure, have developed models of a periodic kind: the structure of the paragraph (topic sentences, etc.), generic structures of various kinds, and of course the whole theory of metrics. (Halliday 1979: 71-3)

He goes on to make explicit reference to the not-dissimilar notions of 'Pike's (1959) important insight into language as particle, wave & field' and to note that:

Although Pike did not conceive of these in quite the same way, it seems very clear that this is what we have here:

constituent (experiential) structures    are particulate

prosodic (interpersonal)    „    „    field-like

periodic (textual)    „    „    wave-like

I will not elaborate on the periodic (textual) type of structure here, since it is of no further direct relevance to this thesis, but will give a brief, introductory characterisation of the prosodic type of structure, characteristic of interpersonal meaning, in comparison with the constituency structure of experiential meaning.

Consider a possible utterance, perhaps said on the telephone as a prelude to terminating a conversation:

1. *Someone is knocking at the door*

The experiential content of this utterance consists of Actor *someone* , Material Process *is knocking* , Circumstance: Location *on my door* . (See Halliday 1985, Chapter 5 for a detailed account of the functional categories participant, process and circumstance in the experiential, or representational, structure of the clause). A representation of structure in constituency terms, bracketing the structural components as follows, seems perfectly appropriate:

(Someone) ((is) (knocking)) ((at) ((the) (door)))

But what about the following possible utterance, perhaps produced by the anxious and deferential student who was knocking at the door?

2. *I was wondering if you could possibly spare me a few minutes, could you please ?*

Here, the experiential content is not only less straightforward to discern (e.g. what does one do about *was wondering* ?), but the whole utterance is suffused with a set of interrelated features with the basic meaning of *maybe* , i.e. modality of probability, the social function of which in a sentence like this is to signal politeness or deference. The relevant features of the clause are:

- modal auxiliary (*could* )
- modalised tag (*could you* )
- modal adjunct (*possibly* )
- 'distant' tense choice: present in past, *was wondering* . (Compare other possible choices: the polite but less deferential present, *wonder* , or the more distant and hence more deferential past in past, *had been wondering* . (See Halliday 1985: 177-184 for this system of tense description)

- grammatical metaphor (*I was wondering* is not in fact the alpha clause of a hypotactic clause complex, which is what it looks like at first glance, but a metaphorical way of realising modality, i.e. it means simply *maybe*. The tag, repeating the mood element of what looked like the beta (dependent) clause, makes it clear that the subject of the whole clause is *you* not *I*. (v. Halliday 1985: Chapter 10).

Added to these grammatical features, one should also include as relevant to the interpersonal impact the lexical choice of *spare* as Predicator in the verbal group (implying that the speaker recognises that this is an imposition and that the addressee is a busy person), the politeness marker *please*, and the massively incongruent relationship between the mood (tagged and modalised declarative) and the speech function Command (i.e. demand goods and services. A congruently realised Command would use imperative mood. See Halliday 1985, Chapter 4).

These features are spread throughout the clause, several 'layers' thick (because the scope of modal choices is the whole clause not a single localised part of it), the reiteration of the fundamental interpersonal meaning of modality functioning like a prosody over the entire clause. (Part II below will explore this phenomenon in more detail, extending the discussion from clause to group and word rank). The amount of repetition or reiteration (indicative of the strength or amplitude of the prosody) may not be precisely predictable from one relevant context to another, but the actual linguistic choices implicated (the systems 'at risk') certainly are.

Now consider a third example, involving the expression of attitude (the use of 'expressive' or 'emotive' language):

3. //I+ *Jesus those /filthy /bastards /fucking /**thrashed** us//*

(Such a wording could have various phonological realisations. The intonation markings indicate one such possible realisation, with only one point of tonic prominence, on *thrash* -, a wide tone 1 (falling), and no specific indication of what might be going on in the pre-tonic (which could be low level - making a very marked contrast with the high fall on *thrash* -, or rising). One obvious alternative is for *Jesus* to constitute a single tone group, with the tonic on the first syllable *Je* - and the vowel considerably lengthened. See Halliday 1970 for details of the notation employed here).

Again there is a cluster of relevant realisations which function together to realise the strong attitude involved here:

- attitudinal lexis (*filthy* , *bastards* , *thrash* )
- swearwords (*fucking* as intensifier)
- thematised expletive (*Jesus* )
- exaggerated intonation contour
- other appropriate phonological features: intensity, rhythm, vowel lengthening (especially on *Jesus* ), possibly voice quality.

Again, the choices implicated (the systems 'at risk') are predictable: in the case of attitude, they will be primarily phonological and lexical, in contrast with modality, which is realised grammatically. These two examples are intended to provide an illustration of what is meant by referring to interpersonal structure as prosodic. Suggestive analogies come from the fields of music and painting: Halliday would seem to have had both in mind in referring to interpersonal meaning as 'strung throughout the clause as a continuous motif or colouring.' (Halliday 1979: 66). He goes on to say that 'the rationale behind this mode of realization' is that interpersonal meaning 'is the speaker's ongoing intrusion into the speech situation' and that 'The essence of the meaning potential of this part of the semantic system is that most of the options are associated with the act of meaning as a whole.' (p.67).

Alongside the objections to interpersonal features as lacking in structure, because they are not analysable in terms of constituency, are assessments of them as unpredictable and hence not properly linguistic, i.e. part of the linguistic system. Robin Lakoff points out that

Interpersonal behaviour is frequently regarded as unpredictable and spontaneous. We do not feel that we are following rules or even a preordained pattern in the way we talk to others, move, respond emotionally, work, think. (Lakoff 1979: 53)

Lakoff is one of an increasing number of linguists interested in interpersonal phenomena, but the way she deals with this area is to make an unnecessary distinction between the linguistic and the stylistic, thereby contributing to perpetuating a view of the interpersonal as ultimately non-linguistic because outside the system, i.e. non-rule governed. Lakoff certainly doesn't want to say that it is thereby uninteresting - on the contrary, she wants

to construct a predictive system of rules for style, to establish for style something analogous to what linguists construct for language in the form of a grammar.  
(Lakoff 1979: 54)

But making this kind of dichotomy between 'language' and 'style' certainly doesn't help to legitimise the study of the interpersonal as far as 'hard-core' cognitivist, *langue* -focused linguists are concerned. (See 2.1.2 below for a critique of approaches to the interpersonal in terms of style).

The kind of rules needed for such an enterprise as Lakoff's, however, are not categorical but, rather, probabilistic - it is this which leads to the assessment of unpredictability. For many linguists, however, only the categorical is linguistically interesting, the probabilistic being dismissed as 'merely statistical' (Labov 1972a: 71). There is not only a clear bias in such views towards (linguistic) system as against process, but a very different kind of conception of both the nature of the system itself and the relation between system and process from that of the systemic-functional model.

In this model, system itself is modeled paradigmatically, i.e. as sets of options arranged in networks of related and/or dependent options. Each set of options, or (sub)system, is represented with its own entry condition/s, and the individual terms or features of each system have an inherent weighting or probability.

. . . the linguistic system as a system of paradigmatic oppositions is a system of possibilities. Choosing a particular feature in a system means what it does because of the features that were not chosen but could have been chosen. This is the qualitative aspect of the system, the system of 'either/or' relations. But the system is not only a system of possibilities, it is also a system of probabilities . . . The choice of a particular feature also means what it does against the background of what are more likely and less likely choices. What is said is not only interpreted against a background of what could have been said but was not; it is also interpreted against the background of expectancies, against the background of what was more likely and what was less likely to be said. The grammar of a language is not only the grammar of what is possible but also the grammar of what is probable. (Nesbitt & Plum 1988: 8-9).

Instantiation in process/text of such a paradigmatically-conceived linguistic system is necessarily probabilistic, because it is context-dependent: this is as true for experiential structures as for interpersonal and textual structures. (See Nesbitt & Plum 1988: 10-11 for a summary account of the notion of probabilistic realisation

of context in language). Models of the system in essentially syntagmatic terms, i.e. as structures and rules about structures, and particularly context-independent models, give a greater significance to the categorical and necessarily see the probabilistic as indicating an inadequacy in the model itself.

At the same time as the presumed unpredictability of the interpersonal is one of the features seen as appropriately excluding it from consideration as properly linguistic, it is precisely this which ensures that the interpersonal (or, more accurately, the personal) is kept safe from the control of 'rules', which have been seen as denying autonomy and creativity. Lakoff (1979: 53) does not accept that the existence of implicit rules does in fact deny autonomy and creativity, but in so stating her position she makes clear that these are important values for her, as for many other linguists working in the American tradition. Part of the context for seeing it as necessary to assert the value of autonomy and creativity was presumably a reaction to the behaviourism which Chomsky criticised so trenchantly (Chomsky 1959), but part of it is also an uncritical acceptance of individualist ideology, a continuation of the Romantic individualism of the nineteenth century, and its particular early twentieth-century manifestation within linguistics, the neo-idealist emphasis on the personal referred to above.

The ideology of individualism in western society is strongly committed to notions of creativity, autonomy and free-will - notions which have not, it seems, been seen as antithetical to the attempt to see linguistic 'competence' as rule-governed but which for long largely precluded investigation of linguistic 'performance', particularly those aspects of it concerned with interpersonal meaning. But a cognitively-oriented notion of linguistic creativity, certainly when Chomsky was first dealing with this notion, seems to be little more than a combinatorial potential:

Although it was well understood that linguistic processes are in some sense 'creative,' the technical devices for expressing a system of recursive processes were simply not available until much more recently. In fact, a real understanding of how a language can (in Humboldt's words) 'make infinite use of finite means' has developed only within the last thirty years, in the course of studies in the foundations of mathematics. Now that these insights are readily available it is possible to return to the problems that were raised, but not solved, in traditional linguistic theory, and to attempt an explicit formulation of the 'creative' processes of language. There is, in short, no longer a technical barrier to the full-scale study of generative grammars. (Chomsky 1965: 8).

A combinatorial potential, moreover, which is merely a

means for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and for reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations (p.6).

i.e. which maintains a rigid separation between language as expression and something else ('thoughts' in this case) which it is expressing. Such a perspective on the content/expression relation is quite antithetical to the views of Hjelmslev (1961) and those working within the systemic-functional model, where content and expression are both aspects of language itself, not one 'inside' and the other 'outside' language. (See Reddy 1979 on the pervasiveness in everyday language of forms of expression embodying what Reddy calls the 'conduit metaphor' - language seen as 'carrying' something else).

Which is not to say that the combinatorial potential of language is not of the utmost significance, even for the very notion of 'the individual' that is seen as potentially threatened by any notion of 'rules' for social behaviour. People are, to a large extent, formed as individuals by what they do, including most significantly what they say, rather than simply 'being' who they are in some pure metaphysical sense. 'The individual' can be seen as an artifact of the particularity of the linguistic choices made by one person, choices both identifying and constituting them as a particular socio-historical entity. For those concerned about the apparent 'determinism' of such an account, with its apparent throwback to behaviourist ways of thinking about language, the individual so constructed is certainly unique: the combinatorial potential of the inherent probabilistic weightings of the system combined with the specificity of the linguistic demands made by the individual's personal history generates massive variability of forms and meanings. Our experience of ourselves as singular and unitary can then be seen as an artifact of the self-reflexive capacity of language. (See the quotation from Benveniste below).

## **1.2 Language, the individual and the social**

I now want to turn my attention to the systemic-functional notion of the interpersonal, incorporating as it does both the interactive and the personal, the social and the individual. There are two problematic, and interrelated, issues that need to be discussed. The first is the question of the relation between the individual and the social; the second is the question of the affective, the realm of feeling, emotion, passion, which seems irreducibly personal/individual at first glance (and having little to do with any self-respecting notion of linguistic system), but which



employs resources from the linguistic system, resources which are moreover structured in similar ways to the more overtly 'social', i.e. interactive, resources.

I certainly take very seriously Halliday's view that

... the whole question of the relationship between the individual and language has to be seen as embedded in the social structure. (Halliday 1974: 117)

The linguistic system itself is inherently social - it is jointly produced, a shared resource (there would not only be no possibility, but no point, in a single human producing a language in social isolation). So too is the process of instantiation in text a social phenomenon; for all forms of text, however innovative, are built on pre-existing types of text, which are socially learned not only as types of text but as meaningful forms of social action (Martin 1985).

The fundamental grammatical unit, the clause, is likewise a social act. Halliday makes the point that

an 'act' of speaking is something that might more appropriately be called an 'interact': it is an exchange ... (Halliday 1985: 68)

and the basis for that exchange is the structural organisation of the clause from an interpersonal perspective, by means of the system of mood.

... our traditional approach to grammar is not nearly as one-sidedly oriented towards the ideational function as sometimes seems to be assumed. For instance, the whole of the mood system in grammar, the distinction between indicative and imperative and, within indicative, between declarative and interrogative - this whole area of grammar has nothing whatever to do with the ideational component. It is not referential at all; it is purely interpersonal, concerned with the social-interactive function of language. It is the speaker taking on a certain role in the speech situation. This has been built into our interpretation of grammar, and I see no reason for departing from this and treating the social meaning of language as some kind of optional extra. (Halliday 1974: 97)

Mood options in the grammar make possible the organisation of the clause in ways that are conventionally understood to constitute propositions (information-oriented moves) or proposals (action-oriented moves), which are then open to negotiation.

One can only interact with others as an 'I' to the 'you' of other/s, however, and this has profound consequences. At the most literal level, 'I' signals the performer of a speech/conversation role (in fact, is constitutive of that performance), and is simultaneously 'this I', on this particular occasion, but also 'any speaker', from the viewpoint of the system rather than the text. At a more profound level, 'I' spoken as separate from 'you' seems a necessary condition for the development of the capacity of a speaker to posit himself as an individual, a self, a subject. Benveniste elaborates this in the following terms:

It is in and through language that man [sic] constitutes himself as a *subject*, because language alone establishes the concept of 'ego' in reality, in *its* reality which is that of the being.

The 'subjectivity' we are discussing here is the capacity of the speaker to posit himself as 'subject.' It is defined not by the feeling which everyone experiences of being himself (this feeling, to the degree that it can be taken note of, is only a reflection) but as the psychic unity that transcends the totality of the actual experiences it assembles and that makes the permanence of the consciousness. Now we hold that that 'subjectivity', whether it is placed in phenomenology or in psychology, is only the emergence in the being of a fundamental property of language. 'Ego' is he who *says* 'ego'. That is where we see the foundation of 'subjectivity', which is determined by the linguistic status of 'person.'

Consciousness of self is only possible if it is experienced by contrast. I use *I* only when I am speaking to someone who will be a *you* in my address. It is this condition of dialogue that is constitutive of person, for it implies that reciprocally *I* becomes *you* in the address of the one who in his turn designates himself as *I*. Here we see a principle whose consequences are to spread out in all directions. Language is possible only because each speaker sets himself up as a *subject* by referring to himself as *I* in his discourse. Because of this, *I* posits another person, the one who, being, as he is, completely exterior to 'me,' becomes my echo to whom I say *you* and who says *you* to me. This polarity of persons is the fundamental condition in language, of which the process of communication, in which we share, is only a mere pragmatic consequence. It is a polarity, moreover, very peculiar in itself, as it offers a type of opposition whose equivalent is encountered nowhere else outside of language. This polarity does not mean either equality or symmetry: 'ego' always has a position of transcendence with regard to *you*. Nevertheless, neither of the terms can be conceived of without the other; they are complementary, although according to an 'interior/exterior' opposition, and, at

the same time, they are reversible. If we seek a parallel to this, we will not find it. The condition of man in language is unique.

And so the old antinomies of 'I' and 'the other,' of the individual and society, fall. It is a duality which it is illegitimate and erroneous to reduce to a single primordial term, whether this unique term be the 'I,' which must be established in the individual's own consciousness in order to become accessible to that of the fellow human being, or whether it be, on the contrary, society, which as a totality would preexist the individual and from which the individual could only be disengaged gradually, in proportion to his acquisition of self-consciousness. It is in a dialectic reality that will incorporate the two terms and define them by mutual relationship that the linguistic basis of subjectivity is discovered. (Benveniste 1958/71: 224-5).

The 'I' who speaks is always an historically specific 'I', however; an 'I' who speaks with, at the very least, a gender, class, racial/ethnic and generational specificity . All these aspects of social identity are not simply given, but are socially constructed in a complex of (i) culturally learned forms of interaction, (ii) structures of knowledge formed by the habitual forms of representation available to and utilised by the individual speaker, and (iii) structures of feeling concerning those structures of knowledge and interaction. The 'I' who speaks has, furthermore, a unique personal history, again with consequences for structures of feeling, knowledge and interaction and the relationships between them.

The expressive/emotive dimension of language is simultaneously social, insofar as it is part of the system, language as resource, but individual insofar as it is not only spoken by individuals but also 'speaks' those individuals, i.e. it is part of the means by which the particularity of individuals as historically specific individual subjects is not only made manifest but also socially constructed. What is particularly important about these expressive/emotive features is that they constitute a key semiotic resource for both producing structures of feeling, experienced at the level of the individual, and also for attaching feelings to the socially-available forms of interaction and forms of representation. The attachment of feeling to representation is of particular importance for the circulation of ideologies, because it involves a virtual physical attachment of people to beliefs and values, thereby ensuring fierce commitment to those beliefs and values and resistance to attempts to 'take them away' by means of argument. The practice in contemporary polemical discourse of bolstering the legitimacy of arguments in support of one's own point of view by calling them 'rational' and delegitimising those of one's opponents by referring to them as 'emotional' doesn't help to clarify the complicated issues involved here.

### **1.3 The representational and the social**

Western culture has a long history of valuing 'reason' and the 'rational' to the detriment of the 'emotional', with those apprenticed to the various fields of legitimated knowledge being conventionally required to suppress any evidence of 'personal feeling' in the name of 'objectivity'. What are regarded as inappropriate displays of feeling or emotion have been rigorously excluded from the highly prestigious forms of expository and descriptive discourse, especially scientific and philosophical discourse, i.e. those forms of speech and writing which are concerned with ideas, theories, understanding the material and social world we inhabit. This attempted exclusion of the affective has meant in practice the exclusion of overtly attitudinal lexis and of both the first-person pronoun 'I' and instances and narratives deriving from the personal experience of that 'I' (the anecdotal), as distinct from the scientific persona of that 'I' (which in theory is indistinguishable from the scientific persona of any other 'I'). This is presumably why the first person plural *we* is permissible: the text-producer is always presumed to speak not on their own behalf but as a representative, 'objective' voice. Note the discrepancy, however, between the legitimising of the individual in conservative political discourse and the refusal to grant it legitimacy in scientific discourse - politics can be seen to be about 'interests' but the west clings to a notion of science as about 'truth' rather than 'interests'). Current work in semiotic, feminist and critical theory (e.g. Belsey 1980) has made abundantly plain that all producers of all texts are both themselves positioned (by their gender, class etc. affiliations, and by the very discourses they are articulating) and also attempt to position their listeners/readers as compliant, i.e. to regard that positioning as entirely uncontentious and unproblematic with respect to both the experiential content of the text and the implicit social relationship between producer and receiver of text.

The systematic exclusion of the first-person singular pronoun, attitudinal lexis and the anecdotal does anything but guarantee that 'scientific' texts are suitably 'objective', however, since these are only the most overt markers of 'feeling' and the 'personal'. Even the most innocuous-seeming representations need to be understood to be just that: representations, employing a wealth of grammatical resources to obscure that fact. This is the territory of what Whorf (1956) called 'cryptotypes' and Halliday (1985) calls 'grammatical metaphor'. The effect of such grammatical patterns is to de-problematise the representations involved, both in terms of the objective/subjective dichotomy (where 'I can organise this data into three categories' becomes 'There are three categories') and in terms of the disguising of ideology/evaluation (where 'I think this is the way things ought to be' becomes 'Our children's futures depend on the maintenance of the traditional

values of honesty, integrity and the freedom of the individual', to give a rather crude example).

What all this has refused to see (probably a historically necessary refusal, if western control over the external world - with its dubious benefits as well as its undoubted gains - was to be achieved as it has been) is that linguistic representations of the world are not the kind of value-free representations that many thought they were and ought to be, that representations to a significant degree are simply that: representations, constructions, indicative just as much of what people think the world should be like as of how it actually is.

The structural continuity of expressive/emotive features at various linguistic levels is a crucial issue in building towards an understanding of the individual/social nexus in all its ramifications. As long as the quintessential expressive/emotive features were seen as phonological (and both outside the purview of segmental approaches to phonology and, by definition, 'meaningless' - i.e. non-referential), it was possible to maintain the fiction that these were purely individually expressive (only really, of course, by not asking the question of how come these supposedly 'individual' manifestations were systematic within particular languages, or by blurring the boundary between involuntary 'noises', such as snorts, and more systematic features). It was even possible to be extraordinarily reluctant to admit that they existed at all as elements of the linguistic system, as in the case of phonaesthesia or sound-symbolism, that very theoretically inconvenient conjunction of phonological segments with the referential. (Jakobson 1978; Jakobson & Waugh 1979; Jespersen 1922/33; Sapir 1915/1951, 1929/51; Wescott 1971, 1980). Once one admits the essential continuity of the phonological with the morphological (or with an intermediate morphophonemic level), much less with the lexical, then the way is open to acknowledging the interconnection of the 'expressive' with the representational. It is lexis that is the real key, looking both ways: 'down' to the personal by means of attitudinal/evaluative items, 'up' to the social in terms of the representational which is simultaneously referential and ideological.

Phenomena like insult/abuse (Labov 1972b; Leach 1964; Mitchell-Kernan 1972; Murray 1979,1983; Winslow 1969) and slang (Wescott 1976, 1980) are well understood within linguistics to be social, not simply individual - even when 'social' is interpreted to mean 'anti-social', i.e. acting in the interests of a minority group rather than mainstream society. What does not appear to be as well understood is that such affectively-loaded linguistic phenomena simultaneously

function to code social attitudes and values and to attach individuals to the social order constituted by that set of attitudes and values. (The question of the relation of abuse/insult to social values and the social order is dealt with in Chapter 6).

I do not intend to make the question of the relation of language to feeling/the emotions/the passions a central focus of this thesis, but it is important to identify it as a significant issue demanding attention. One obvious future direction is to develop connections between linguistics and psychoanalytic theory that go beyond the kind of linguistic analysis of therapy sessions of Labov & Fanshel (1977), however locally revealing these may be, or which, from the psychoanalytical side, approach the linguistic from too general a perspective, eschewing any serious consideration of the nature and implications of empirical data (e.g. Kristeva 1980, 1984). The work of the group of people, predominantly based in Sydney, drawing on the systemic-functional model of language in work they call simply social semiotics (e.g. Kress 1985/90, forthcoming; Kress & Threadgold, forthcoming; Lemke 1988, forthcoming a, b; Poynton 1985/90; Poynton & van Leeuwen, in prep.; Thibault 1986; Threadgold 1986, 1988, forthcoming), has been notable for the multiple connections being made with work in semiotic, critical, feminist and social theory. Psychoanalytic theory needs to be added to this repertoire for any serious exploration of the interconnections between language, the individual and the social.

What this thesis does do is to explore precisely the structural continuity of expressive/emotive features at various linguistic levels identified above as a crucial issue in building towards an adequate understanding of the individual/social nexus. That is the task of Part II. I have not attempted to cover all linguistic levels, but have focused on group and word rank within the lexico-grammatical stratum. The choice of this focus was dictated by the original decision to work on address, as a significant social practice which deploys interpersonal resources of the linguistic system which have been inadequately described or in some cases completely ignored in the linguistic literature. This central grammatical section is preceded by a model for a semiotics of social relations, i.e. the set of options concerning social relations, conceived of as a semiotic system, which underlies and is realised in the deployment of the interpersonal resources of the language and which is simultaneously constituted by those linguistic choices. The final section consists of a preliminary exploration of the articulation of the interpersonal linguistic resources available for address with the semiotic options for the organisation of social relations in a late twentieth-century English-speaking society. I have called

this section 'ethnographic': I could very well have called it, as I did in a previous publication (Poynton 1985/90), 'the politics of address'.

## Two

### Interpreting the interpersonal

The autonomy of the verbal symbolic system appears to be restricted to the formal levels alone and it may be that an adequate semantic theory presupposes an adequate theory to account for the nature of contact between the formal linguistic and the extra-linguistic phenomena. The nature of this contact is not exhausted by such isolated notions as those of 'reference', 'representation' or 'naming'. The onomastic function is certainly basic to language; it is perhaps also necessary for other functions that language has. In view of our present state of knowledge, this particular type of relationship between language and non-language is perhaps also the easiest to handle. None the less, there is more to this rather neglected area of language study. Language is used to live, just as social structure is used to live. This introduces a complexity in the description of language and argues for a weakening of boundaries between various systems for communication. The exhaustive description of language is an ideal, which may perhaps never be achieved, but there will certainly be much *less* chance of its being achieved if language is separated from the living of life totally. The semantic structure of language is not absolutely unrelated to the total meaning structure available to a community. Hence, meanings in language cannot be described adequately by remaining enclosed within the formal symbolic system of language. (Hasan 1973: 287)

The interpersonal may have been marginalised within linguistics, but it has of course not been totally ignored. The first task of this chapter will be to discuss a number of key terms used in attempting to explicate interpersonal phenomena, and the adequacy of such approaches. Problems raised by the use of such terms as 'formal', 'polite', 'colloquial', 'slang', to refer, frequently ambiguously, to linguistic items and/or to the social/semiotic factors relevant to the choice of linguistic items (more unambiguously referred to by such terms as 'power', 'solidarity' and 'social distance'), will be used as the basis of an argument for the necessity of a stratified approach. Such an approach would distinguish features of the linguistic code itself



from higher level semiotic systems determining and being themselves constituted by linguistic choices.

The stratified model of systemic-functional linguistics will be used as the theoretical framework for this thesis. The version used is based on the work of M.A.K. Halliday as developed by the Register Working Group at the University of Sydney from the early 1980s, under the leadership of J.R. Martin.

A number of key terms have been used as descriptive and quasi-explanatory tools by those interested in the interpersonal aspects of non-representational language. These terms can be roughly grouped into two sets, depending on whether the focus is on language itself or on the social and/or psychological factors presumed to underlie and correlate with or determine the linguistic choices.

The first set of terms is concerned broadly with 'levels' or 'styles' of language and includes terms such as 'formal', 'vernacular', 'colloquial', 'slang', 'vulgarism', frequently though not exclusively characterising lexis. The second set focusses broadly on what is usually presented, within the linguistic literature, as 'outside' or extrinsic to language and correlating with or determining linguistic choices, and includes terms such as 'formality', 'politeness', 'power', 'solidarity', 'social distance'. The nature of these categories, and what is implied in their use about the nature of the relationship between the linguistic and the social, will be explored in this section.

## **2.1 Identifying interpersonal phenomena**

A range of linguistic phenomena have been seen as concerned with the negotiation of the social and/or the personal. Lexis, categorised in various ways, is perhaps most commonly referred to. There has been a long tradition in lexicography of categorising lexical items in terms of various kinds of social origin (e.g. *dialect* with respect to regional variation, *colloquialism* with respect to relaxed everyday speech, *slang* with respect to the social bonding of peer groups), categorisations which all too often blurred the boundaries between social origin and social acceptability. Though contemporary lexicographical practice largely eschews the use of the more value-laden terms, reflecting a change in orientation from prescription to description, both the terms and the attitudes attached to them live on in widespread general usage. The operation of covert as well as overt prestige norms, as well as the social functionality of 'officially' stigmatised forms of

language, operate however to ensure the lively continuity of at least some such forms (e.g. slang and urban dialect forms).

Slang and swearing are particular targets for such stigmatising, because they are seen as forms of resistance to legitimated authority: to parents, on the part of adolescents, and to the political and cultural control of the dominant classes, on the part of the working class. The issue is seen not simply as a matter of social unacceptability but as potential subversion, particularly when unacceptable linguistic behaviour (along with other 'anti-social' behaviour with respect to dress, sexuality, etc.) is exhibited publically by members of urban underclasses such as unemployed black or immigrant youth. One would expect linguists to have a greater understanding of the solidary, as well as the oppositional, function of slang in creating and maintaining social cohesion; and to the extent that the issue is dealt with explicitly in the linguistic literature, this is indeed so (e.g. Adelman 1976, on the solidary function of slang among adolescents).

Other lexical categories such as the technical and what I shall call the 'learned Latinate' on the one hand and the attitudinal on the other are also relevant to the social and/or personal, but raise somewhat different questions. Whereas it is commonly those who are in positions of authority or influence who object to slang and swearing in the language of those they see themselves as having authority over or responsibility for, it is precisely those not in such positions who are made uncomfortable by the technical and the 'learned Latinate', even if they do not overtly object to it. They see the use of such lexis as excluding them from knowledge and, in some cases, from the possibility of real participation in significant social institutions such as the law. And while one does not want in any way to reinforce ways of thinking about language that see it as merely a kind of clothing of thought, which is always capable of being expressed in other ways (what Reddy calls the 'conduit metaphor' view of language), it is important to understand the social effects of the exclusion of certain categories of people from access to certain kinds of language: not merely words, but 'ways of speaking' that incorporate both habitual grammatical and textual patternings: what have been variously called, from different theoretical perspectives, 'cryptotypes' (Whorf 1956), 'ways with words' (Heath 1983) or 'coding orientations' (Bernstein 1971, 1973, 1975).

In the case of the attitudinal we have another phenomenon which is used for political purposes by the powerful, as new apprentices to powerful public institutions and the codified knowledges associated with those institutions are

trained to habits of 'rational' linguistic practice (which excludes the overtly attitudinal, 'emotive language', as illegitimate), habits which include discrediting the arguments of oppositional voices by claiming them to be 'emotional' and 'irrational'. Such a tactic is typically used by dominant voices who see the hegemonic discourses they speak as obvious, self-evident, true - commonsense, in other words, while oppositional discourses are 'emotive', 'irrational' and 'ideological'. What such voices never acknowledge (and current popular views of language make it impossible for them to do so) is that all discourses include not only representations (the experiential component), which always necessarily code a point of view, but also take up an evaluative position towards those representations/that point of view, whether this is coded overtly (through lexis) or more covertly (through grammatical choices). (See Poynton, in press).

With respect to address forms, another special kind of lexical category, it has always been clear that choice of address form is inherently social. The constitutive function of choice of address form in the negotiation of social relations, in conjunction with other appropriate linguistic forms, is less clearly understood, however, than is the case for slang. Using a specific address form, like using slang rather than vernacular, may not simply reflect pre-existing social relations between speaker and addressee but may be a significant move (within a complex configuration of interpersonal phenomena) towards re-affirming or re-constituting those relations in particular terms; or may, in fact, be constructing or constituting them anew. Such a constitutive role for language involves a rather different kind of relationship between the linguistic and the social than seeing them as separate, albeit correlatable, categories.

Other linguistic phenomena seen as relevant and dealt with in varying degrees of detail in the linguistic literature include: indirect speech acts (speech function choices and their variant grammatical forms); modality/hedges (where the interactive meaning can be understood as deference and the personal meaning as hesitation, diffidence or politeness); politeness markers; morphological and morphophonemic diminutive and augmentative forms; phonetic variants (sociolinguistic variables) and other phonological features (e.g. elision/assimilation in allegro speech); and intonation. Beyond language, laughter (seen as an indicator of style-shift by Labov), kinesics and proxemics are also relevant and interact in complex and interesting ways with linguistic phenomena. This thesis will not attempt to deal with non-linguistic phenomena, but a comprehensive account of the operation of language in the negotiation of social relations will need to take them into account. (See McInnes 1988 for innovative work on the interaction of

linguistic and kinesic/proxemic codes in dramatic rehearsal and performance). There is also that range of phenomena, especially phonological and morphophonemic features, dealt with under the heading of 'emotive' language (e.g. Stankiewicz 1964, Werner 1955). These will be treated in 2.1.7 below.

One of the most comprehensive inventories of linguistic phenomena relevant to the social is that of Brown & Levinson (1978), who discuss what they refer to as 'politeness strategies', a total of 40 in all, a number of them covering a range of linguistic realisations. The phenomena they refer to include joking, gossiping, the use of 'in-group identity markers' (such as jargon, slang, contraction and ellipsis), indirect speech acts, hedges (including prosodic and kinesic), replacement by indefinites or pluralisation of 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns. Such an inventory ranges widely, from genre to phonology, and furthermore takes account of the kinds of information included or excluded from the utterance, i.e. the representational aspect of the clause. It does not, however, shed a great deal of light on the motivation for these and only these particular aspects of language being implicated except implicitly, in a highly tautological way: 'they're implicated because this is the role they play'.

Brown & Levinson's citing of parallel data from several unrelated language families is used as evidence for a basically cognitivist explanation, i.e. one extrinsic to language. While there is undoubtedly room for extrinsic motivation in any kind of explanation of such phenomena, it is much more dubious whether such motivation should be seen in purely cognitive terms. (See 2.5 below for a more detailed critique of Brown & Levinson). The systemic-functional model, with its functional approach to language form, is concerned with both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, the intrinsic motivation deriving from the internal organisation of language itself, in ways which shed considerably more light on the relationship between the linguistic and the social. Halliday's functional analysis of language in terms of 'metafunctions' ('principles of organization and modularity internal to the semantic and grammatical systems' of language' (Matthiessen 1989: 15)) simultaneously links linguistic forms and meanings in a theoretically motivated way, and at the same time the metafunctions 'also explain how the semantic relates upwards, to context' (ibid), i.e. connect with a relevant extrinsic motivation.

Such an approach to language pays explicit attention to the paradigmatic (i.e. what can potentially be said in relation to what is actually said), as well as to the syntagmatic, as well as going beyond the clause to consider the text as the basic semantic unit. These two issues, of the paradigmatic and of text, are closely

related: it is only through the actualisation of the potential of the linguistic system through process, or text, that the system can be said to exist (though paradoxically only to be subject to the constant possibility of change as the value of terms within sub-systems of the whole are renegotiated in and through text). The whole question of what might have been said in relation to what was said would seem crucial to any investigation of style (whether literary or sociolinguistic): a largely syntagmatic approach to language, resulting simply in lists or inventories, would not seem to be particularly revealing, especially in relation to text. And it is text as actualised potential, particularly though not exclusively interactive text, that is the central site for the negotiation of social relations. This is not to deny the role of phonological, lexical, grammatical and conversational/discourse features but rather to focus attention on the overall configurations of features characterising a text.

## **2.2 The interpersonal as style**

The notion of style, which across various of its uses subsumes such terms as 'formal/informal', 'polite', 'colloquial', 'casual', 'intimate', would seem to be the most widely used general term with reference to interpersonal phenomena. The first difficulty with this term is that it is by no means used in comparable ways. Joos (1959, 1962), and others writing for a general or undergraduate audience (e.g. Brook 1979, Ann Zwicky 1981) use it in a fairly impressionistic way to distinguish between levels of formality. (Joos' categories of style were labelled 'frozen', 'formal', 'consultative', 'casual', and 'intimate'). Other proposals for what are effectively scales of formality (albeit sometimes referred to as 'styles') come from British, especially neo-Firthian, linguists. Catford (1965) distinguishes between 'formal'/'colloquial'/'intimate' and also a cline with 'formal' & 'informal' as the endpoints; and, using the notion of register, Halliday, McIntosh & Stevens (1964) distinguish between 'colloquial' and 'formal' and also between 'casual', 'intimate' and 'deferential' styles of discourse. More recently, in the same neo-Firthian tradition but from Canada, Gregory & Carroll (1978) speak of two scales for the register category 'tenor' (formerly Halliday et al.'s 'style'): one a cline with extreme values 'extreme degrees of formality' and 'extreme degrees of informality' and the other contrasting 'familiarity' with 'formality'. Crystal notes that a 'conception of 'style' in terms of 'vertical' formality level is found in many [sociolinguistic] studies' (Crystal 1980: 337) and the use of the term 'level' in a similar sense to 'style' within stylistics and sociolinguistics (Crystal 1980: 208).

Rather less germane is Labov's (1972a) use of 'contextual styles' to refer to patterns of distribution of phonological variables correlating with the manipulation of situational factors producing varying degrees of attention to speech. Labov's original five categories ('casual', 'formal', 'reading-passage', 'word-list', 'minimal pair') can be extended so as to take account of the differing degrees of attention demanded by written compared with spoken language (v. Johnston 1985). And it is certainly possible to offer a richer analysis of the nature of the situational variables Labov and others following him (e.g. Trudgill (1974) on British English) were manipulating. (See Plum 1988). Since the focus of this kind of sociolinguistic investigation has been on the correlation of linguistic features with questions of social class (e.g. the department store survey) and social identity (e.g. the Martha's Vineyard study), rather than on the negotiation of social relations, there seems little point in further exploring this approach here.

Crystal & Davy (1969) make the broadest use of the term 'style' to refer to situationally-distinctive varieties of language. In their model, the term is basically equivalent to the systemic-functional 'register' (though they reject the equivalence). Within this more global notion of 'style', the subcategory concerning 'the social relationship existing between the user and his [sic] interlocutors' (p.82) is called 'status'. Status deals with

'the systematic linguistic variations which correspond with variations in the relative social standing of the participants in any act of communication, regardless of their exact locality. ... The semantic field which may be subsumed under the label 'status' is of course complex: it involves a whole range of factors related to contacts between people from different positions on a social scale - factors intuitively associated with such notions as formality, informality, respect, politeness, deference, intimacy, kinship relations, business relations, and hierarchic relations in general. A number of areas may be clearly distinguished within the dimension of status in any language, various kinds of formal and informal language being perhaps the most noticeable (though one must be careful to distinguish between formality in a stylistic sense, and the grammatical category of formality which occurs in, say, Japanese, where social status is reflected paradigmatically through many of the forms of the language). (Crystal & Davy 1969: 74)

They go on to criticise Joos' postulation of five degrees of formality as 'premature':

Exactly how many categories of status there are awaits elucidation. Joos has postulated five degrees of formality in this connection (namely 'frozen', 'formal', 'consultative', 'casual', and 'intimate'), but we feel this to be premature. It is likely that a scale of formality exists, but the number of linguistic terms along the scale, and the nature of the polarities, are still matters for speculation. Utterances may be found which seem to fit neatly into the above five slots; but these are far outnumbered by utterances which do not. (ibid.).

Apart from the imprecision of the term 'style' itself (the major reason for Gregory's 1967 proposal to substitute the term 'tenor' in the systemic-functional model), a major problem with those approaches concerned with a scale of formality is that they tend to treat styles as relatively discrete 'blocks' of language where the relevant linguistic features are not described (or predicted) in sufficient breadth or detail and only one relevant dimension (social distance) of that aspect of the situation concerned with the relationship between interactants is taken into account. (Formality as social distance will be dealt with in the next section).

What this produces is a somewhat monolithic notion of 'stylistic' variation, where the totality of the features present distinguishes one 'style' from another in relation to its appropriate use in different situations. The problems with this kind of approach are (i) the configuration of variables is seen as a totality, i.e. as dependent (lock-step) rather than as (relatively) independent, and in terms of discrete sets of options rather than as continua or clines; (ii) hence one is locked into a correlation or correspondence notion of the relationship between style and situation or context - by no means the only possible formulation; and (iii) styles tend to be seen as uni-dimensional, when they are in fact multi-dimensional: just as more than one category operates simultaneously to produce a 'style' (in the broader sense) or 'register', so more than one category is needed to characterise a 'style' (in the narrower sense) or tenor.

There is also considerable variation in the kinds and range of linguistic phenomena attended to in distinguishing styles. Much of the less technical literature, aimed at a student or more general audience (e.g. Brook 1979) focusses largely or even exclusively on lexis. Ann Zwicky (1981) has a somewhat broader scope than usual for this kind of material, dealing with phonological and grammatical as well as lexical features, and also recognising that 'stylistic levels' are not in fact discrete. At the opposite extreme, Crystal & Davy propose a comprehensive inventory of

possible distinguishing features of styles that covers every kind of linguistic phenomenon at every linguistic level but fails to suggest any principle of selection of features relevant to different kinds of meanings, such as the systemic notion of metafunction. Without such an organising principle, one is effectively thrown on one's own interpretive resources and certainly no kind of prediction of features in relation to particular styles or registers is possible. Using the systemic notion of metafunction, major types of relevant linguistic features related to each major dimension of register are predictable, and this approach has the added strength of the notion of metafunction looking two ways: in to language and out towards context or situation. Before developing an account of this model, however, more ground needs to be cleared concerning the kinds of meaning interpersonal phenomena are negotiating. The next section will continue this investigation by taking a closer look at the notion of formality.

### 2.3 The interpersonal as formality

There is a long history in linguistics of the terms formal/formality being used as if they were quite transparent. The relevant entry in Crystal (1980) is illustrative:

... **formal** is opposed to such terms as **informal**, 'intimate', 'familiar', etc., as part of a system of 'formality' of expression, referring to a level of language considered APPROPRIATE to socially formal situations. (Crystal 1980: 150)

This tells us effectively nothing about either 'formal' language itself, nor about the 'formal' situations in which it is supposed to be appropriate. Turning to the literature outside mainstream linguistics is somewhat more informative. Irvine (1979) and Atkinson (1982) shed considerable light on both, Irvine however being quite explicit in doubting the usefulness of the term as an analytic tool.

Irvine sees formality as representing 'not just one, but several dimensions along which social occasions can vary' (p.784). She proposes a finer set of distinctions for what she refers to as the discourse and the situational aspects of formality discernible in the literature, identifying four aspects of formality: increased code structuring, code consistency (both within and across semiotic codes), the invoking of positional identities (public rather than private personas) and the emergence of a central situational focus (also referred to as 'centralisation').



As far as her code or discourse-related aspects of formality are concerned, the fundamental issues would seem to be predictability and consistency. She sees formality as leaving various amounts of room for 'creativity' but not for 'play' - formal situations may not necessarily be entirely formulaic and ritualised but they must be serious. (Irvine's category of increased code structuring has to be understood in the context of a particular model of linguistic structure: from the perspective of a systemic-functional grammar of choices, i.e. a paradigmatically-organised account of language as a potential, the issue is one of 'different choices', rather than 'more rules' to get from underlying to surface structure). Irvine refers to a wide range of linguistic phenomena, at all levels, that are potentially involved, but there is no implication of any theoretical motivation for just those features being implicated., i.e. there is nothing paralleling the systemic notion of metafunction.

Turning to the situational aspects of formality, the fundamental issues would seem to be the public nature of formal situations and the constraints on the behaviour of participants in such public situations, affecting not only the choices that must be made by central 'performers' but those that ought not to be made by more peripheral participants: where the former are expected to behave in relatively predictable ways, the latter may be expected to suspend usual social behaviours, e.g. not to engage in side-sequences.

Coming from a different direction again (ethnomethodology rather than anthropological linguistics), Atkinson (1982) sheds further light both on the nature of formal situations and, in the process, on possible characteristics of formal (and by implication, informal) language. His starting point is with people's assessments of public multi-party situations, such as small claims tribunals, as relatively informal (compared with the formality of more conventional courtroom procedure). His general conclusion is that the assessment of formality is directly related to the extent of the departure of interaction from everyday conversational interaction. He extends his conclusions to 'encounters which take place in institutional settings and/or between professional and lay persons, such as doctor and patient, lawyer and client, policeman and suspect, teacher and pupil, interviewer and interviewee, seller and buyer, etc.' (Atkinson 1982: 110). Atkinson's focus is on the management of conversational interaction, rather than on other kinds of linguistic features characterising 'formal' language. This is a valuable corrective, however, to linguistic treatments of this issue that all too often have not got beyond the level of lexis.

What the focus on interaction enables us to attend to is the question of the range and the kinds of options available to active participants (remembering that those not engaged in the central action may have no speaking rights at all). In terms of range, formal situations restrict the linguistic options available. Certain kinds of conversational moves are severely constrained or not available at all; and the more 'formal' the situation, the greater the constraints on the form of interaction - compare the conduct of courtroom cross-examination with media political interviews and then with chat between friends. Topic choice in 'formal' situations is substantially restricted and hence so are the semantic fields of lexical choice. Lexical choice is further constrained in terms of dialect and/or sociolect, technicality, and attitude or emotive flavour. The general expectation is of standardised 'public' and emotively 'neutral' vocabulary, with experts permitted (and mostly expecting) to demonstrate their expertise through the use of appropriate vocabulary (usually characterised in terms of 'foreign', especially Graeco-Latin, origin and available largely to restricted groups through specialist training).

At the opposite extreme from the constraints of talk in 'formal' situations is the openness and flexibility of everyday conversational interaction between people who know one another well. Though the comparative freedom from constraint of such interaction operates at all linguistic levels, it is the lexical category of slang which epitomises the contrast with the constraint of talk in 'formal' situations. Slang is characterised by its transience (rather than being standardised), by its attitudinal loading and by its morphophonemic characteristics (v. Wescott 1980) which partly derive from etymology and partly from being spoken forms. Slang is also characterised by its tendency to proliferate synonymous forms (in extreme contexts, giving rise to anti-languages (Halliday 1976b)). Such lexical proliferation does not lend itself to taxonomic arrays such as are deemed appropriate for the technical lexis of specialised fields of knowledge in institutional settings. Slang is not at all concerned with the constitution of knowledge, nor with 'public' institutional practice, but rather with private interactive practice where the affective is of more significance than the cognitive and where the desired 'institutional' outcome is the ongoing marking of a boundary between those who are 'inside' and those who are 'outside', not the achievement of a resolution to some problem.

The issues of attitudinal loading and capability of taxonomic organisation with respect to lexis should alert us that lexis characterised as 'formal' is concerned not only with speakers' relations with one another but also with their relations with

objects, processes, knowledges - with the whole of what is going on, in the sense of what is being enacted, in the situation (in systemic-functional terms, with the register variable field). One could say that in 'formal' situations, social distance (which is what is at stake in personal terms) is a function of two other kinds of distance: the distance of participants from actual experience, along a cline of action-to-reflection, and the interactive distance between participants in terms of possibilities for feedback, on a cline of monologue-to-dialogue in the first instance. An investigation of the notion of 'formality', then, reveals it to be of considerable situational complexity.

Finally, a further common characteristic of 'formal' situations, the lack of symmetry or reciprocity in the choices available to participants, should be mentioned. 'Doctor and patient, lawyer and client, policeman and suspect, teacher and pupil, interviewer and interviewee, seller and buyer' do not have the same degree of control of the situation and this is manifested in the lack of parallelism in conversational moves available and in patterns of lexical choice, as well as in possible disparities in pronunciation and other phonological features (including fluency). Not only expertise, but class, gender and other bases for inequality in a society are clearly involved but this is another whole dimension of that dimension of situations concerned with social relations - that of power - and will be treated in more detail in 2.6 below and particularly in Chapter 3.

#### **2.4 The interpersonal and social distance**

Social distance is widely recognised as a central dimension of social relations in everyday discourse, with its common metaphorical characterisation of social relations as a space with horizontal (and vertical) dimensions. The horizontal dimension is seen as concerned with social distance (*get close to* , *keep one's distance* , *keep at arm's-length* , *be stand-offish* , *be approachable* , *encroach* ) and the vertical with power relations (*look down on/up to* , etc.).

Irvine suggests that social distance is often used to deal with that aspect of formality concerned with invoking positional identity (Irvine 1979: 778), a notion akin to sociological 'role'. The notion of social distance certainly demands some scrutiny, but it is by no means clear that positional identity or role *per se* is the central issue. The formulaic and/or ritualised nature of much 'formal' interaction, contrasting markedly with what is seen as the spontaneity and comparative unpredictability of casual conversation (Halliday & Plum 1985, Plum 1986), indeed

suggests that speakers are functioning as performers of roles in such situations (as 'personae' rather than as 'persons'), in contrast with 'being themselves' in more casual interaction. What such a contrast fails to take account of is that forms of conversation learned at an early age become so naturalised that one can forget that they once had to be learned, just as new forms of spoken and written language have to be learned as one moves from the known and comfortable world of home and school to the less familiar and therefore more threatening public world. Because casual conversation is learned earlier, and therefore not only is more familiar but speakers are more affectively engaged with it, and in pleasurable ways, it can also be regarded as 'pure' or 'natural'. Such a view is, however, romantic delusion, hankering after an idealised social world as far distant from modern industrialised capitalism as it is possible to be, but hardly prepared to pay the costs of either material deprivation (the 'cost' paid by traditional Aboriginal society) or of significant lack of control over one's own life (the usual 'cost' of the security and closeness of being a child).

Casual conversation can be so relatively unconstrained because it is in a sense 'outside' regular social interaction - a kind of suspension of usual business (Halliday & Plum 1985). The point or goal of casual conversation is concerned with interaction itself rather than with any kind of 'successful' outcome distinguishable from the performance of the genre itself, as in say a service encounter. In other genres, people are either going to be judging you as successful or not, or something happens or is brought about by your successful performance; in casual conversation the performance itself is the point. In other words, the focus is interpersonal rather than experiential and hence the structure (generic or schematic structure, not grammatical structure) is not going to be constituency-based but considerably more prosodic. Such structure is not primary (nor secondary, for that matter) but simply different.

Quite apart from these linguistic considerations, notions such as 'being oneself' or 'real self' are becoming more problematic in the light of recent work on the notion of subjectivity, which sees it as multiple, produced by participation in the multiple discourses speakers produce as social beings.

A further relevant consideration is that the notion of role itself has been coming under increasing scrutiny within social theory (v. Pfohl 1975, Connell 1979, Edwards 1983), particularly under pressure from feminist work criticising sex role theory and from work on the intersection of subjectivity and discourse. (See 3.1.3 below). From these points of view, 'roles' cannot preexist the discourses in which

speakers participate as social beings nor are they outside actual power relations. The situation with the use of role is analogous to the uses of the term class in the sociolinguistic literature, too often unproblematically identified with socio-economic status (see Guy 1988 for a useful account of the issues). In both cases, linguists' use of these terms bears a rather closer relationship to everyday than to specialist usage within social theory.

The notion of social distance does seem to be central to the question of formality, and ultimately of style in the sense of tenor, but an elaborated account is what is needed. The model presented in Chapter 3 moves in this direction, by proposing a dimension of social relations called distance which takes into account four kinds of factor: the frequency and extent of contact between interactants, whether the role relationship involved is uni- or multi-dimensional (Bott's uniplex/multiplex (Bott 1971)) and whether the situation is task-oriented or person-oriented. This dimension has not been identified on purely *a priori* grounds, however, but on the basis of patterns of linguistic choices made by speakers. The crucial issue as far as this dimension of social relations is concerned is the range and predictability of choices available to speakers - the phenomenon called proliferation below.

## **2.5 The interpersonal as politeness**

Politeness is another term consistently used to refer both to certain kinds of interpersonal linguistic phenomena as well as to the nature of the social relations obtaining between interactants. Brown & Levinson (1979) give by far the most comprehensive account, both theoretically and descriptively. Their work has been widely read and extensively used as a model. The work incorporates an account of a wide range of linguistic phenomena concerned with politeness (across languages in three unrelated families), organised in a single explanatory framework which is fundamentally psychological and individualistic in orientation. Within this framework, individuality is taken as a given, and the needs of individuals have to be negotiated in relation to the needs of others. There is no sense of the individual person, or social subject, as a product of engagement in social interaction.

Central to Brown & Levinson's approach to social relations is the question of face, which they define as

the public self-image that every [competent adult] member [of a society] wants to claim for himself [sic], consisting in two related aspects:

(a) negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights to non-distraction - i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition

(b) positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (Brown & Levinson 1979: 66)

They acknowledge other schema for modelling social relations, in particular the relevance of power and social distance, but see these as functions of the more basic need to preserve face, both positive and negative. There is a fundamental problem with this approach, however. Brown & Levinson simply assume the unproblematic prior existence of both the individual and of his [sic: the individual in this model is indisputably male] wants and needs. There is now a considerable body of theory arguing that it is the social which is prior, and that not only are both 'individuals' and their wants and needs socially constructed but that the very notion of a unitary individual or self, with a single set of wants, needs and desires, needs to be discarded.

What is taking the place of the 'individual' of classic liberalism in new theoretical work is a more complex notion of persons being constituted in terms of multiple and shifting 'subjectivity' (i.e. capacity for acting as social subjects - both subjects of and subject to). Subjectivity is not in any sense to be taken as a given, but is seen as created in and through the active participation of persons in specific discourses operative in the societies of which they are members. 'Discourse' from this perspective has a far wider reference than merely conversational interaction or stretches of language considered as text. It can be most closely linked with ideology, considered not as some idea or set of closely related ideas but rather as a set of material practices, things people actually do (including say), which literally embody a way of viewing the world and which therefore work towards making the world the embodiment of that point of view. (On discourse in this sense see Foucault (1970, 1972), also Kress (1985/90) for an account that pays closer attention to linguistic processes in discourse. On the construction of subjectivity

see Althusser 1971, Belsey 1985, Henriques et al. 1984, Weedon 1987 and Lemke 1988, for an account looking from the perspective of systemic theory).

The question of the form of interaction in relation to its effects, then, is central. It is notable that traditional linguistic approaches to language use in terms of politeness and formality are inadequate in precisely this respect: both approaches tend to focus too much on the language of the individual speaker and fail to pay sufficient attention to the interactiveness of much of the language speakers actually engage with on a day-to-day basis. Characterising the speech of individual speakers on the basis of level of formality or of politeness is clearly possible, but does not begin to come to terms with the interactiveness itself, much less what is being enacted by means of that interaction. Politeness is preferably seen not as in any sense primary but as in fact a gloss, a conveniently ideologised way of referring to practices which have far more to do with maintaining traditional power relations in a society - and, as a consequence, indeed with constituting persons as particular kinds of persons, i.e. superiors/subordinates or equals - than with simply allowing people space to be their liberal individual creative selves.

## **2.6 The interpersonal and power/solidarity**

Another significant approach to language and social relations uses the notions of power and solidarity as its organising constructs. The sociolinguistic work using this approach originates in the work of Roger Brown and his colleagues on address and social or interpersonal relations (see Brown 1965: Chapter 2 (The Basic Dimensions of Interpersonal Relationship), Gilman & Brown 1958, Brown & Gilman 1960, Brown & Ford 1964). The significance of Brown et al.'s work was to demonstrate in the most elegant way the interrelationship of social and linguistic factors with respect to one tiny aspect of the linguistic system: the availability of alternate pronoun forms for direct address in most European (as in many other of the world's) languages. An additional strength of the classic Brown & Gilman (1960) paper, 'The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity', was its concern with historical as well as contemporary usage: diachrony has not been a major focus of post-Saussurean linguistics.

It needs to be remembered that the aspect of the linguistic system investigated is directly relevant to the kind of model that will adequately account for one's findings. What Brown & Gilman concentrated on was two-valued systems of second-person pronouns, where there is a very simple pattern of alternative usage:

reciprocal or not reciprocal, with alternative forms being available where usage is reciprocal. This produces a set of three possibilities: T/V, T/T, V/V (where T = the so-called 'intimate' form, usually 2nd person singular, and V = the so-called 'polite' form, commonly but by no means exclusively 2nd person plural). What Brown & Gilman claimed was that non-reciprocal usage has declined and reciprocal usage increased, in relation to a shift in European society away from what they called a 'power semantic', i.e. a basically hierarchically-organised mode of social relations, towards a 'solidarity semantic', i.e. a mode of social relations posited on equality, oriented less to the question of whether one is superior/equal/subordinate and more to how close/distant one is in relation to one's addressee. (It is worth noting that the terms used to refer to this distinction are oriented respectively to inequality (in the case of 'power') and closeness (in the case of 'solidarity'), revealing something perhaps of the ideological predispositions of the authors as well as the political and social changes they are discussing).

The question of whether a linguistic item can be used symmetrically, or reciprocally, by interactants is indeed of critical importance for social relations. In Chapter 3, this issue will be dealt with as the principle of reciprocity, operationalising the dimension of social relations concerned with power. This dimension is concerned not only with inequality but also with equality, i.e. with all three possible 'positions' that can be taken up by one speaker with respect to another along the 'vertical' axis of social space: superior, equal, subordinate. Some of the territory of Brown & Gilman's solidarity dimension has thus been preempted, but there still remains the whole of the 'horizontal' axis: what has frequently been referred to as 'social distance' but will be referred to below simply as distance. Brown & Ford (1964), in a study of address that goes beyond pronominal forms, identified the fundamental principle of linguistic organisation related to this 'horizontal' axis when they pointed out that the number of available address terms increases the 'closer' people are to each other. This phenomenon could easily be seen as the principle of linguistic organisation parallel to reciprocity in relation to power, i.e. as the phenomenon of proliferation referred to in the discussion above of 'formality' and social distance. From one point of view, this is undoubtedly true: the number of choices or options for address does increase in direct proportion to decreases in social distance, i.e. increases in intimacy. However, if one takes into account the form of the items used, then a second meaning can be discerned. Address forms used between intimates tend to have an iterated or cumulative structure, and to co-occur with a variety of features traditionally characterised as expressive. Thus, not only might one address a loved one as *Mikeypooodles* or *Franglekins* (examples from messages for St Valentine's



Day in newspaper personal columns cited by Mühhäusler 1983) but the surrounding (spoken) discourse is likely to be multiply marked, especially phonologically, in ways conventionally regarded as affectionate towards the addressee. The principle of proliferation, relating to the horizontal dimension of social relations, is to be distinguished then from a third principle of linguistic organisation which will be called amplification. This principle is related to a third dimension of social relations that will be referred to as affect. The issue of the affective or expressive will be taken up next.

## **2.7 The interpersonal as the expressive**

In defining the term 'expressive use of language' as simply 'the manipulation of verbal material to convey information about one's emotional state' (1970: 153), Samarin shares a widely held view. Such an unproblematic equation of the expressive in language with personal emotion cannot go unquestioned, however. When the relevant forms are phonological (involving, for example, marked choices of pitch variation, speech rate, lengthening and voice quality features) or morphological (such as diminutive and augmentative affixation), then the 'personal emotion' interpretation seems plausible - marginally less so in the case of diminutive forms, perhaps. It is less clear that 'personal emotion' is the only consideration in dealing with cultural phenomena such as address practices, including 'expressive' nicknames, insults and endearments (Hopper et al. 1981, Murray 1979, 1983, Winslow 1969, Morgan et al. 1979), ritual verbal contests, e.g. rapping or the dozens (Labov 1972b, Mitchell-Kernan 1972), joking relationships (Douglas 1975b), the widespread use of slang, and literature (Langer 1955, Waugh 1988). (See also Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (1976) comprehensive bibliographic survey of speech play). Emotion or affective engagement is certainly involved in such practices, but the extent of the conventionalisation or ritualisation of the forms utilised for its realisation make it somewhat problematic to see such emotion as purely personal.

When one considers further aspects of the meaning of an expressive utterance, the problems multiply. Phonological features are matters of linguistic substance, rather than linguistic form. They have to be considered in conjunction with the 'formal' meanings that they both realise and elaborate. One can't just identify the phonology or morphology as 'expressive' and cut this kind of meaning off from the other kinds that are being simultaneously realised, particularly from referential or representational meaning. If, for example, one looks at the kinds of meanings that

are typically the focus of insult, then it becomes clear that there is a considerable social investment involved: insults are used to maintain social boundaries, directed at ensuring either that outsiders remain outsiders or that those who are and wish to remain insiders conform to normative expectations. (See Chapter 6 below). There are also practices which test social boundaries, and in testing them, sustain them: joking relationships in many societies have just this function. The use of otherwise offensive words (such as *bastard*, *mongrel*, *cunt*) as forms of address among Australian males to signal camaraderie rather than hostility can be seen as yet another cultural form of such a joking relationship.

Where some confusion arises is that this boundary marking or social enforcement work is done by individuals who frequently exhibit considerable originality in their verbal behaviour as well as considerable affective involvement. The affective involvement is readily comprehensible. Group members usually make a considerable emotional investment in being members of that particular group, and not another (or none), whatever the basis of commonality of the group (gender, age, neighbourhood, school, race or ethnicity, religion, occupation, workplace, hobby, sport etc.). The linguistic originality, particularly if this is exhibited in culturally highly-valued forms such as literature, needs to be seen not just in terms of an unproblematic notion of individual creativity but as speakers taking on the role of agents with respect to both the referential meanings being negotiated as well as to the social value of those meanings. Steedman (1982) makes this point elegantly in her interpretation of what three little working class girls writing a story called 'The Tidy House' were actually doing: she sees them as acting as 'agents of their own socialisation' as they actively recreate, make anew, the gender and class meanings that they were engaging with. In so doing, they made these meanings their own, ones which they both controlled (because they 'made' them) and were committed both to and by. The emotional investment involved in taking on such meanings can be seen as the anchoring of the psyche in the social: at one and the same time constituting the person both as 'individual', i.e. unique, and as social being. The notion of subjectivity referred to above is highly relevant here.

The irony of such a personalised commitment is that in making ideological meanings anew people make them differently, however small the differences are, and hence possibilities for change (of both the language itself and of the ideologies being realised) are opened up. Such change is slow, however, and one of the factors ensuring its slowness is the phenomenon of amplification as the organisational or realisational principle of 'expressive' forms. Where the principles of reciprocity and proliferation apply to meanings, amplification applies to forms -

new forms which either displace the old or increase the range of alternatives available for the same meanings. Where new forms displace the old, e.g. the constant substitution of new slang terms for old, the newness of the form is part of what keeps the emotional investment in the old meanings high: these are forms that I/ we/our group has made. Where new forms increase the range of alternatives available, as in the proliferation of lexis with respect to ideologically sensitive aspects of the culture, e.g. gender, the opportunity to choose which is available to the individual speaker maintains the illusion of newness and difference and hence the possibility of personalised commitment. Such alternative forms can either be chosen among or iterated in order to augment the affective investment, e.g. alternative lexical items marking positive and negative attitude (*a rotten* or *lousy* or *awful party* compared with *a rotten lousy awful party*).

As well as this kind of link between the expressive and the more overtly social, there are also interesting dependencies between the affective on the one hand and power and social distance on the other. This issue will not be explored here, but taken up in some detail in Chapter 3 below. It provides further evidence for treating the expressive as one aspect of interpersonal meaning rather than as something quite separate (as Fawcett 1980, Butler 1988 propose, within a systemic framework).

One final issue needs to be addressed here, and that is the assertion that expressive meaning is uncontrolled or random, i.e. cannot be seen as part of the linguistic system. Stankiewicz (1964), as referred to in the preceding chapter, deals admirably with this question, distinguishing between those signals which are involuntary but may be considered to 'express' some internal state (e.g. yawns) and those which can be considered linguistic and therefore systematic. (It is probably also the case that a residual 'linguo-centrism' does not always take into account that bodily modalities of semiosis other than speech are also systematic). The question of speaker intention, raised in the quotation from Samarin cited above, is quite beside the point. Using the Saussurean dualism, expressive features have tended to be treated as aspects of *parole*, rather than *langue*. Recasting that dualism as system/process or system/text puts considerable emphasis on the meaningfulness of the totality of what speakers produce in social situations. The interesting questions then become what the choices are in the multiplicity of systems which are drawn from in the construction of text and under what conditions particular choices are made.

## 2.8 An argument for stratification

It is not only in relation to expressive language that an explicitly paradigmatic approach to language is called for. An understanding of what particular choices contrast with at their own level would seem of considerable importance in dealing with any meaning or form. But there is a further complication. The whole of Chapter 2 to this point has focussed on the question of what linguistic forms are used with what meanings in what situations, and what I have attempted to demonstrate is that much of the work dealing with the social aspect of situations and language has not only failed to make necessary terminological distinctions but has mostly failed to make a broad enough inventory of relevant phenomena. Brown & Levinson's (1979) account of politeness phenomena is certainly wideranging, but it lacks a paradigmatic dimension. Further, it makes no attempt to systematise the meanings assigned to the linguistic phenomena in some kind of motivated relationship with those phenomena, despite an explicit recognition of a social motivation for much of what they refer to as 'language structure':

... the motivations that lie behind such usages are powerful enough to pass deep into language *structure*. In section 8.1 we draw together examples of how the encoding of the strategies addressed to such wants can become part of the grammar: as lexicalizations (*sorry, sir*), as transformations (passivization, ellipsis, dubitative inflections, nominalization), and as phonetic (including prosodic) modifications (high pitch, hesitation phenomena, creaky voice). There we make the argument in a strong form: in general the abundance of syntactic and lexical apparatus in a grammar seems undermotivated by either systemic or cognitive distinctions and psychological processing factors. The other motivation is, grossly, social, and includes processes like face-risk minimization. (Brown & Levinson 1979: 99)

What seems to be called for is some kind of stratification which enables one to make two kinds of distinctions: firstly, a distinction between linguistic forms and their meaning or function (with it being clearly understood that there is no bi-unique relation between these levels) and secondly, a distinction between those meanings/forms (considered now as strata of a single level of 'language') and a further situational or contextual level concerned with those key dimensions of social relations which determine and are themselves determined by the linguistic choices made. Thus terms like 'formal' and 'polite', if they are used at all, will be used to refer to phenomena at one level only and not at all three levels simultaneously, as can happen at present. This will mean, among other things, the

elaboration of distinctive technical vocabularies to name the features at each level, making the distinctions absolutely explicit.

One of the effects of such a strategy will be to focus attention on items at the rank of word and morpheme as interesting and meaningful in their own right, in terms which extend well beyond the referential, rather than simply being considered as pieces in the jigsaw puzzle of the clause as the sole significant semantico-grammatical unit. What is being advocated is the kind of polysystemic approach to understanding how language means consistently advocated by J.R. Firth.

So, for example, a lexical item instead of being characterised simply by means of ambiguous labels such as *formal* or *colloquial* or *slang*, can be described in terms of formal characteristics involving oppositions such as: Graeco-Latin vs. Anglo-Saxon origin, general vs. field-specific, technical vs. non-technical, full form vs. hypochorism (and if the latter truncated vs. augmented - see Chapter 5 below for further delicacy), established form vs. new form, and in terms of the word class it belongs to (noun, verb, adjective, adverb etc.) and its relation to other word classes, e.g. whether it is a nominalised form. Thus, for example, a word such as *environmentalist* would be characterised as of foreign, specifically Graeco-Latin, origin (see Thuan 1980 on the recognition and categorisation of foreignness in Australian English); polysyllabic rather than monosyllabic structure (v. Jespersen 1928/33 on the significance of monosyllabism in English, and Chapter 5 below); noun, marked by specific morphological elements as a nominalisation; new rather than well-established form. The contrast of this word in virtually all respects with the structure of the partially synonymous word *greenie* makes it possible to understand more clearly why the former term is used with the meaning of 'technicality' and the latter with the meaning 'attitudinal: pejorative' (assuming for the moment the existence of developed semantic networks including such features - networks only in their embryonic stages as yet). At this point, having characterised such items in structural and semantic terms, but from a paradigmatic as well as a syntagmatic perspective, one can then proceed to investigate the situational dimension.

The commonest approach to stratification from the level of language to that of situation is in terms of pragmatics, conceived of as a separate stratum concerned with generating appropriate utterances, located beside the strata of syntax (concerned with generating grammatical sentences) and phonology (concerned with the articulation of those sentences). The problem with the pragmatics approach is that it still cannot provide a motivated and explicit account of how the

strata of pragmatics and syntax are actually related with respect to the interpersonal, the assertions of Butler (1988) to the contrary. Issues such as presupposition and implicature, which are seen as playing a significant role in the domain of pragmatics (Levinson 1983), do not seem particularly helpful for the kinds of linguistic phenomena I am concerned with. Nor do generalised maxims or principles such as Grice's Co-operativeness Principle (Grice 1975) or Leech's Tact Maxim (Leech 1983). The problem is that they offer nothing more sophisticated than lists and generalised principles by way of connecting the linguistic with the situational (or, as Leech puts the concern of pragmatics, 'the study of how utterances have meanings in situations' (Leech 1983: x)).

As well as a stratified formalisation of system both of language and of situation with respect to language, one needs also to work towards methods of dealing with the configurations of choices that constitute text. This is always essential in attending to meaning, but particularly significant in dealing with interpersonal meaning negotiating social relations, insofar as interpersonal meaning is realised globally rather than locally and this is true not only for clauses but for texts. The basic claim of systemic-functional linguistics, outlined in the previous chapter, is that the mode of realisation of the interpersonal is not in terms of constituency, as in the case of representational meaning, but in terms of prosodies whose 'scope' is always more than purely local. Such prosodies may be manifested in overtly prosodic form, as in the intonation contours signalling the 'key' of an utterance (Halliday 1985, 8.9), or by what may appear to be discrete items such as terms of address, modal auxiliaries and adjuncts, attitudinal lexis. Such apparently discrete items are best seen as localised manifestations of an ongoing process. In relation to negation and modality, this ongoing effect has been conventionally referred to as 'scope': the term is useful, but needs to be understood as the effect of the overall interpersonal meaning that is being negotiated rather than as the effect of individual words as kinds of logical operators.

Any adequate approach to the interpersonal needs to operate on several fronts. The way in from semantics (which is what this chapter is all about) is attractive - particularly so to non-linguists, because of the apparent transparency of labels such as 'formal', 'polite' etc. This approach does need to be counterbalanced by, on the one hand, some formalisation of that dimension of situations concerned with social relations (the task of the subsequent chapter) and on the other by a careful account of the relevant linguistic forms and the linguistic substance through which those forms are realised (the task of Part II, with particular reference to forms used in address).

A further issue of considerable significance is working towards a more satisfactory way of conceptualising the interaction of the linguistic with the social than the notion of 'correlation', considering that it is precisely the area of the social that is literally constituted or constructed by the deployment of the various semiotic resources available to members of a culture. 'Society' does not exist outside of configurations of meaning-making practices on the part of those who identify themselves and are identified as belonging to it. From the theoretical perspective adopted here, not only does one need to consider text, rather than individual linguistic items as basic, but the starting point needs to be with interactive text: the basic social act is the exchange of meaning through text, and not individual acts of 'meaning' in the form of words and sentences produced by speakers considered purely as individuals. Such an approach perceives all texts, even if monologic in form, as inherently interactive: in the parlance of contemporary semiotic and critical theory, all text necessarily positions 'readers' as 'subjects' of particular kinds if they are to be able to make sense of it (Belsey 1980). One may accept or reject the meanings being constructed, as a 'compliant' or a 'resisting' reader, but the interactiveness is inherent in the very construction of text.

## Three

### Towards a semiotics of social relations

Field, tenor and mode are not kinds of language use, nor are they simply components of the speech setting. They are a conceptual framework for representing the social context as the semiotic environment in which people exchange meanings. (Halliday 1978: 110)

This chapter begins with an account of the development of a model of context of situation, or register, within systemic-functional linguistic theory, from its origins in the work of Malinowski and Firth through successive stages of conceptualisation (and changes in nomenclature) to recent attempts at systemic formalisation. It goes on to focus on the contextual category tenor, the category relevant to interpersonal meaning, foregrounding certain problematic aspects of previous work. Two issues of particular importance are the use of 'social role' as central to tenor in the work of Halliday (1978, Halliday & Hasan 1985/90) and the widespread adoption of Brown and Gilman's (1960) mapping of relational space in terms of two dimensions, power and solidarity.

The chapter goes on to present a model of tenor, developed not on *a priori* grounds but on the basis of the prior identification of the three independent realisational strategies deployed in the use of interpersonal forms. These realisational strategies of reciprocity, proliferation and amplification (introduced in the previous chapter) motivate the setting up of a model with three corresponding dimensions of social relations. As well as this intrinsic motivation, such an account accords well with work in social psychology on the basic dimensions of social relations.

The chapter concludes with some observations on the constitutive function of the interpersonal resources deployed in the negotiation of social relations, constituting not merely distinguishable forms of social relations and ultimately the social order but, in the process, constituting individual speakers in terms of what Firth called 'personality' and might now be more appropriately called 'subjectivity'. This last section draws on recent work in social, semiotic, feminist and poststructuralist theory.



### 3.1 Tenor in systemic theory: issues and problems

The category 'tenor' in systemic-functional theory derives from Firth's work on CONTEXT OF SITUATION, this latter term deriving ultimately from Malinowski (Malinowski 1923). Firth consistently characterised context of situation in terms of:

1. The participants: persons, personalities and relevant features of these.
  - (a) The verbal action of the participants.
  - (b) The non-verbal action of the participants.
2. The relevant objects and non-verbal and non-personal events.
3. The effect of the verbal action. (Firth 1957/68: 177)

In an earlier paper, Firth distinguishes his own use of the term from that of Malinowski who, according to Firth, saw context of situation as 'an ordered series of events considered as *in rebus* ', i.e. as far too tied to the actuality of specific situations. Firth's own view is that

. . . 'context of situation' is best used as a suitable schematic construct to apply to language events, and that it is a group of related categories at a different level from grammatical categories but rather of the same abstract nature. A context of situation for linguistic work brings into relation the following categories: [the usual list follows]. (Firth 1950/ 1957: 182)

In the later paper, he spells out a little more explicitly what he had in mind:

The abstraction here called context of situation does not deal with mere 'sense' or with thoughts. It is not a description of the environment. It is a set of categories in ordered relations abstracted from the life of man in the flux of events, from personality in society. (Firth 1957/1968: 200)

Firth was very well aware that what was needed to explore this territory in detail was a set of categories that had not yet been developed:

No hard and fast lines can be drawn at present to form a strict classification for contexts of situation. . . . The technical language necessary for the description of contexts of situation is not developed nor is there any agreed method of classification. . . . It will be maintained here that linguistic analysis states the interrelations of elements of structure and sets up systems of 'terms' or 'units' and end-points of mutually determined interior relations. Such interior relations are set up in the context of situation between the following constituents: [the usual list follows].

No linguist has yet set up exhaustive systems of contexts of situation such that they could be considered mutually determined in function or meaning. There is some approximation to this, however, in Malinowski's *Coral gardens and their magic*, and here and there in special studies of contexts of personal address and reference, and of well-defined technological activities such as fishing or weaving or making war, and of rituals of various kinds.

In classifying contexts of situation and in describing such contexts as wholes, a language of 'shifted-terms', that is to say a vocabulary and phraseology of descriptive definition involving notional elements is probably unavoidable. It is, however, a clear scientific gain if such notional language only appears at this level and is rigidly excluded from all other levels such as the collocational, grammatical and phonological levels. (op. cit., 177)

Later in the same paper, Firth comes a little closer to spelling out the kinds of considerations that would be involved:

The description of the context of situation by stating the interior relations of the constituents or factors, may be followed by referring such contexts to a variety of known frameworks of a more general character such as (a) the economic, religious and other social structures of the societies of which the participants are members; (b) types of linguistic discourse such as monologue, choric language, narrative, recitation, explanation, exposition, etc.; (c) personal interchanges, e.g. mentioning especially the number, age and sex of the participants and noting speaker-listener, reader-writer and reader *or* writer contexts, including series of such exchanges; (d) types of speech function such as drills and orders, detailed direction and control of techniques of all kinds, social flattery, blessing, cursing, praise and blame, concealment and deception, social pressure and constraint, verbal contracts of all kinds, and phatic communion.

Statements of contexts of situation may be presented in tabular form under headings selected from the above list. One method of tabulation would comprise ten entries as follows: (i) type of context of situation; (ii) type of speech function; (iii) the language text and language mechanism; (iv) the restricted language to which the text belongs; (v) the syntactical characteristics of the text (colligation); (vi) other linguistic features of the text and mechanism, including style and tempo; (vii) features of collocation; (viii) the creative effect or effective result; (ix) extended collocations and (x) memorial allusions, providing serial links with preceding or following situations. (op. cit., 178)

Subsequent work on context of situation, and on what came to be called register (after Reid 1956) or diatypical variation (Gregory 1967), can be seen as providing the more detailed map of the terrain that Firth had begun to explore. (See Hill 1958; McIntosh 1962;

Enkvist, Spencer & Gregory 1964; Halliday, McIntosh & Stevens 1964; Ellis 1965, 1966; Gregory 1967; Ellis & Ure 1969; Ure 1971; Halliday 1973; Hasan 1973; Ure & Ellis 1977; Halliday 1978; Gregory & Carroll 1978; Halliday & Hasan 1980, 1985/90). But the potential impact of much of the early work was undermined by a failure to agree on basic categories, much less on terminology. Even when substantial agreement was reached on the number and general nature of the basic categories, after Halliday, McIntosh & Stevens (1964), not only did the terminology still have to be finally settled but, more significantly, the categories themselves were for some time seen as associated with a relatively small array of relevant linguistic phenomena rather than being formally motivated by them, thus reinforcing suspicions outside the neo-Firthian tradition that what was being discussed was simply a version of 'crude contextualism', i.e. a naive one-to-one correspondence between language and what is outside language (which usually comes down to physical reality, i.e. the labelling function of language). Jean Ure's work on lexical density (Ure 1971), pioneering the detailed specification of register distinctions in terms of substantive linguistic differences, is a notable early exception, along with the work of Leech on advertising English and Huddleston et al. on scientific English (Leech 1966, Huddleston et al. 1968).

### **3.1.1 Register as semantico-grammatical configurations**

Firth's somewhat intuitive categories were progressively refined under the label of REGISTER, producing eventually the three current register or contextual categories (sometimes also referred to as register or contextual variables): FIELD, TENOR and MODE. The term REGISTER has been central to the endeavour of developing the kind of abstract theoretical construct Firth saw as necessary. The term was originally used by Reid (1956). It was subsequently generally adopted by those working in the post-Firthian tradition to refer to the patterns of variation characterising texts appropriate to different situation types, and received its most rigorous and abstract treatment from Halliday, who defined it as:

... the configurations of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type (Halliday 1978: 111).

(There is an even more recent chapter in the story of register, in which it is abstracted away to an even greater degree not only from the actualities of real situations but also from the linguistic plane itself, which will be outlined below).

What eventually came to be agreed on were three register, or contextual, categories known as FIELD, TENOR and MODE. These categories, as configurations of semantic resources, are seen as referring to three critical situational components:

1. The FIELD OF DISCOURSE refers to what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place: what is it that the participants are engaged in, in which the language figures as some essential component?
2. The TENOR OF DISCOURSE refers to who is taking part, to the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles: what kinds of role relationships obtain among the participants, including permanent and temporary relationships of one kind or another, both the types of speech role that they are taking on in the dialogue and the whole cluster of socially significant relationships in which they are involved?
3. The MODE OF DISCOURSE refers to what part the language is playing, what it is that the participants are expecting language to do for them in that situation: the symbolic organisation of the text, the status that it has, and its function in the context, including the channel (is it spoken or written or some combination of the two?) and also the rhetorical mode, what is being achieved by the text in terms of such categories as persuasive, expository, didactic, and the like. (Halliday & Hasan 1985/90: 12).

Matthiessen sums up the register categories, neatly but more than a little contentiously with respect to seeing one dimension as more 'semiotic' than the others, as follows:

Put very simply, field concerns natural reality, tenor social reality, and mode semiotic reality. (Matthiessen 1989: 15),

At the same time as the register categories were being developed, however, Halliday was developing his account of language as organised in terms of a small number of semantic components, 'different kinds of "meaning potential" that relate to the most general functions that language has evolved to serve.' (Halliday 1979: 59). These components, or metafunctions, are motivated by the observation that in a paradigmatically-oriented account of language system, such as that developed within systemic-functional linguistics, options cluster in sets 'which exhibit strong interdependence internally and strong independence externally' (Plum 1988: 24). Plum goes on to explain how these sets of options, or system networks, are then seen as

the major representation of an abstract metafunctional organisation of the linguistic system ... The metafunctions themselves are referred to by Halliday by very general, semantically oriented, terms which reflect the basic thrust of the grammatical model as one with a 'rich *semantax*' (Martin 1985: 249) rather than one favouring an autonomous syntax. The

metafunctions, with glosses added, and their major systemic reflections at clause rank, are outlined ... below:

	ideational	interpersonal	textual
<b>metafunctions</b>	experiential	logical	
<b>lexicogrammar</b>	TRANSITIVITY	TAXIS	MOOD THEME & INFORMATION

**Gloss:**

EXPERIENTIAL = 'language as representation of experience'

LOGICAL = 'language as natural logic'

INTERPERSONAL = 'language as interaction'

TEXTUAL = 'language as message'

The concept of the metafunctional organisation of the linguistic system suggests a formal mechanism for relating choices at the levels of lexicogrammar and discourse semantics to choices at the level of context via an extension of the notion of choice or system in a technical sense. If it is the formalisation of language as a system of choices which permits the conceptualisation of the linguistic system itself as a 'set of possibilities' or meaning potential in the first instance, it is the meta-functional interpretation of language which creates the potential for relating language to its environment not only when considering it as abstract system but also as actualised structure or text. (Plum 1988: 24)

The significance of the metafunctional hypothesis for linguistics is that, unlike many functional accounts of language which are essentially motivated by concerns which are external to language itself (see Halliday & Hasan 1985/90 for a review of functional theories), this approach is simultaneously motivated extrinsically and intrinsically, by considerations internal to the nature and organisation of language itself. The metafunctional organisation is not self-generating, however:

The system of natural language can best be explained in the light of the social functions which language has evolved to serve. Language is as it is because of what it has to do. (Halliday 1976a: 17)

Not only is language 'as it is because of what it has to do', but it continues to do 'what it has to do'. The metafunctional hypothesis aims to

be both extrinsic and extrinsic at the same time. It is designed to explain the internal nature of language in such a way as to relate it to its external environment. (Halliday 1974: 95)

For an account of the relevant semantic resources 'at risk' we now turn to Halliday's multifunctional account of language, which distinguishes between experiential, logical, interpersonal and textual meaning, seen as 'the four components in the semantics of every language' (Halliday & Hasan 1985/90: 23). These components are the metafunctions. Halliday's metafunctional account of the organisation of language makes available a previously unavailable specification of the relevant semantic resources 'at risk' relevant to the register categories. The metafunctional components are distinguished on the basis of their characteristic modes of realisation in terms of distinguishable types of structure (described in Chapter 1 above), as well as their semantico-communicative function. Halliday, in a key paper, gives the following extended account of the functional issues:

The semantic system of a natural language is organized into a small number of distinct components, different kinds of 'meaning potential' that relate to the most general functions that language has evolved to serve. Here are the headings we shall use:

IDEATIONAL	INTERPERSONAL	TEXTUAL
EXPERIENTIAL	LOGICAL	

The first of these is language as representation: the semantic system as expression of experience, including both experience of what is round about us in the outside world and experience of the world of consciousness that is inside us. This we are calling the ideational component. There are two subcategories: an experiential, where we represent experience 'directly' in terms of happenings (actions, events, states, relations), entities that participate in these happenings (persons, animate and inanimate objects, institutions, abstractions) and circumstantial features (extent, location, time and space, cause, manner and so on); and a 'logical', where we represent experience 'indirectly' in terms of certain fundamental logical relations in natural language - 'and', 'namely', 'says', 'is subcategorized as' etc. - which are not those of formal logic but rather are the ones from which the operations of formal logic are ultimately derived. These two, the logical and the experiential, together make up the ideational component in the semantic system: that of meaning in the reflective mode.

The second main component, the interpersonal, is language as interaction: it is meaning in the active mode. Here the semantic system expresses the speaker's intrusion in the speech event: his [sic] attitudes, evaluations and judgments; his expectations and demands; and the nature of the exchange as he is setting it up - the role that he is taking on himself in the communication process, and the role, or rather the role choice, that he is assigning to the hearer. This component is therefore both speaker- and hearer-oriented; it is interpersonal -

what Hymes called 'socio-expressive' - and represents the speaker's own intrusion into the speech situation.

All discourse involves an ongoing simultaneous selection of meanings from both these components, which are mapped into a single output in the realization process. But there is also a third component, which we are calling the 'textual', whereby the meanings of the other two kinds take on relevance to some real context. Here the semantic system enables the speaker to structure meaning as text, organizing each element as a piece of information and relating it significantly to what has gone before. If the ideational component is language as reflection (the speaker as observer of reality), and the interpersonal component is language as action (the speaker as intruder in reality), the textual component is language as relevance (the speaker as relating to the portion of reality that constitutes the speech situation, the context within which meanings are being exchanged). The textual component provides what in modern jargon we might refer to as the ecology of the text. (Halliday 1979: 59-60).

The final stage in what I will call the 'classical' account of register, is to explicitly relate the register categories to the relevant functionally-oriented semantico-grammatical components. The relation is seen as one of realisation, with the correspondences set out in the following diagram:

<b>SITUATION:</b> Feature of the context	(realised by)	<b>TEXT:</b> Functional component of semantic system
Field of discourse (what is going on)	↘	Experiential meanings (transitivity, naming, etc.)
Tenor of discourse (who are taking part)		Interpersonal meanings (mood, modality, person, etc.)
Mode of discourse (role assigned to language)		Textual meanings (theme, information, cohesive relations)

**Figure 3.1 Relation of text to context of situation (Halliday & Hasan 1985: 26, Fig.2.4)**

Matthiessen (1989), in an elegant overview of Halliday's work, does not use the term 'realisation', but talks of the relation between the semantico-grammatical and the contextual categories in terms of 'projection', 'correspondence', 'determination' and 'reflection':

According to Halliday (e.g. 1978), each of the three metafunctions tends to serve to project one of the three different aspects of context; he sets out the following correspondencies as a working hypothesis:

field -- ideational  
 tenor -- interpersonal  
 mode -- textual

That is to say, the field tends to determine ideational meanings, the tenor interpersonal ones, and the mode textual ones. For instance, the significant social action is reflected in the ideational resources of transitivity, whereas the tenor of the relations between speaker and listener is reflected in selections of mood and modality.' (Matthiessen 1989: 16-17).

### **3.1.2 Register as connotative semiotic**

Turning now specifically to the elaboration of the register, or contextual, category of tenor, Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964: 92), in their chapter 'The users and uses of language', identified 'the relations among the participants' as a linguistically-significant component of situations. (Cf. Firth's 'participants: persons, personalities and relevant features of these'). In a later publication Halliday glossed Firth's 'persons and personalities' as 'corresponding more or less to what sociologists would regard as the statuses and roles of the participants' (Halliday & Hasan 1985/90: 8). Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens used the term *STYLE OF DISCOURSE* to refer to what they regarded as a unitary dimension, involving a single cline with suggested intermediate positions of 'casual', 'intimate' and 'deferential' between the endpoints of 'colloquial' and 'polite' (the term 'formal' was rejected 'because of its technical use in description'). In discussing relevant aspects of participant relations, Halliday et al. also mention degrees of permanence, ranging from the most temporary, 'those which are a feature of the immediate situations, as when the participants are at a party or have met on the train' through to 'the opposite extreme', 'relations such as that between parents and children', while in between are 'various socially defined relations, as between teacher and pupil or labour and management' (p.93).

They go on to make clear that 'What participant relations are linguistically relevant, and how far these are distinctively reflected in the grammar and lexis, depends on the language concerned. Japanese, for example, tends to vary along this dimension very much more than English or Chinese' (p. 93). English, as we shall see, tends to grammaticalise rather than lexicalise its markers of social relations, thereby rendering them considerably less visible - cf. Whorf's notion of cryptotypes, patterns of grammatical choice characteristic of the language use of a particular culture, usually below the level of conscious awareness, which nevertheless organise the semantic space of that culture in characteristic ways (Whorf 1956).



The work of Halliday et al., with its three-way characterisation of register in terms of field (of discourse), mode (of discourse) and style (of discourse), became the basis of nearly all subsequent work on register. Though the terms FIELD and MODE have been retained, TENOR has come to be substituted for STYLE, after a suggestion by Michael Gregory:

TENOR is preferred to STYLE for obvious reasons. STYLE has had for a long time in literary and linguistic study a quite different application and inverted commas are hardly sufficient to set it apart. Even within variety differentiation it is used in two, possibly three, different senses. TENOR (in the Oxford English Dictionary sense of 'way of proceeding') is so little used nowadays except unambiguously in the discussion of music that it has some of the advantages of neutrality. (Gregory 1967: 195)

Gregory in fact qualified his use of the term tenor, referring to PERSONAL TENOR distinguished from FUNCTIONAL TENOR, the latter concerned not with the participants in a speech situation but with rhetorical purpose. Part of what Gregory was attempting to deal with under the label 'functional tenor' is now handled by those with whom my own work is most closely associated through the category GENRE. There is thus no longer any need for qualification of the term tenor. The work done by members of the Register Working Group<sup>1</sup> at the University of Sydney, especially by J.R. Martin and Joan Rothery, in establishing genre as a separate level in language description above the level of register, has led to a rather different kind of model of the relationship between language and situation than the Hallidayan one on which it is based (e.g. Martin 1985, Martin & Rothery 1980, 1981; Rothery 1990).

The stratification of register and genre was necessitated by an increasing understanding of the ways in which a text proceeds in stages in working towards the achievement of some socially-recognisable purpose. These stages, or elements of schematic structure, are distinguishable in terms of characteristic configurations of lexico-grammatical choices - which already are understood to realise particular values of the register variables field, tenor and mode, thereby necessitating a model with three levels rather than the two posited by register theory to that point. Martin (1985), after Hjelmslev, calls these levels 'communicative planes' and refers to the two 'above' language as connotative semiotics, having no expression plane of their own but dependent upon language (or an alternative semiotic with its own expression plane) for their expression or realisation. At the same time as the connotative semiotic plane of genre was being distinguished from that of

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<sup>1</sup> The Register Working Group at the University of Sydney consisted of a number of honours and postgraduate research students working with J.R. Martin. The Working Group originally met regularly as a research seminar in the early 80s, and has now somewhat dispersed as members have graduated and taken up positions in various places. Original members of the Working Group were J.R. Martin, Christopher Nesbitt, Guenter Plum, Cate Poynton, Joan Rothery, Anne Thwaite and Eija Ventola. Suzanne Eggins and Lynn Poulton were later associated with the group.

register, moves were being made by other members of the Register Working Group towards increasingly explicit formalisation of the contextual categories in terms of system networks, both developments leading (by different routes) to the same outcome: seeing the register categories as semiotic systems whose features can be selected from with the same kinds of freedom (and constraint) as can the choices in any other semiotic system. Treating the system networks for the register categories as meaning potentials gives one a stronger handle on seeing the relation between language and 'reality' as two-way: the linguistic choices actually made 'construct' or are constitutive of reality because of their realisational 'relation' to the terms of the register systems, as of course the linguistic choices themselves are realisations of those terms.

Martin (1985) uses the following 'stepped' diagram to model the relationship between what he calls (after Hjelmslev) the denotative semiotic of language itself and a set of connotative semiotics which are necessarily parasitic on a semiotic system such as language, with both content and expression planes, because they have no expression plane of their own:

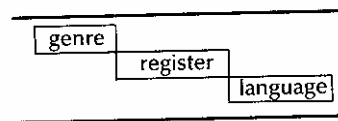


Figure 3.2 Language in relation to its connotative semiotics: register and genre (Martin 1985: 250, Fig. 2).

Later versions of Martin's model have a fourth plane, ideology, above the other three. Ventola's version includes the plane of ideology and is somewhat more informative:

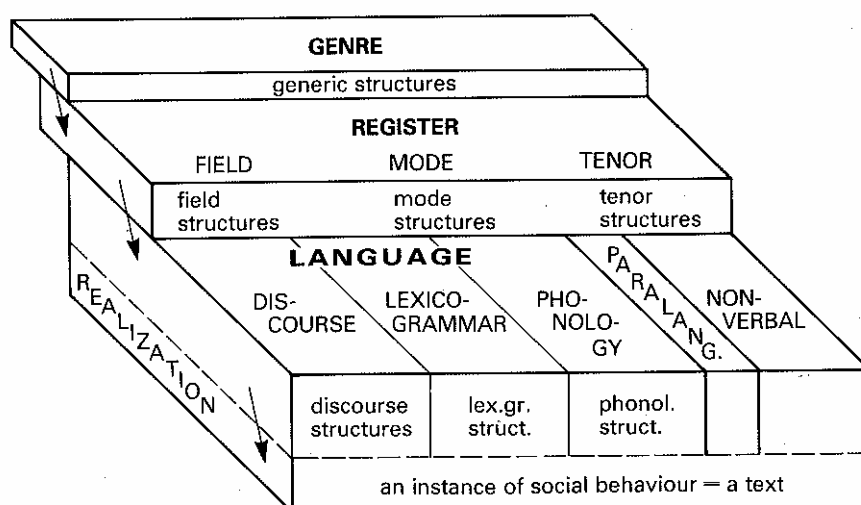


Figure 3.3 The semiotic communication planes (Ventola 1987: 58, Fig.3.2)

A significant effect of this kind of model is that register is now seen in some sense as equivalent to (context of) situation, but situation as a potential rather than as an actual. Such an interpretation is certainly in the Firthian spirit. For Halliday, register is a matter of the semantic and lexicogrammatical weightings consequent upon situational variation, i.e. situation and register are distinguished. This latter sense of register as a basically linguistic matter (at the level of what in Martin's model is the language stratum) has informed much systemic-functional work which uses the notion in ways which imply at least that a register is a situationally-specific type of text, a use of the term not very different from use outside the systemic framework (e.g. Ferguson 1983). Thus Halliday et al. (1964) can raise the question of differentiating 'registers' on the basis of style of discourse (where the more usual basis, especially outside systemic-functional linguistics, would be field):

This dimension is unlikely ever to yield clearly defined, discrete registers. It is best treated as a cline, and various more delicate cuts have been suggested, with categories such as 'casual', 'intimate' and 'deferential'. But until we know more about how the formal properties of language vary with style, such categories are arbitrary and provisional. (Halliday, McIntosh & Strevens 1964: 92-93).

Martin sums up the difference between the model he and his colleagues in the Register Working Group have been developing and that of Halliday in the following table:

<u>Halliday</u> (e.g. 1978)	<u>English Text</u>
CONTEXT OF SITUATION:	REGISTER:
	[as connotative semiotic]
field	field
tenor	tenor
mode	mode (excluding rhetorical mode)
<b>REDOUNDING WITH (i.e. symbolising, construing and construed by)</b>	
LANGUAGE:	LANGUAGE:
semantics (register as meanings at risk)	discourse semantics
lexicogrammar	lexicogrammar

phonology/graphology

phonology/graphology

Figure 3.4 The different place of register in the two models (Martin in press, Ch. 7 [1992: 502, Table 7.2]).

This relocation of register as semiotic potential has enormous advantages as far as tenor and the interpersonal are concerned, since it makes it easier to explain the constitutive role of language with respect to social relations. Linguistic choices don't simply 'reflect', 'mirror' or 'express' the preexisting interpersonal 'realities' of situations but are constitutive of them, despite the existence of institutionalised forms of linguistic practice legitimising (but never totally determining) certain linguistic forms as culturally appropriate, especially with respect to such key aspects of social identity as gender, generation, class, race/ethnicity. Status by virtue of occupation, income, possessions, location of residence etc. can also be relevant, but people perform complicated 'calculations' about how to weight the various factors and also about how to present themselves in order to achieve particular goals. An extended example will illustrate. A young male student wanting special consideration may attempt to charm an older female lecturer ('superior' with respect to two dimensions: generation and institutional standing), in an attempt to reconstitute the situation in purely gender terms, either as a (hetero)sexual game intended to put the lecturer in the weaker position (males conventionally being the ones who charm females into giving them what they want) or to recast the generational and status differences into the more familiar (and more manipulable) relational type of mother-son. A woman in such a situation can respond in various ways to such an attempt to constitute the situation in terms more likely to have a favourable outcome for the student. She can simply respond as a female to a male being charming; she can respond to the charm but let him know that she understands the game he's playing. Or she can refuse to participate in such a game and insisting on playing the encounter as one between institutional superior and subordinate. The way an individual lecturer negotiates such a situation is not predetermined in any simple sense by any particular aspect of their social identity, and certainly not by any assumption that she will simply step into the speaking position made available as a function of that adopted by the student (where 'speaking position' is analogous to 'reading position' in current critical theory, (v. Belsey 1980, Moi 1985), referring to the subject position from whose perspective a text makes sense, and goes far beyond the relatively simple notion of 'speech role').

### 3.1.3 The problem with social role

Early attempts to characterise tenor either situationally or linguistically made considerable use of the term 'formality' (critiqued in the previous chapter), and indeed a recent systemic-functional publication still does so (Benson and Greaves 1984). Halliday's work is notable for the absence of this term. The metafunctional conception of language led to a focus on MOOD as a key interpersonal system at clause rank and hence on speech role - which can readily be related to social role. I shall argue below that social role is best handled as a function of field, i.e. as an aspect of 'what's going on', with its institutional perspective. Speech role, however, taking us into what systemicists refer to as speech function (speech act defined according to grammatical criteria (Halliday 1985; Martin 1981, in press) and beyond that into the more extensive negotiation of exchange structure (Berry 1981, a, b, c; Martin, in press), and is clearly of enormous relevance to the negotiation of social relations. (See Chapter 4 ).

Halliday (1978) fairly consistently refers to tenor in terms of role relationships (or status and role relationships), which includes levels of formality as one particular instance, i.e. tenor itself can no longer be characterised in terms of familiarity, formality etc., but rather these are to be seen as realisations of tenor, an underlying variable. In characterising the tenor of various texts he presents, Halliday (1978) talks very specifically in terms of roles, e.g.

- small child and parent interacting: child determining course of action (p.115);
- re a Thurber story, two levels:
  - i) writer and readers, writer adopting role as recounter (the relation of writer to audience)
  - ii) mate and mate (the relation of the characters in the story) (p.146);
- equal and intimate: three young adult males; acquainted
  - but with hierarchy in the situation (2 experts, 1 novice)
  - leading to superior-inferior relationship (p. 226).

In analysing a conversation from the film *Talking Shop: demands on language* (Appendix 1, 'The 'silver' text', to *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 1985), Halliday characterises tenor in general as referring to 'the statuses and role relationships: who is taking part in the interaction'. In this particular situation, an interaction between a young woman just starting work and the manageress of the silverware department of a large department store, Halliday characterises the tenor as follows:

Manageress and new salesgirl; a complex status relationship embodying (a) senior-junior, (b) expert-novice, (c) teacher-apprentice; with a fourth, personal relationship at a metaphorical level, (d) mother-daughter (p.370).

These last two examples introduce terms like hierarchy, expert/novice, superior/inferior, senior/junior, which are considerably more general than the terms parent/child, mother/daughter, writer/reader, manageress/new salesgirl. Characterising participants as 'male' or as 'young adult' lies somewhere in between these other two sets. It does not specify a unique institutional setting (field) in the same way as does characterising participants as parent/child (specifying the institution of the family), writer/reader (literature) or manageress/new salesgirl (retailing). It does, however, imply a range of possible institutional settings (work, family, education, specific field of entertainment etc.). Characterising the relationship of interactants using such terms as 'equal', 'intimate', 'hierarchy', 'expert', 'novice' and 'superior-inferior' is at a different level of abstraction again, referring to forms of relationship which can occur in most kinds of institutional setting, regardless of whether participants are young or old, male or female, and while certainly not regardless of the most specific characterisation in terms of role, then at a level of generality at which it is possible to separate those aspects of what is said that are relevant to equality/inequality *per se* and those which are more situationally specific. The most specific terms seem to concern field, insofar as linguistic realisations with this degree of specificity will mainly be lexical and other aspects of what is said can be accounted for at a more abstract level of conceptualisation about social relations.

What then is one to do with social role as an explanatory notion, where playing a role in relation to a complementary role, e.g. in parent/child, customer/service-provider dyads, can be seen as providing the relational basis from which interpersonal choices spring? The approach here will be to treat role in its specific (experiential) manifestations as a function of field, with implications for both the modelling and realisation of field - initially in terms of lexis, the most overt manifestation of field, but ultimately in terms of entire transitivity structures at the level of the clause and activity sequences at the level of text (Plum 1984; Martin, in press a). Social role may also be implicated in the unfolding, particularly the dynamic unfolding, of certain genres. Given that it seems likely that the relationship of field and genre will prove far more complex than current models allow for (an issue that will not be further explored in this work), the focus of what follows will be primarily on the appropriateness of relocating social role to field.

The formalisation of field as a register category lags well behind that for the other variables, tenor and mode. Field is not susceptible to the same kind of schematising or reduction to a set of underlying principles as tenor or mode because of the irreducible particularity of the multiplicity of fields existing in any society, even more so in a complex

modern society; a particularity and multiplicity registered most sensitively in the scope of the lexical resources of a language. Lexis is only the beginning, of course. If we consider field as a mode of doing/knowing in the world, involving specific forms of action/knowledge performed on and with specific kinds of objects, then in the process of participating in such a mode of doing/knowing one also constitutes oneself as a particular kind of actor/knower (or active subject), whose actions have material effects and whose knowledges are no less active as they are projected upon the world, as representations of that world, in the form of what one 'says', using the various semiotic modalities of one's culture. Translating this process into more explicit grammatical terms, using the key clause rank experiential system of transitivity (both transitivity and its ergative reinterpretation, v. Halliday 1985: Chapter 5), one ought to see field in terms not only of the activity orientation (Process) and object orientation (Medium/Goal) proposed by Plum 1984 but also in terms of 'subject'-orientation (Agent/Actor), i.e. incorporating the whole of the activity appropriate to that particular institutional setting. In this way it becomes easier to see social role as the sociological construct corresponding to both grammatical Agent/Actor and Medium/Goal (where this is a person) and, further, to the semiotic subject. The meanings, needless to say, are not the same.

I shall exemplify from the field of education, involving two social roles, teacher and taught.<sup>2</sup> Moving to the field of animal husbandry, sub-field domestic animals, one finds the roles of breeder, distributor/seller, owner, veterinarian, and a number of roles involving the provision of goods and services (e.g. grooming, supplying food) and, in the specific context of showing, the further roles of exhibitor, handler and judge. Within this subfield one also finds the process of teaching, sometimes in the context of obedience *schools* (for dogs), but the activity is generally referred to as *training* rather than *teaching*. By and large, the terms *teaching* and *teacher* are restricted to the field of human education in English-speaking cultures; it is conceivable that in a society where the difference between humans and other animals was not regarded as so great, one might not find such a lexical distinction. Likewise, in English, medical care of animals is provided by *veterinarians*, though the range of knowledge and skills required and the activities carried out in performing that role may in some cases differ very little from those of the doctor whose patients are human rather than animal.

In other cases, where culturally sensitive distinctions are not involved, it is possible to use a superordinate term to refer to a role, focussing on what that role has in common with

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<sup>2</sup> Note that the same names are not given to these roles in sub-fields with different prestige: *teacher* and *pupil* (sometimes *student*) are appropriate for school settings but *professor/lecturer/tutor* - *student* are the terms used in tertiary settings (though individuals may characterise themselves as *teachers* and their professional activity as *teaching*, presumably as an indication of their perception of the field of education as unitary and/or as a disclaimer of any particular prestige attaching to them as individuals, i.e. as an ideological statement).

similar roles in other institutional contexts rather than on what differentiates it. One example would be the term *judge*, which occurred above in the context of showing animals and which also occurs in the field of competitive sport (where one also finds the terms *umpire* and *referee* for specific sports) and competitions generally: assessing the relative merits of wines, petit point, advertising jingles, Miss Universe and Mr World contestants or potential Nobel Prize winners, as well as a more ill-defined role in the kind of 'competition' which involves merely sending in a coupon in order to win something, where one is told that 'No correspondence will be entered into with the judges'.

This last use is about as far away as one could get from the judge of the law, but its use is perfectly comprehensible: the role that in the field of law necessitates impartial assessment of evidence, interpretation of a codified body of legislation and case-law, and decision-making based on all of these, in the context of give-away competitions involves merely 'deciding' (i.e. selecting) between entrants and doing so fairly. Using the term *judge* undoubtedly adds prestige to an activity that in essence is largely a lucky dip: the advertising industry takes itself far too seriously, however, to use a term like *lucky-dip puller-outerer!*

An investigation of the use of superordinate versus taxonomically more specific terms for social roles would presumably reveal a great deal about the salience and prestige of the various institutions within a particular society. The fact that superordinate terms are often used to refer to roles in more general terms, the specific processes characteristically engaged in and the objects involved being field-specific (i.e. the lexical strings in which the word *judge* appears would differ from field to field), points to the possibility of abstracting away from what I shall call the 'content' of such roles (which properly belongs in field) leaving a more general set of relational dimensions, or interpersonal modalities, within which speakers can occupy various positions. The dimensions proposed below are concerned with hierarchy, social distance and attitude/evaluation. It is these three dimensions which are realised by systems from the interpersonal metafunction and hence are proposed as properly constituting the register category tenor. These dimensions or modalities are generalisable across situations and are capable of being mapped as a semiotic resource. Such a model is, in principle, generalisable across all human societies. The typical positions occupied by speakers along such dimensions in a variety of situation types will no doubt vary: much cross-cultural miscommunication would seem to be interpretable as mismatches between expected and actual locations of speakers from different cultures. Even more variable will be the patterns of realisation: the metafunctional hypothesis predicts that all languages will be organised metafunctionally, but does not predict the form of those realisations. There is enormous potential here for empirical investigation: Christine Beal's work (Beal 1987 on conversation in French, work



in progress on cross-cultural communication in a French firm based in Australia) is pioneering this area, using the model of tenor I have been developing.

One apparent difficulty with this approach is that there do seem to be interpersonal forms used in some fields, e.g. realisations of the key interpersonal clause-rank system MOOD, which seem predictable less on the basis of hierarchy and/or social distance (attitude is not implicated) than on the basis of field itself. A nice example is the fact that, while in many settings subordinates ask questions of superiors (regarded as experts) and superiors ask questions of subordinates (regarded as possessors of specific valued information), in both cases in order to obtain new information, in one particular kind of setting superiors (regarded as experts) regularly ask questions of subordinates in order to obtain information which they themselves already possess. The field involved in this latter case is, of course, education and the strategy described is characteristic of the process known as teaching (it is not, of course, the only strategy employed). In this case it would seem that speech function allocation and the MOOD choices realising speech function (assuming congruence for the moment) is being determined by field rather than tenor.

One solution to this problem would be to regard basic exchange structure roles (i.e. primary/secondary knower/actor, Berry 1981a, b, c; Martin in press c. See Chapter 4 for an account) as preselected by field. To the extent that fields focus primarily on either knowledge or action and that some participants are experts and others novices, then one can predict not only which 'commodity' will be the object of negotiation but also who will occupy which exchange role (in relation to who has the primary responsibility for the knowledge/action which will subsequently be realised in exchange structure roles). Education is, par excellence, the field where knowledge is the commodity being exchanged. Thus teachers can be culturally (not merely situationally) defined as primary knowers and insofar as they themselves conceive of their role purely in terms of the transmission of knowledge then they will act in such a way as to give their pupils the opportunity to demonstrate that they too are 'knowers' but often with a very restricted scope: knowledge may only be constituted as 'proper' knowledge within the parameters laid down by a particular teacher. Such a routine, then, as the sequence of delayed primary knower/responding secondary knower/confirming primary knower moves is not only about knowledge but also about power: students typically tell teachers what they think teachers want to hear rather than simply what they themselves know or understand. Insofar as teachers conceive of their role as something other than mere transmitters of knowledge, they will act differently, e.g. by asking information-seeking questions which assume that their students are genuine primary knowers, subjects with real responsibility for their own knowledge.

Another approach to seeing social role as problematic in relation to social interaction is the scope for frustration of the expectations that such a construct legitimately arouses. Roles are defined independently of their occupants, in terms of institutional settings (fields) and institutionalised tasks (genres). There are undoubtedly expectations that individuals will enact those roles in terms of appropriate social (including linguistic) practice, and certainly sanctions can be invoked against individuals who fail to 'perform' in a socially acceptable manner, but it is not the case that the behaviour of an individual in a particular role can simply be predicted. People can perform a role in an idiosyncratic way, thereby of course creating doubts as to whether they are in fact playing the role, as in the case of parents or teachers who are not as authoritarian as others would like them to be; or they can refuse to take up the role, even though in a situation which apparently requires them to do so, as in the case of an employee who invited the boss to join them in the tea-room during working hours instead of getting on with the job. Such an employee might find themselves out of a job very smartly, on the grounds of dereliction of duty and insubordination - i.e. failing to participate in appropriate activities for an employee (a matter of field) and acting inappropriately, i.e. without proper deference, towards the employer (a matter of tenor).

In contemporary Australian society it is not the case, on the whole, that taking on a particular social role means also taking on a rigidly-prescribed code of behaviour, including linguistic behaviour, though one certainly meets individuals in various contexts who seem to be playing out their roles in a somewhat automatised way. Most people play out their roles in somewhat more flexible ways. We can see one instance of this in Text 1, a piece of mother-child interaction (courtesy of Clare Painter). The child is rocking on a chair:

- 1 Mother: *Don't do that. Move it away, if you want to rock it.*  
 2 Child: *No.*  
 3 Mother: *You'll go straight to your room if you bang my chair ...*  
 4 Child: *I hit you with a teddy.*  
 5 Mother: *Poor teddy! Teddy's crying. You hurt his head. He's got a head-*  
 6 *ache now. He wants to be my teddy.*  
 7 Child: *No [taking teddy]. He hasn't got a tummyache. He's got a fat*  
 8 *tummy. I want to see the water in there ...*

At line 5 the mother, having issued two commands (line 1) and then a threat (line 3) to the child to get him to stop rocking on his chair, changes tack and takes up as a new topic the participant other than herself and the child himself in the child's retaliatory threat:

*I hit you with a teddy*

Suzanne Egging (1990) has noted the strategy of promoting Medium to Agent as a mechanism for maintaining conversation. This is essentially the same strategy, in this case having the specific effect of distracting the child's attention from the two participants in the situation who are in conflict with one another and hence avoiding any further overt aggression from the child. It was perfectly open to the mother to pursue the confrontation over the chair: in Australian society, parents are legitimated as authority figures with respect to children to what seems at times an almost frightening extent (viz. the extent of child abuse and incest). This mother chose not to pursue the confrontation, but rather to pursue a more conciliatory approach which averted further conflict - and, if this is a habitual pattern, presumably reinforced previous 'lessons' to her child that outright confrontation is not the appropriate way to conduct social relations.

Another familiar situation type involving legitimated as authority figures is the medical consultation. Some doctors play out the role of all-knowing minimally communicating reservoir of specialist knowledge/expertise to the hilt, but by no means all of them act in this way. Look at how the surgeon in Text 2 (courtesy of Joan Rothery) presents his diagnosis of appendicitis to his 11 year-old patient and his mother:

*Ah look, I don't think you can go past an appendix there. Just, you know, number one, he's got no pain just there and is sore there and I think he's just got something blocking the appendix and it's just giving him this constant pain and trouble, so seeing that you've had it for some time and seeing that he's been worse lately I think it certainly would be wise to think about having it done. Not a must but in view of the fact that it's giving him trouble.*

What is at issue in both conversations is the question of how power is to be negotiated - overtly, forcibly, insisting on one's rights (as parent, to control behaviour; as doctor, to control knowledge), or in a more conciliatory way. All social relations can be looked at in terms of power, along a cline or continuum that runs between equal and unequal, e.g. the relations of lovers, parent/child, classmates, teacher/student, friends, employer/employee, officer/services personnel. But clearly in our society few actual relationships are either (i) located at a particular point on the cline by definition, though clearly they will tend to lie towards one or the other end, or (ii) are unchangable, either over time or even in the course of a particular interaction.

What all this suggests is that social role is by no means the straightforward construct it is sometimes assumed to be<sup>3</sup> and that, if it is to be used at all, it makes much more sense to

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<sup>3</sup> Much of the contemporary critique of the notion of role has come from feminists resisting the conservative political implications of the notion of sex or gender role (v. Edwards 1983; also Pfohl 1975, Connell 1979). Contemporary feminist, and other, conceptions of the social construction of subjectivity are basically at variance

do so in terms of field than in terms of tenor. The perspective adopted here has undoubtedly been made accessible in part because of the development of a new perspective on the whole territory of language in relation to types of situation. Martin has noted (course materials, Linguistics III 1983) that 'making one's definition of tenor less role oriented, in the sense of having to specify say a buyer and seller in a purchase text' is one of the effects of setting up genre as an underlying semiotic. He notes that one of the further advantages of dealing with genre in this way is 'Making the register/metafunction hookup clearer: realisations of field, mode and tenor tend more neatly to skew probabilities in one or another metafunction'. It ought finally to be noted that it is undoubtedly true that my decision to abstract away from social role to more general dimensions of social relations that can be seen as underlying the operation of social roles in constituting the category of tenor has been substantially affected by the nature of the data I initially worked with. There are relatively few 'role' terms of address in English, particularly in Australian English, and many of those that do exist are probably better interpreted either as titles (e.g. *Nurse* , *Captain* ) or, in the case of family kin names (e.g. *Mum* , *Grandpa* ), as special instances of personal names. In the absence of a repertoire of 'role' terms of address, one is forced to look for more general properties of social relations. This proved merely a useful starting point, however, since other compelling reasons soon became evident for pursuing this direction.

### **3.2 Modes of realisation of interpersonal resources**

Much of my previously published work on tenor spoke of the relation between tenor and the interpersonal as one of realisation but, whether it began with exploring data or with an exemplification of a model of tenor, handled the realisational relationship in a very 'top down' way, a way which resulted in giving a more substantial initiating role to the 'higher-order' semiotic categories than to the linguistic forms involved in their constitution. The following quotation is illustrative:

Each of the three tenor dimensions seems to activate somewhat different sets of linguistic choices and to do so with characteristic patterning of the realisations. Such patterning can be structural or interactional. For the power dimension, the characteristic realisational pattern is interactional, in terms of the extent of RECIPROCITY of the linguistic choices made. For the dimensions of contact and affect, the characteristic realisational patterns are structural, in terms of what we shall call the principles of PROLIFERATION and AMPLIFICATION. (Poynton 1985/90:79).

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with the traditional notion of role, which implies the existence of social positions awaiting occupancy rather than seeing social positions as the product of mutual negotiation.

Systemic models of the interrelation of language and situation, via the notion of register or context of situation, have always been seen as theoretically bidirectional but in practice have tended to operate in a very 'top down' way, i.e. seeing context as determining language. Hasan & Martin note that

... as Halliday has often argued, text affects context even as choices determined by context are realized in text. Once again Halliday's model at present falls short of his goals. Realization as usually modeled makes language subservient to context - directed from above. What one really wants is a model in which realizing a text feeds back into the system, with accumulated feedback leading or not leading to systemic change. Whorf gave language a more deterministic role in this process than most linguists. For Whorf language symbolized reality. This is a perspective Halliday would share. (Hasan & Martin, 1989: 8)

My early model of tenor (e.g. Poynton 1984, 1985/90) was no exception to this less than realised bidirectionality. What were then referred to as modes of 'operationalising' the tenor subcategories will now more appropriately be referred to as realisational modes or strategies of the interpersonal, rather than simply of tenor, i.e. as both linguistic as well as contextual or situational phenomena. As two intimately related semiotic resources, the developmental relationship of key socio-relational categories to the interpersonal resources of the linguistic stratum is very much a chicken and egg matter: deciding 'which comes first' is an impossible task. There are many good reasons, particularly by building on the work of others, for using a 'top down' approach, i.e. motivating the tenor network extrinsically, from outside language; but the real strength of the systemic approach lies in its capacity to model the relationship between language and situation intrinsically, from within language. And here, again, starting with the investigation of address phenomena has proved fruitful.

Roger Brown and his colleague Albert Gilman in their influential paper on pronominal address in European languages identified RECIPROCITY of usage (or the lack of it) as relevant to their 'power semantic' (Brown & Gilman 1960). Brown and another colleague, Marguerite Ford, in a slightly later paper on address in American English, which necessarily paid attention to some of the variety of non-pronominal address forms available in the English language, identified an increase in the number of different forms used by a speaker to a particular addressee as an indication of the closeness of their relationship (Brown & Ford 1961/64). This observation formed the basis for my identification of a second interpersonal strategy, called PROLIFERATION. The third interpersonal strategy became apparent in the course of a detailed investigation of diminutive forms of proper names in English, part of the exploration of the resources for address in English. The phenomenon involved, called AMPLIFICATION, involved initially

the iteration of items from the morpheme and word ranks of the lexicogrammar in constituting words and groups used as vocatives (these being the ranks 'at risk' with respect to address), but amplification eventually came to be seen as operative at all levels of the rank scale with respect to interpersonal meanings. The iteration involves either straightforward repetition, as in instances of praise or reprimand such as *you bad bad boy*, *you wonderful wonderful Mum*, or iteration of function but not form, i.e. items functionally but not formally equivalent, as in a multiply-suffixed diminutive name such as *Mikeypooodles*. This name is analysed as consisting of the truncated personal name *Mike* plus a sequence of four diminutive suffixes, i.e. *Mike* + *-y* + *-poo* + *-(d)le* + *-s* (see Chapter 5 for a detailed account). All of these suffixes are capable of being directly attached to a name base, though there are phonological constraints restricting their actual occurrence, and none of them is easily distinguishable semantically.<sup>4</sup> The cumulative effect of such iteration is the augmentation or intensification of a basic attitudinal stance, either positively or negatively oriented - intensifiers are a parallel resource, but lexical rather than grammatical.

All three interpersonal strategies not only serve to locate the speaker in socio-relational space but also to specify an appropriate location for the addressee. This specification is achieved more directly with reciprocity than with either proliferation or amplification, because the organisation of conversation is particularly implicated. The adoption of a speech role is in effect a demand that one's addressee will take on the complementary speech role (assuming for the moment a model of conversation organised in terms of adjacency pairs). In terms of a tri-stratal model of language, the level of discourse semantics is most 'at risk' in relation to reciprocity. For proliferation, the level most 'at risk' is lexicogrammar (though reaching up, in the form of ellipsis and substitution, to the discourse stratum). For amplification, the level most 'at risk' is phonology (reaching up into lexicogrammar, especially morpheme and word ranks). Figure 3.5 sets out these proportions, identifying some of the central systems at each level (stratum and rank).

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<sup>4</sup> The meanings involved would of course be seen by many linguists as a matter of pragmatics rather than semantics. The systemic-functional category of the interpersonal retains such meanings within rather than outside the grammar.

STRATUM/RANK	RECIPROCITY	PROLIFERATION
<b>Discourse semantics</b>	<p><b>Conversational structure:</b> turntaking, including length of turn, interruption; role in exchange; speech function choice.</p> <p><b>Lexical cohesion:</b> who controls lexical strings (field/topic choice).</p> <p><b>Reference:</b> who refers to whom, and to whose discourse, and how. Homophora to include/exclude, e.g. name-dropping.</p> <p><b>Conjunction:</b> who controls/reformulates internal conjunction.</p>	
<p><b>Lexicogrammar:</b></p> <p>Lexis</p> <p>Grammar Clause</p> <p>Nominal group forms.</p> <p>Word forms)</p>	<p><b>Technical lexis, slang, jargon:</b> ± reciprocal usage</p> <p><b>Mood:</b> congruence/incongruence of speech function realisation.</p> <p><b>Modulation/modality:</b> presence and extent</p> <p><b>Vocation:</b> ± reciprocal usage, as also for:</p> <p>- iterated nom. gp. structures;</p> <p><b>Modification:</b> extent and kind.</p> <p>- morphological form;</p> <p>forms. Infixing of swearwords.</p>	<p><b>Antilanguages</b> etc. (proliferation of forms)</p> <p><b>Mood:</b> range of types; elliptical/complete.</p> <p><b>Vocation:</b> range of choice</p> <p>Amplified &amp; intensified</p> <p>Range of variants (inc. truncated &amp; suffixed</p>
<b>Phonology</b> elision/	<p>- accent, voice quality.</p> <p>Marked/unmarked choices of</p>	Elision/absence of

Figure 3.5 Summary of key modalities of interpersonal realization

### 3.2.1 Reciprocity

This section will explore the scope for reciprocity in conversational discourse and the implications of this phenomenon for a linguistically based model of social relations. The obvious place to start mapping the scope for reciprocity is with the organisation of conversation itself, in terms of such features as: the speech roles or types of moves made by individual speakers in terms of exchange structure, speech function, and the grammatical forms (MOOD choices) realising these moves; how speakers are assigned speech roles (whether they are given or taken); interruptions and overlaps (location, frequency and response of participants); topic nomination and effective topic maintenance.

Conversation can vary enormously in terms of reciprocity. For many speakers, the ideal is being able to 'say what you like', 'speak your mind' and 'be yourself' - a set of injunctions in the spirit of classic American liberal individualism (and of Grice's co-operativeness principle (Grice 1975), grounded in the same politico-philosophical tradition). For all participants to be able to achieve this ideal means that everyone has to be sensitive not only to their own 'rights', but also to those of the other conversationalists, with respect to all the aspects of conversational organisation listed above. Variations from this ideal range from the listener frustration of virtual monologue, one speaker taking the floor and maybe not even responding to the absence of back-channelling as an indication of the social unacceptability of their performance, to the chaos of everyone talking over the top of everyone else. Then there is a range of more planned face-to-face interaction, 'interviews' and 'consultations' of various kinds: the job interview, the political interview, the professional consultation, the clinical assessment, the therapy session. In all of these, the scope for reciprocity with respect to the conduct of the interaction is restricted; in some cases severely so. Restrictions may, of course, be contested. Contestation is common in some situations, e.g. by politicians who don't want to answer the questions being asked in a political interview, less common in others, e.g. by 'assertive' clients in professional consultations of various kinds. The restrictions exist because of the institutionalised inequality of the interactants with respect to the possession of expert knowledge/skill, an inequality which is further underlined by differences in income level and status.

In all types of face-to-face spoken interaction there can be greater or less reciprocity and expectations vary depending, in the first instance, on the interaction type or genre involved. Thus an appropriate form of reciprocity in a conversation between friends is for both to have a free choice of topic nomination at some stage, introduced by something like '*You know what?*' or '*Hey I just remembered*' or '*I've just had a thought*' (or maybe not even introduced at all). Such free choice is not appropriate in a medical consultation, however, where the doctor has the sole right to nominate topics; not an absolute right but a



restricted one, determined by field. A patient with a broken toe being asked detailed questions about their sexual life is entitled to regard this as unprofessional conduct, perhaps even sexual harassment. In a political interview, topic nomination rights are likewise restricted, resting almost entirely with the interviewer. A skilled political interviewee will, of course, use a variety of tactics to avoid dealing with an 'uncomfortable' topic. The interviewee can refuse to respond, though that is regarded as a marked choice. Alternatives are to transform an uncomfortable topic into a more 'comfortable' one, to comment on a possible 'political' motivation in nominating that topic (i.e. one that supposedly advantages an opposing political party) or, a classic tactic of former Queensland Premier, Johannes Bjelke-Petersen, 'reassure' the interviewer (and hence the listening audience) that there is no problem and that everything's under control but without giving any information. 'Don't you worry about that' was a trademark of Bjelke-Petersen's interviewing style.

What can happen in this kind of interaction is that the unfolding of the interaction becomes an ongoing contest between interviewer and interviewee, with interviewers framing their questions in ways which imply a particular answer (i.e. effectively abrogating the role of primary knower) and interviewees counterclaiming the same role, as the ones who 'really' know. In other words, a kind of reciprocity is operating, but the effect is oppositional rather than cooperative. Where the cooperative reciprocity of casual conversation is seen as indicating a degree of equality between interactants, reciprocal contestation is about claims and counterclaims to authority and the outcome is a stalemate: political leaders are powerful but so are the star media interviewers, with respect to public opinion and ultimately the ballot box. So a kind of equality prevails. Both of these interactive contexts contrast with the job interview, one instance of institutionalised inequality, where the interviewee is in fact a supplicant (i.e. subordinate), must present themselves as knowledgeable and competent (i.e. powerful) but must do so without taking over the conversational roles appropriate to the interviewers (i.e. not be too powerful).

As types or genres of verbal interaction, these characterisations are identifiable but idealised. In practice, there is substantial variability in the conduct of all types of verbal interaction, even those which can be most ritualised. The co-ordinates of social relations, locating interactants in social space, are not pre-determined, though some people do relate to others with less flexibility and greater rigidity than others. Some police officers and school-teachers overtly flex their authority by their use of congruent Commands and impersonal forms of address (*'Pull over, driver', 'Shut that door, boy'*) and by their total control of conversational space; some bureaucrats play a similar game (somewhat less overtly) by insisting on rigid observation of standard procedures; many men are still incapable of a conversation with a woman that is not directed at a possible sexual

outcome. In all these cases I would want to argue that what is at issue is not an attachment to a somewhat rigid conception of social (or sexual) role but rather the adoption of a particular subject position which both locates the speaker in a particular place in social space and simultaneously locates the addressee in a complementary position, one that is particularly difficult to contest without being seen to be 'difficult' - a perception which can have serious repercussions.

The basic argument is that the co-ordinates of social relations are potentially up for (re)negotiation in each encounter, though the repertoire of subject positions people have constructed for themselves and had constructed for them, on the basis of their previous interactive and discursive histories, makes it more likely that some rather than other positions are more likely to be (re)occupied in subsequent interactions. Habit is hard to shake, particularly when the cumulative effect of such personal history is interpreted in terms of personality, personhood, the very self, in the still pervasive ideology of liberal individualism. An alternative interpretation is that one's experience of reciprocity (or the lack of it) constitutes a significant aspect of one's experience of power/lessness and is crucial to the construction of available subject positions. In an analogous way, one's experience of the expansion or contraction of the range of available semiotic resources (proliferation, dealt with in the next section) constitutes a significant aspect of one's experience of intimacy/social distance, a second critical dimension of social relations.

The process of learning to occupy subject positions occurs across all semiotic modalities of a culture, since all forms of semiosis 'address' ('interpellate' in Althusserian terms (Althusser 1971)) or position subjects, but verbal interaction is a critical site because it involves the simultaneous articulation of the discourses which form the ideological underpinning for the practices which the interaction is enacting and the enactment of those ideologically-based practices. The intersection of patriarchal or sexist discourses, concerning the identities of male and female and their appropriate relations, with the kinds of interactive practices which serve so effectively to silence many women (Poynton 1985) is a telling instance: the mapping of practice and discourse onto one another considerably increases their effectiveness, in part by making it even more difficult for people to understand what is going on.

Apart from the organisation of conversation, there are two other overtly interpersonal phenomena where reciprocity or the lack of it is highly visible and readily interpretable: the overt expression of attitude or evaluation and the choice of type of term of address. Address alternatives include: full first name, diminutive form of first name, title plus last name, 'endearment', insult, 'inverted' form (an item which would be an insult if addressed to someone not known well). Address implicates choices at morpheme, word and

(nominal) group rank, while attitude may involve lexis only (as in 'purr' and 'snarl' words such as *thrifty* compared with *mean* or *mingy* ), and/or various phonological choices, including intonation contours realising KEY (Halliday 1970), voice quality, lengthening (especially of vowels) and distortions of normal rhythmic patterns. (The interrelationship between the tenor systems POWER and AFFECT, the systems relating to the phenomena reciprocity and amplification, will be discussed in 3.3 below).

Reciprocity is also an issue with respect to such special lexical categories as slang, swearwords, technical (field-specific) lexis, formal (non-field-specific but 'learned') lexis and what Halliday (1976b) calls 'antilanguage', all of which have a strong attitudinal loading insofar as they can signal the membership of the speaker and the non-membership of the addressee in a restricted group of some kind. Adult reaction to teenage slang and student reaction to technical lexis are often of the same kind: resentment at being excluded, at being made an outsider, and a strong desire that such lexis should not be used, the implication being that difference would thereby simply disappear.

Under certain circumstances reciprocity can also involve the question of whether speakers identify each other as speaking the same language variety (sociolect or dialect). Such identification may be lexical, in the case of regional dialects, but the more socially significant level seems to be phonological: 'accent'. 'Speaking the same language' can very effectively decrease social distance, for example when travelling in a foreign country; but dialectal and sociolectal differences within a society are more often perceived in terms of hierarchy and hence power.

It also needs to be pointed out that, significant as conversational interaction is in the negotiation of power relations, considerations of power do not simply disappear when the genre used is monologic. 'Non-conversational' does not mean 'non-interactive': all forms of non-conversational text, from lectures, electoral speeches and sermons spoken to a present listening audience to newspaper reports and all forms of literature, written for an absent reading audience, 'address' or interpellate listeners, as subjects who are to occupy a particular subject position. Such non-conversational genres carry out this task the more coercively insofar as they leave no room for the listener/reader to overtly accept or refuse that position. By rendering one's audience silent by institutional custom ('the special privilege of the preacher, standing six feet above contradiction', in the words of one expert on preaching<sup>5</sup>) or oneself unable to hear any response, even if one were to be made, by virtue of the literal absence of the writers of written texts, producers of such texts occupy positions of considerable power. One might also add that the cumulative experience of

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<sup>5</sup> Reverend Professor Ian Pitt-Watson, Professor of Practical Theology at Fuller University, speaking on ABC Radio National, 23 October 1988.

such forms of interpellation in contemporary democratic capitalist societies must play a significant role in the construction of subjects positioned to hear, maybe to mutter and even do a bit of heckling, but not to feel that they have any significant degree of control over the larger affairs of politics and business. (See 3.4 below for a further account of tenor in monologic texts).

### **3.2.2 Proliferation**

This section will explore the scope for proliferation in conversational discourse and the implications of this phenomenon for a linguistically based model of social relations. As indicated above, the primary linguistic stratum 'at risk' is lexicogrammar, though ellipsis and substitution phenomena are of some importance, and the phonological stratum and the communicative plane of genre are also implicated. The phenomenon of proliferation involves a double patterning: with some kinds of linguistic forms, the range of actual choices increases with intimacy and decreases with non-intimacy, while with other forms the pattern goes the other way, the range of choices decreasing with intimacy and increasing with non-intimacy.

This account assumes a paradigmatic description of language as potential, as sets of choices, and claims that the range of actual (as distinct from potential) choices from relevant systems made by speakers varies as a function of intimacy. A second perspective on this phenomenon is in terms of predictability: i.e. the wider the range of choices available to a speaker, the less predictable their talk becomes. Predictability, however, involves two perspectives: where reciprocity can be assessed by both interactants and outside observers with roughly the same result (particularly allowing for repeated interaction over time), predictability will be assessed differently by outsiders and insiders, and both these are relevant. When interactants are not known to one another, the insider and outsider perspectives merge: one participates essentially as an outsider, on terms given by the culture. When interactants know each other intimately, these perspectives are sharply differentiated so that what may be utterly predictable to the insider (i.e. not only word for word, but with accompanying intonation, gesture, etc.) may be unpredictable to the outside observer. Thus when interactants are non-intimates (including not previously known to one another as the limiting case), topic choice, speech function and mood choices, terms of address and the scope of lexical choice (including the use of slang, jargon, technical lexis and marked attitudinals other than conventional items indicating a positive disposition to the setting or other people present) will be more predictable than is the case when interactants are intimates. In the latter case, not only will whole systems rather than partial ones become available to speakers but additional systems not usually

part of a speakers repertoire (e.g. phonological systems: 'putting on accents') may become a resource, along with various kinds of linguistic innovation, including lexical innovation, for exuberant linguistic play.

Predictability thus operates with respect to the grammatical, the lexical, the phonological and certain aspects of the discourse semantic strata. Predictability is also relevant to the realisational patterns of the schematic structure of genres, where both the 'content' of particular stages and the unfolding dynamics of the genre vary in predictability as a function of intimacy/non-intimacy (see Ventola 1979 on variant schematic structure in casual encounters as a function of social distance). Not necessarily intimacy as a social fact, however, but intimacy as a semiotic construct. Thus doctor and patient may know one another well, and part of the identification of an interaction as one between people who do in fact know one another well will be the presence and/or location of elements of schematic structure that are not canonical as far as the identification of the medical consultation genre is concerned, e.g. elements of chat or casual conversation. In certain critical ways, however, the consultation will unfold as if the interactants were unknown to one another, turning its back as it were on one aspect of social reality in order to focus on a different reality, where the relationship between doctor and patient is necessarily impersonal rather than personal because of the basis of western medical practice in the 'objectivity' of science.

Key systems where the range of actual choices increases with intimacy and decreases with non-intimacy therefore include: topic choice (as a manifestation of field), speech function, MOOD (realising speech function), address forms, attitudinal systems. Conversation among intimates ranges freely among topics (the question of who initiates those topics being a matter of reciprocity), while among strangers topic choice can often be entirely predictable and even ritualised, as with 'the weather'. This is the quintessentially 'safe' topic in a range of safe topics dealing with perceptible aspects of the immediate material situation: the setting, other people present, food and/or entertainment if present. Such topics can be handled entirely formulaically or they can be used to reveal points of view on the part of the interactants, in which case topic choice may rapidly expand if interactants find one another compatible. Topic range then functions as both sign and cause of a re-location of interactants in social space along the axis of social distance.

The range of MOOD choices as realisation of speech function choices will also tend to be greater among intimates than among non-intimates, especially among intimate equals (which is not as tautological as it may seem: parents and young children are intimates but hardly equals). Equals will tend to distribute speech function or conversational roles reciprocally, thereby increasing the range deployed by each speaker, unlike the skewed

distribution of unequals (e.g. in a professional consultation). Intimates are more likely to use a wider range of MOOD choices in realising particular speech function choices: 'playing with the system' in showing greater sensitivity to the relational nuances of situations than non-intimates could be expected to show and also in simply playing, taking on roles for the sake of it. Thus the speech function choice Command, among non-intimates, will tend to be realised by either an imperative (Brown & Levinson's 'bare on record') or by a modalised interrogative, depending on the power relations, whereas among intimates one can not only use either of these choices (depending on the context), but one can also use forms such as tagged imperatives and modalised, modulated and/or tagged declaratives. This is not to say that such mood options do not occur in interaction between non-intimates, simply that the overall probabilities of any of them occurring will be lower, and of the complete repertoire lower still. This is a claim that has as yet not been tested against an appropriately varied body of data, and two linked observations are called for about this prediction. Such data on probabilities is predicted to constitute a cline rather than falling into discrete categories and should be interpretable in terms of the multiplicity of positions that speakers can occupy on the social distance axis of social space: not merely as a reflection of what is but as a move towards the way they want things to be.

Address provides the clearest example of proliferation, as the range of potential choices increases with intimacy but remains small with distance. Among strangers, no term of address at all may be used by speakers of English, unless the situation is what Ervin-Tripp (1971) calls 'status-marked', in which case the situationally-appropriate term of address may be used (*Your Honour, Your Worship, Prime Minister*) or the general status-marked terms *Sir* and *Madam* (the latter increasingly being displaced in Australia by *Ma'am*). This situation contrasts with that in many other languages where 'polite' public forms of address are available which do not carry any implication of the subordination of the user (as *Sir/Madam* can). Between intimates, not only can the repertoire of 'ready-made' resources such as endearments and hypocoristic forms of given names (both personal and family name) be drawn on, but intimacy is often marked by the invention of nicknames specific to that relationship (Hopper et al. 1981). Not all speakers will avail themselves of all these resources: the extent to which they do so will be a significant factor in locating the relationship on an intimacy or social distance axis in hypothetical social space.

A further significant area where actual choices may markedly increase among intimates is the repertoire of 'expressive' resources, involving language and other semiotic systems. This increased use of 'expressive' resources is partly a matter of intimates not masking affect as non-intimates are commonly expected to do: not only positive affect, involving the expression of love and attachment, but also negative affect, getting upset or angry and

shouting or swearing - including at other people. (The relation between intimacy and affect is discussed in 3.3 below).

Turning now to the mirror-image pattern of proliferation, choices that decrease with intimacy and increase with non-intimacy, these are basically matters of decreasing or increasing the amount of redundancy. Thus the extent of ellipsis (especially Subject or Mood ellipsis when the Subject is the speaker in a declarative clause or the addressee in an interrogative, e.g. *Saw so-and-so today* ; *Coming* ; *Find it?* ), the use of pronouns whose referents are not retrievable from the text, the incidence of general words (*stuff* , *thing* , *do* ) rather than field-specific lexis and the extent of elision and other phonological 'shortcuts' is greatest in conversation between intimates and least in conversation between non-intimates. Intimates have shared knowledge and shared experience, including experience of what each other is likely to say, so the language used can afford to be less redundant. It is these kinds of context-dependent and minimally-redundant forms, along with slang and relaxed vernacular lexis, which have come to be seen as the quintessential forms of 'informal' language, a categorisation which all too often has involved negative judgments of both the forms themselves and of their users in a literate society that has been taught to value the more invariant (because more standardised) forms of the written language more highly than the greater variability of speech.

### 3.2.3 Amplification

'That,' said her spouse, 'is a lie.'

'It's the truth,' said she.

'It's a dirty rotten stinking lousy bloody low filthy two-faced lie,' he amplified.

(Criena Rohan, **Down by the Dockside**).

This section will explore the scope for amplification in conversational discourse and the implications of this phenomenon for a linguistically based model of social relations. As indicated earlier, the primary linguistic stratum 'at risk' is phonology, but the phenomenon involved 'reaches up' in an iconic fashion into lexicogrammar, so that 'saying it louder' at the phonological stratum becomes 'saying it stronger' or 'saying it again' at the lexicogrammatical. The ranks implicated are primarily morpheme, word and group ranks, especially involving the formation of forms of address; but amplified forms also occur at clause complex rank. These would normally be accounted for in a systemic description as forms of paratactic elaboration (v. Halliday 1985: Chapter 7).

The basis of amplification is not in fact linguistic at all but physical, involving the exaggeration of regular behavioural patterns with respect to one or more of a range of forms of physical behaviour such as facial expression, gesture, body stance, proxemic behaviour, rate of movement. This exaggeration can operate in two directions, so that behaviour can be 'larger' or 'smaller' than usual: smiles can be jaw-cracking and frowns thunderous, or the face can be almost entirely blank; the whole or part of the body can be moving rapidly and with sweeping gestures, or remain unnaturally still. This pattern of physical exaggeration, or AMPLIFICATION, spills over into the linguistic system, involving initially various physical aspects of speech itself, exaggerations of typical phonological behaviour such as:

- speeding up or slowing down speech rate;
- increasing or decreasing pitch range in intonation contours;
- speaking louder or softer than usual;
- flattening-out normal stress and rhythm-patterns;
- lengthening speech sounds, especially vowels;
- repeating speech sounds (alliteration and assonance).

The most overt manifestations of this phenomenon on the lexicogrammatical stratum are what Martin (in press b) calls 'gradable systems' and Bolinger (1972) calls 'degree words'. Degree words of various kinds are very evidently amplifying phenomena, sitting midway between lexis and grammar in the sense that items like *very* are lexicalised but are grammatical rather than lexical items. Martin investigates a range of gradable systems including modality and adjective comparison (the former lexicalised in form but grammatical in meaning and the latter a mixture of grammaticalised and lexicalised forms - compare *big /bigger /biggest* with *important /more important / most important* ). There is a substantial linguistic literature on modality (v. Quirk et al. 1985 for selected references), but many of the other relevant phenomena are ignored in the linguistic literature, other than passing mention in introductory linguistics textbooks as curiosities, hardly meriting more serious consideration.

Part of the problem (apart from the fact that the meaning involved is attitudinal or 'expressive') is that amplification seems to occur only on the edges of the grammaticalised when it does get into the grammar. In terms of the rank scale, it only has specific reflexes in morphology, and in terms of the syntagmatic axis, its only structural reflex is repetition or iteration. Lexis is a far more readily identifiable attitudinal phenomenon, whether in the form of purely attitudinal items such as *fantastic* and *terrible* or items combining attitudinal and experiential content such as *mob* (compared with *crowd* ) and *annihilate* (compared with *beat* ). But how does one handle swearing and other expletives? These are



phenomena that only occur in speech, often 'vulgar' speech at that, and they appear in all sorts of places in grammatical structure, behaving in many respects like adjuncts but going much further than any adjunct in their freedom of movement by even appearing as infixes (the only instances in English), e.g. *kanga-bloody-roo* . Citing such infixed forms purely as linguistic curiosities, as aberrant, misses the basic point that there are a variety of forms of amplification locatable at the intersection of the lexical and the grammatical, blurring these particular boundaries of the linguistic system in a rather analagous way to the way that the phenomenon of phonaesthesia even more embarrassingly blurs the boundary between the phonological and lexicogrammatical strata - thereby vindicating Firth's conviction that every level is meaning-making, and independently meaning-making.

Returning to lexis, Martin includes graded attitudinal lexical sets among his 'gradable systems', but somewhat overstates his case by claiming a three-value grading for lexis when in fact lexical grading is more variable. The following sets are illustrative (more extensive sets can easily be put together from a perusal of Roget's Thesaurus):

*beat/ thrash/ decimate/annihilate*  
*pet/ dear / sweetheart / darling*  
*say/ shout/ yell/ scream*  
*OK/ good/ great/ terrific/ fantastic*  
*gathering/ crowd/ throng/ horde/ mob/ rabble*

This phenomenon of lexical grading essentially translates the literal amplification of the phonological stratum, 'saying it louder (or softer)', into 'saying it more emphatically', producing lexical sets which differ from one another in the strength or degree of attitude involved. Such sets can be purely attitudinal, as in *OK ... fantastic* or combine attitudinal and experiential content, as in *gathering ... rabble* and *beat ... annihilate*.

More extensive lexical sets also occur in particular social contexts. Halliday (1976b) characterises what he calls anti-languages, the languages of marginalised subcultures such as criminals, in terms of lexical proliferation or over-lexicalisation. Wescott (1977) notes a similar tendency with respect to slang, a milder form of inclusive/exclusive linguistic behaviour, and Stanley (1977) documents the excess of pejorative lexis in English referring to women. Such lexical proliferation is clearly another form of essentially the same phenomenon of amplification, in a similar iconic relation to the literal amplification of the phonological stratum, 'saying it louder' being manifested lexically as 'saying it over and over again', with the basic meaning being 'I feel strongly about this'. The strong feeling can relate to an ideological position, as in the case of the over-lexicalisation of pejorative lexis referring to women, the essential negativeness of the female being something that needs constant reiteration in a patriarchal society, or it can be more a

matter of reinforcing solidary bonds within a group, either a stigmatised and excluded subculture such as criminals or somewhat less marginalised youth subcultures.

It is this latter form of amplification, by means of repetition or reiteration, which operates as the fundamental grammatical form. It seems to be most evident in speech where, presumably, the availability of phonological realisations is more consonant with the simultaneous deployment of both lexical and grammatical resources. In writing, lexis seems to be the fundamental mode of realisation (though note that graphic resources such as font size and type, use of underlining, capitalisation, repetition of letters etc. can be employed as forms of amplification. Graffiti makes particular use of such resources, a simple example using repetition and capitalisation to admiringly refer to a set of named males as *SOOOOOO GOODLOOKING*). Grammatical amplification occurs at all ranks (clause, group, word, morpheme). The repetitions involved range from the repetition of attitudinal items in close proximity in a text, e.g.

*... it's a tremendous responsibility, a tremendous privilege, but there's a big job ahead of us ... ah, I'm tremendously excited about the prospects for an open, honest and a progressive government ...* (Michael Field, newly appointed Premier of Tasmania, leading a Labor-Green coalition, speaking on **The 7.30 Report**, 28.6.89)

*Mr Bond is thrilled, Sothby's is thrilled, and of course the Getty Museum is delighted.* (Sotheby's representative on the sale of Van Gogh's *Irises*, bought by Alan Bond in 1987 and sold in 1990 in tougher financial circumstances, speaking on PM (**ABC Radio National**))

to more overtly repetitive forms, involving iteration of either the same item or of a functionally equivalent item (these phenomena occurring at all ranks of the rank scale):

Rank	Identity iteration	Functionally equivalent iteration
clause	<i>We won, we won! them!</i>	<i>We won! We beat them! We thrashed</i>
group	<i>the pig, the pig</i>	<i>you pet, you dear, you absolute darling</i>
word	<i>a great great party</i>  <i>really really awful</i>	<i>a rotten lousy awful thing to do</i>  <i>absolutely fan-bloody-tastic</i>
morpheme	Hypocoristic name-forms, with reiterated rather than repeated morphemes, seem to be the most elaborated forms in English, e.g. <i>Franglekins</i> (Fran+(g)le+kin+s), <i>Mikeypoodles</i> (Mike+ y+poo+(d)le+s). The invented nonsense word <i>supercalifragalisticexpialidocious</i> (from the film <i>Mary Poppins</i> ) seems to utilise the same principle with a mixture of extant and invented morphemes.	

Figure 3.6 Grammatical amplification, by rank and form of iteration

There are, of course, available grammatical descriptions for iterated structures at clause and (nominal) group rank; but accounts of paratactic elaboration or of apposition or nominal group complexes have not, so far as I am aware, commented on the attitudinal uses of these structures.

This subsection has used the terms 'attitude' and 'attitudinal', without either glossing these in any way or attempting to relate them overtly to a dimension of social relations in an analogous way to the relation between reciprocity and power and between proliferation and social distance/intimacy proposed in the previous subsections. The term ATTITUDE is used here to refer to any linguistic manifestation of what can be called, looking from two different perspectives, 'emotion' or 'evaluation'. 'Emotion' focusses more on the personal, on questions of internal affective states of speakers; 'evaluation' focusses more on questions of judgment, of assessment (as good/bad, right/wrong), and can be seen as less personal than social, deriving ultimately from attachment to particular beliefs, values, ideologies. The linguistic systems 'at risk' overlap at the level of lexis, which looks two ways: 'down' to the personal, 'up' to the social in terms of the evaluative and ultimately the ideological. In terms of linguistic realisations other than lexis, the ideological is manifested more in terms of clause rank grammar and certain aspects of discourse semantics, while the affective is manifested more in terms of grammatical ranks below the clause and in phonology. Both attitude as emotion and attitude as evaluation are concerned with what will be identified in the following section as a third dimension of social relations, posited in part on the basis of the linguistic phenomena explored in this subsection and in part as a result of certain problems with Brown & Gilman's horizontal axis of social relations, their dimension of solidarity. There are certain peculiarities of this third dimension of tenor, not the least being its dependence on the other two dimensions. These will be discussed below.

### **3.3 Modelling tenor as a systemic network**

The identification of the three realisational strategies of the interpersonal leads directly to modelling tenor in terms of three dimensions. These dimensions are to be understood as semiotic dimensions, i.e. not as categories which merely describe the actuality of social relations in particular situations but rather as the dimensions along which those relations are shaped in and through the process of choosing particular configurations of realisations from the range of operative semiotic systems, including the linguistic. In situations where people are interacting directly with one another, reading the configurations of forms

produced in such interaction as mere manifestations or expressions of pre-existing social relations is to misunderstand the relationship between forms of semiosis and the constitution of social relations. People do not speak in certain ways simply because they already are equal or unequal, intimate or distant, but rather people speaking in certain ways thereby constitute themselves and their interlocutors as equal or unequal, intimate or distant. Even in situations where certain semiotic forms are prescribed (or proscribed), as in interaction between military officers and their subordinates, it is only the compliance of the participants with these prescriptions that constitutes them as unequals in that situation. The phenomenon of impersonation is relevant here: dress as, act as and speak as a particular kind of person (military officer, cleric, even surgeon) and you will be taken as what you proclaim yourself to be - until such time as your lack of certification becomes known, that is.

### **3.3.1 Representational issues**

The three dimensions of tenor are called POWER, DISTANCE and AFFECT in the network presented below. The end-points, or poles, of each dimension are modelled as a choice between features, using conventional systemic notation, e.g. [equal] and [unequal] for the dimension of POWER. Since this form of systemic representation has developed for modelling paradigmatic systems in which choices are discrete, and often binary, it would not seem on the face of it to be especially suited to modelling clines or continua, which is clearly what is involved in modelling tenor. Several considerations are relevant here. First, is recent work by Martin & Matthiessen (1990) suggesting that conventional forms of systemic representation, to the extent that they can make the boundaries between some classes of phenomena too discrete, need to be complemented by other forms of representation. Martin & Matthiessen refer to such alternative forms as 'topological', in contrast to the 'typological' focus of conventional systemic representation. If what has up to now been considered standard systemic representation is going to come to be seen as requiring supplementary representation, then there is no good reason why new notational conventions should not be introduced into the networks themselves where this seems appropriate. An obvious notational modification would be the replacement of the conventional square bracket, with the meaning 'or', with a notational form more appropriate for the representation of a cline. The form adopted here is a 'broken' bracket, a square bracket with a break in the middle filled with dots.

In the case of modelling tenor, maintaining some form of conventional systemic representation but employing new notational conventions does seem appropriate. A form of representation specifically developed for modelling choice seems particularly appropriate for the perspective adopted here on the forms of social relations as themselves

constituting a semiotic system, a system whose terms are subject to choice in an analogous way to the way in which the terms of those semiotic systems through which this system is manifested are themselves subject to choice. Such a parallelism in the conception of these systems, between choice on the plane of register and choice on the plane of language, especially the lexicogrammatical stratum of that plane, becomes a further motivation for maintaining some form of conventional systemic representation with respect to tenor.

A further problem with the conventional form of systemic representation concerns realisation statements. In a linguistic network, features are not motivated arbitrarily but by the presence or absence of identifiable functions and by specific configurations of these, e.g. the absence, presence and order when present of the functions Subject and Finite as realisations of choices in the MOOD network. A specification of such (syntagmatic) functions is attached to each (paradigmatic) feature in the form of a realisation statement. The kind of realisation statement that can be attached to features in the tenor network proposed below is at a level of considerable generality, rather than the specificity characteristic of linguistic features, and will in the first instance consist of a specification of the relevant mode of realisation of interpersonal phenomena (i.e. in terms of reciprocity, proliferation or amplification). Such a statement will, however, contain within it an indication of the scope of the potential choices 'at risk' on the communicative plane of language because of the tendency of the three realisational modes to operate within specific linguistic 'territory' (see Figure 3.5 above). Thus, reciprocity (the realisational mode of the POWER dimension of tenor) operates most significantly with respect to systems on the stratum of discourse semantics, proliferation (the realisational mode of the DISTANCE dimension of tenor) operates most significantly with respect to systems on the lexicogrammatical stratum, and amplification (the realisational mode of the AFFECT dimension of tenor) operates most significantly with respect to systems on the phonological stratum.

Such realisation will inevitably be probabilistic, as all register-to-language relations are (Nesbitt & Plum 1988). It will also be configurational, with a range of features rather than single items being implicated, and with interaction between the various choices making it more (or less) likely that some choices will be made once others have been made. It is certainly possible to make checklists, at varying degrees of delicacy, of features/choices 'at risk' in terms of tenor or social relations. Brown & Levinson 1978 is an exemplary example of such a list from a non-systemic perspective, Fawcett 1987 presented an outline of such a list from a systemic-functional perspective and my own work in this area has involved building up a comprehensive list of such features.

As yet there has been no substantial work on the interaction between, much less the interdependencies of, the items on such a list. For example, tenor is clearly relevant to the particular lexicogrammatical forms realising SPEECH FUNCTION. With respect to the MOOD choices realising the speech function Command, in Brown & Levinson's (1978) terms the most 'face-threatening' speech act, virtually the whole range of options is potentially available, from the most congruent (imperative) to the least congruent (declarative). The degree of congruence/incongruence is clearly significant in the negotiation of social relations, but there is no simple hierarchy. Not only is it the case that, for example, bare imperatives can be used both by superiors to inferiors and between equals, but even taking mood tag and ellipsis into account, much less the further interdependencies of the whole MOOD system with other clause-rank interpersonal systems such as VOCATION, POLARITY, MODALITY and MODULATION, to say nothing of KEY on the phonological stratum, massively complicates the possibility of any prediction. Speakers and listeners learn to interpret the social meanings of particular configurations of choices, but we do not as yet have any clear idea of how to weight even such highly grammatically-interrelated systems as these interpersonal systems.

The notion of realisation itself is problematic, however, in relation to a model which is not 'top-down' but bidirectional. Here, Martin's (in press c) suggestion of 'redounds with' as a more appropriate way of characterising the relation between the communicative planes of register and language seems appropriate, since it carries no implication of unidirectionality as the term realisation can. Theorising the nature of the relation between communicative planes is of necessity a somewhat different matter from theorising the relation between strata on the language plane, where a directional notion of realisation, particularly relating language content to language expression, makes more sense.

### 3.3.2 Tenor modelled as a systemic network

The simplest representation of tenor in the form of a systemic network is as follows:

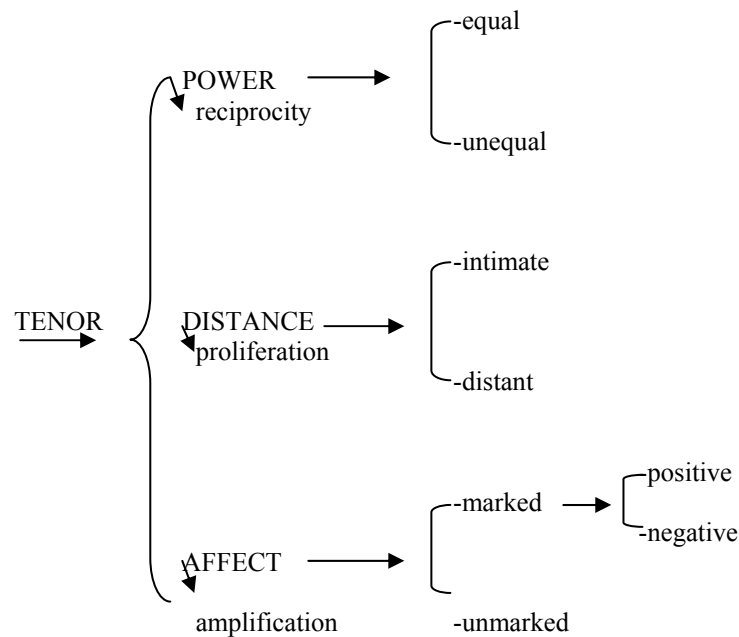


Figure 3.7 Tenor: register plane (least delicate options)

#### 3.3.2.1 POWER

The first dimension is called POWER.<sup>6</sup> The end-points, or poles, of the POWER dimension are defined in terms of equality and inequality, relations that are constituted respectively in terms of the reciprocity or non-reciprocity of the relevant semiotic forms used by interactants. This distinction is modelled as a choice between the features [equal] and [unequal]. These are to be read as ideal or abstract forms of relations, rarely met in this ideal form in human social life. Grimshaw notes that 'Asymmetry appears to be the norm in social relationships and cases of true equality the limiting ones' (Grimshaw 1981: 286), suggesting that the terms of the power system are skewed rather than equiprobable, that social relations will generally incline towards inequality. Given that most societies are hierarchically organised, on one basis or another (v. Dumont, 1970), this is hardly surprising.

<sup>6</sup> Martin prefers the term 'status', reserving 'power' for matters more directly concerned with the operation of ideologies. 'Power' is the term now generally used in the literature on language and social relations, after Brown & Gilman, however. Apart from this consideration, 'status' is a more ambiguous term, having a meaning close to 'role' in classic sociological theory and closer to 'social standing' in everyday discourse. There is a continuity between the kind of power exercised at the level of interpersonal relations and that operative at institutional levels of social organisation (v. Wrong 1979 on power as a relational term); that continuity needs to be emphasised by using the same term.

The fact of inequality, and the forms/mechanisms of such inequality at the micro level in human social interaction need, however, to be distinguished from the social bases of inequality at a more macro level, involving such key sites of difference as gender, class, race/ethnicity and generation. Forms of social structure systematically either privilege or discriminate against people on the basis of these perceived differences, the politics of difference significantly buttressed and in part constituted by racist, patriarchal, ageist and classist discourses. Experientially, such discourses are distinguishable; but they are integrated with a common set of linguistic practices: interpersonal practices constructing positions of equality, dominance or subordination. It is the experience of occupying such positions which in turn plays a critical role in the construction of individual subjectivity, as the practices of power are reintegrated with racist, patriarchal, ageist, classist and other relevant discourses. The interactive organisation of social relations with respect to power (and respect to distance and affect) is achieved in basically similar ways whether one is dealing with relations of gender, class, race/ethnicity or generation. What will differ will be the frequency, purpose and institutional setting of such interaction. (Part III will explore some aspects of the social construction of these specific forms of social relations with respect to address forms and practices).

### **3.3.2.2 DISTANCE**

The second tenor dimension is DISTANCE. The end-points, or poles, of the DISTANCE dimension are defined in terms of intimacy and distance, relations that are constituted in terms of the range (proliferation) of choices made (or available) from the relevant semiotic systems used by interactants. This distinction is modelled as a choice between the features [intimate] and [distant]. These too are to be read as ideal or abstract forms of relation. Just as the naming of the dimension of POWER implicitly reflects the tendency of human relations to be structured in terms of power, a relation of inequality, so the naming of this second dimension implicitly reflects the tendency of human relations to be structured in terms of distance rather than intimacy. Just as was the case with the negotiation of power, the negotiation of distance is also a dynamic process, not simply a function of roles and statuses. Through particular configurations of linguistic choices, interactants may lay claim to greater intimacy or distance than the actual circumstances of their relationship would predict: the used-car salesman lays claim to intimacy with a new client in the hope of thereby being in a better position to make a sale; the would-be Don Juan has a different goal in mind. Such claims may, of course, meet with either acceptance or rejection, realised either overtly or covertly, and the nature of the consequent relationship will be constituted by the ongoing dynamics of what is claimed and how that claim is responded to.



What it is that is being invoked or laid claim to calls for some further examination, however. The commonest contrast of dimensions of social relations in the literature on address is between power and solidarity, after Brown & Gilman's classic paper, 'The pronouns of power and solidarity' (Brown and Gilman, 1960). This highly influential paper was based on the exploration of the uses of essentially a two-term system in a variety of European languages: the T pronoun of intimacy, and the V pronoun of politeness/distance. With such systems, there are only three possible patterns of usage: asymmetrical T - V, symmetrical T - T, symmetrical V - V. Brown & Gilman's argument is that there has been a basic shift in European culture from what they refer to as the power semantic, i.e. social relations perceived essentially in hierarchical terms, realised in asymmetrical patterns of address, to what they refer to as the solidarity semantic, i.e. social relations perceived essentially along a horizontal dimension, realised in symmetrical patterns of address. The difference between the two forms of symmetrical pronominal use, T - T and V - V, is to be read as the difference between greater and less solidarity. Brown & Ford, in their 1961 paper, are able to get closer to distinguishing these two dimensions on the basis of realisational differences because they are looking at address in American English which forces them to look beyond pronouns. They note an increase in the number of types of address in close relations, i.e. a form of proliferation.

Brown & Gilman characterise solidarity in terms of relations of the kind 'attended the same school as', 'have the same parents as', 'practice the same profession as', suggesting that 'any sort of camaraderie resulting from a common task or common fate' (Brown & Gilman 1960: 261) can be identified as grounds for choosing the 'intimate' T form in contemporary Europe. Such camaraderie can be of a more permanent kind, as in the examples above, or purely situational, as in their mountaineering example:

It seems that mountaineers above a certain critical altitude shift to the mutual T. We like to think that this is the point where their lives hang by a single thread. (ibid.)

Such a characterisation of solidarity as the horizontal dimension of social relations blurs several kinds of necessary distinctions, however. Firstly, it blurs the distinction between the horizontal and vertical dimensions of social relations by treating reciprocity, the form of realisation appropriate to the vertical dimension, as operative on the horizontal dimension. Such a blurring of the difference between solidarity and equality is of considerable ideological significance in nations, such as Australia, where the prevalence of a discourse of egalitarianism makes it that much more difficult to perceive inequality at various levels of social organisation. Secondly, this characterisation of solidarity privileges the solidary end of what is clearly a continuum or cline, with speakers perceiving their relation with an interlocutor as solidary seen as tending to use mutual T,

while those perceiving their relation with an interlocutor as non-solidary are seen as tending to use mutual V. Recent developments in epistemology are leading to greater wariness in the handling of binary distinctions, especially those where one term is defined merely as the absence of the other, rather than having its own value. The quintessential example is the contrast of female with male, where earlier characterisations of female as minus male, i.e. in terms of lack and absence, have been successfully resisted by feminist scholars. (Irigaray 1985, Jardine 1985).

The third problematic aspect of Brown & Gilman's characterisation of solidarity is that it fails to distinguish an affective, or attitudinal, component from 'togetherness' or solidarity. This failure in large part is a consequence of the kind of data examined, but not distinguishing degrees of 'togetherness' or solidarity is also relevant: the kind of 'togetherness' involved in having gone to the same school twenty years ago, or being co-religionists, or sitting on the same committee, or being siblings, or living in the same street, or coming from the same town/country, or having shared anything else, is not all of the same kind. Not only can the affective loading of such likenesses be seen as differing in some kind of absolute way between these different kinds of relationship, it is sensitive to situation. Compare the emotional impact, and hence the affective loading, of meeting someone who lives in the same street on the train, at a concert, or at a committee meeting, with the impact of meeting a compatriot when one has been travelling and has not recently heard the familiar language or accent. The linguistic forms employed in such a situation are likely to be characterised not only by reciprocity and proliferation, but also by amplification, and many a friendship has emerged from such encounters, the realisational forms of the interaction having literally created a relationship characterised by equality, closeness and warmth.

'Solidarity' then can be analysed as incorporating two distinguishable dimensions of social relations: a distance dimension and an affective (strength of feeling) dimension, where the attitude or affect may be directed not towards other people in a situation but towards the shared activity or a shared point of view. (The next subsection will discuss AFFECT as the third tenor dimension). Brown's work, as reported in various publications, certainly makes sense of the linguistic data he and his colleagues have attended to; it can also be seen as part of a tradition, within social psychology, which identifies two fundamental dimensions of social relations, summed up by the terms control and affiliation (Smith, 1985). There is, however, another body of work, at the boundaries of social psychology and communication theory, which posits three rather than two dimensions, dimensions which map quite closely onto the dimensions proposed here (v. Wish 1974, Wish 1975, Wish 1976, Wish, Deutsch & Kaplan 1976, Wish & Kaplan 1977). Other relevant work is that of Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum (1957), whose semantic differential response dimensions,

as one would expect from a model based on linguistic responses, relate extremely well to the tenor dimensions proposed here.

### 3.3.2.3 AFFECT

The third tenor dimension is AFFECT. This system is different from the other two in that the first choice apparently allows one the option of 'opting out', with its initial choice between [marked] and [unmarked]. The choice is rather one of whether or not to display affect: the absence of overt realisation is a choice and is meaningful. This is the first of a number of features differentiating this tenor system from the other two. The differences arise principally from the fact that this dimension relates to the personal component of the interpersonal, whereas the other dimensions relate to the social. POWER and DISTANCE are relational: the interaction between the choices made by interactants ensures that relations along these two dimensions in a particular situation can always be located somewhere on the cline between [equal] and [unequal] with respect to POWER, and somewhere on the cline between [intimate] and [distant] with respect to DISTANCE. AFFECT will always be present, as the 'emotional charge' (interpretable variously as want or desire, ideological commitment, belief, the conviction that something matters or is of importance) which the individual speaker both brings to discourse, seen as both experiential and interpersonal, and produces as a reaction to discourse. (The textual metafunction, and the tenor feature mode, are being ignored here: an exploration of the interrelationship of affect and mode calls for considerable explication, and is another project again).

AFFECT is, to a considerable extent, a function of POWER and DISTANCE, but because it is not relational will not always be realised. A speaker's choice of [marked] or [unmarked] affect does not implicitly position an addressee in the way that choices from either the POWER or DISTANCE systems position them, with that positioning either confirmed or resisted by the choices made in turn by the addressee.<sup>7</sup> The choice of [unmarked] affect, then, is better read as the repression of its overt manifestation rather than as absence. In either case, one is talking about a neutralising phenomenon, which does not occur with respect to either of the other tenor systems. (See 3.4 below on the question of 'neutral tenor' in relation to written texts).

The dependence of the AFFECT system on the other tenor systems was initially seen as a problem: why set up a third system at all if it is merely a function of the other two? The first reason for doing so was the identification of the phenomenon of amplification as a third mode of interpersonal realisation, which implies a third tenor dimension. The second

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<sup>7</sup> Affect is widely understood as an expression of the 'true' inner self, of personhood: the absence of even its most basic manifestations (in the form of attachment to persons, of reaction to circumstances which would normally produce pain) in Victor, the 'wild child' of Aveyron (Lane 1977), should give us pause for thought as to how 'natural' and 'unlearned' even our most basic emotions are.

reason was an increasing understanding that the organisation of social space certainly involved the intersection of two dimensions but that the person, self or subject located at any of the possible points of that intersection is not only in a sense a product or function of that intersection, but simultaneously with being so produced plays an active role (as agent not merely subject of/to) in the further negotiation of social space and hence the further production of its own conditions of being a subject/agent. The question of affect, read either as personal emotion or as evaluation from an ideological perspective (the two end up interrelated), is central to this complex two-way process insofar as it is simultaneously reactive and active, serving either to fix the subject at a particular point in social space or to motivate the rejection of that location and hence lead to further active negotiation. Affect attaches individual subjects to discourse, conceived of simultaneously as both interpersonal and experiential meaning. The focus here has been on the interpersonal aspects of discourse, but these ultimately are intertwined with the experiential as far as the social production of individual subjects is concerned.

Returning now to the tenor network, the [unmarked] option for AFFECT arises because of the dependence of this system on the systems of POWER and DISTANCE. The dependence of AFFECT on POWER is such as to make the choice of [marked] affect more likely from both interactants when [equal] is chosen from the power system and to inhibit its choice by a subordinate, but not by a superior, when [unequal] is chosen. Where the relation between interactants is one of inequality, a superior is freer to choose to express attitude or evaluation towards topic, third party or addressee than is a subordinate. Realisation of affect is much more socially marked on the part of a subordinate than on the part of a superior. Subordinates are expected to behave deferentially, in ways which not only do not involve any overt indication of negative affect towards a superior but may inhibit the presentation of a personal point of view with respect to either topic or third parties. The fact that such an expectation is not always met in no way denies its social force.

With respect to the interdependence of DISTANCE and AFFECT, there is a cross-dependency between [intimate] and [marked] affect, and between [distant] and [unmarked] affect. The clearest dependence is with respect to the [intimate] end of the DISTANCE cline. Intimate relations are expected to be characterised by positive affect in western cultures. Grimshaw notes that 'there are relationships which are culturally defined as positive, e.g. certain kin relationships and the informal bonds of friendship' (Grimshaw 1981: 290). Such a claim of 'relationships ... culturally defined as positive' refers to an ideal, an expectation, a hope, all too often belied by actual practice - in a rather analogous way to cultural aspirations to relationships of true equality. At a rather literal level of experience countering expectation, antagonism between siblings is not uncommon. At a more semiotically, and culturally, significant level, in many western countries marriages are deemed to have irretrievably

broken down, i.e. to be no longer relationships, when there is a substantial shift from the culturally-expected [positive] to either [negative] or [unmarked] affect. The ideal contemporary western marriage is defined in terms of the combination of the tenor features [intimate], [equal] and [positive] affect; one measure of how unrealistic such an expectation may be, compounded of the ideological constructs of individualism and romantic love, is the current rate of separation and divorce. It may be the case that in other societies the appropriate distance for such a relationship is located more towards the [distant] than towards the [intimate] end of the DISTANCE cline than is the case in western society, and maybe it is not necessarily associated as strongly with [equal] power or with [positive] affect.

Further support for the interdependence of DISTANCE and AFFECT comes from empirical observations such as that of Argyle et al., who say that 'Liking results in more frequent interaction, especially more intimacy and helping. Status differences result in less frequent interaction, and choice of less-intimate situations.' (Argyle et al. 1981:125). Roger Brown's account of 'The Basic Dimensions of Interpersonal Relationship' (Brown 1965, Chapter 2) notes evidence for the same connection in the work of Heider (1958) and Homans (1950), neatly summarised in the aphoristic

... similarity and proximity beget liking and interaction which in turn beget more similarity and proximity which beget additional liking and interaction ... (Brown 1965: 77)

Affect may be marked when [distant] is chosen, but is more likely to be directed towards the topic (especially if that is an area of common experience or in the 'public' domain) or towards third parties than towards the addressee. The consequence of marking affect with respect to topic can be either to close any initial distance between interlocutors, if they share the same attitude/evaluation, or to ensure that distance is maintained (if not the interaction terminated), if interlocutors do not share a point of view. Thus, the taxi-driver who favours passengers with strong views on immigration, politics or gender relations will be regarded by some as a soul-mate and a long-lost friend, and by others as someone they can't wait to see the back of and hope never to meet again.

Affect can also be related to both other tenor systems simultaneously. One interesting example is a common parental control technique, involving a shift along the DISTANCE cline, from [intimate] towards [distant], realised through the use of more distant terms of address than those commonly used, e.g. full first name rather than a truncated or diminutive form. Interestingly, this strategy can be perceived by children in terms of affect, as in the case of the 4 year-old boy usually addressed as *Robbie* whose astute metalinguistic comment on the meaning of *Robert* was that '*Wobert means cwooss*'. It is interesting to speculate that, for young children, affect may itself be the primary

dimension of social relations; that ontogenetically the other dimensions may be constructed on the basis of affect. Certainly much classic psychoanalytic theory seems to be based on such a proposition.

Whatever the complex of factors relevant to its choice, once [marked] affect is selected, a dependent system offers a further choice between [positive] and [negative]. In both cases, a variety of lexicalised and grammatical forms exist side by side with what I earlier suggested were the more fundamental phonological and physical forms of realisation. Many lexicalised forms of realisation make the distinction between [positive] and [negative] overt, but the affective meaning of some of these is not always what it seems: the values can be reversed, especially negative forms used with positive meaning. This reversal has been particularly commented on with respect to the use by males of negatively-loaded words such as *bastard* or *mongrel* in friendly reference, or even address, to other males. One can only speculate on how pervasive this phenomenon might be: it is likely that the further 'up' the linguistic hierarchy one goes, the more games of this kind can be played, while the further away from language into physical behaviour one goes, the less room there is for games because physiological and sympathetic nervous system reflexes take over. Pleasure and pain are manifested first as physiology and then in overt bodily behaviour (facial expression, kinesic and proxemic systems, etc.); only later are they manifested in terms of more abstract semiotic systems, which however remain closely integrated with the more primary physiological and physical manifestations, since affect as emotion remains a matter of the body. The question of the forms of these non-linguistic realisations of affect, including the degree of difference and the possibility of some kind of inversion or reversal of value, unfortunately has to remain beyond the scope of the present work.

### **3.3.3 Tenor in monologic texts**

All of what has been said up to now about tenor has been predicated on text as dialogic, produced by people interacting directly with one another. What about monologic text, where an audience either does not or cannot respond? Can monologic text, in any of its forms, be seen as neutral, as outside or beyond the negotiation of social relations? Contemporary critical and social theory would maintain that all texts position or interpellate their listeners/readers, and do so with respect to power as well as with respect to the central ideological discourses framing those texts. If power is necessarily involved in the 'reading' of any kind of text, what about the other tenor dimensions? And are there differences between different kinds of monologic texts in terms of the ways in which they (attempt to) position their readers/listeners?

The notion of monologic text used here encompasses texts produced in both spoken and written medium, using various channels of communication: face-to-face (with its potential for both visual and aural feedback), television (no potential for either kind of feedback, other than from a studio audience, but communicating using both channels), radio (with a further restricted output, because of the absence of a visual channel), and various forms of written text (all of which necessitate varying degrees of delay before an audience even receives the text, and which have intended audiences ranging from one specified individual to anyone who happens to see or pick up the relevant publication). (v. Martin, 1984 (draft) for distinctions).

Some kinds of texts seem to more obviously position readers interpersonally than others: news and narrative position ideologically or discursively (e.g. Trew 1979, Davis 1987) but do not seem to overtly position interpersonally. Other texts more overtly position interpersonally, but may not be generally understood as positioning ideologically at all, e.g. textbooks, scientific and bureaucratic texts (the voices of the controllers of legitimated knowledge and legitimated action) (e.g. Hardaker 1982 on bureaucratic discourse). Advertising and political propaganda are seen as doing both (Williamson 1978, Vestergaard & Schroder 1985 on advertising). Where interpersonal positioning is perceived by audiences, this can be in terms of all three tenor systems, with POWER and DISTANCE interpreted directly in relation to the reader, and AFFECT in a variety of ways, ranging from the expression of personal feeling (e.g. in poetry) to attempts to manipulate audience response (e.g. in advertisements) when affect is marked, to appropriate objectivity when it is unmarked (e.g. in scientific text). Readers/listeners seem to be more conscious of the power dimension when they either feel themselves prevented from speaking (in a potentially interactive situation) or when they are made conscious of lack of experience, expertise or authority. Linguistic features of texts contributing to such consciousness include high levels of technical or field-specific lexis and extensive use of the speech function Command, including realisations as modulated declaratives. Topic, level of lexis (technical, vernacular, slang etc.) and extent of personalisation, especially in the choice of pronouns used either for address or reference, are particularly relevant to reader perception of DISTANCE. Personal letters generally make somewhat different choices of topic and level of lexis from those made in bureaucratic discourse: the extent of use of the pronouns *you* and *we/us* in recent Australian Federal Government policy documents (e.g. Commonwealth Green & White Papers on Education), for instance, can be interpreted as an attempt to somewhat offset the distancing effects of topic and lexical choice. (It also has ideological effects, particularly since such choices are regularly linked with a nationalist discourse by the recurrence of such combinations as *we Australians* ).

When listeners/readers perceive themselves as being entertained, the inherent non-reciprocity of monologue does not seem to be an issue: it can be more socially acceptable not to be a good story-teller, for example, than not to have certain kinds of expert knowledge. Such social evaluations are dependent on situation, however. In particular, they are extraordinarily sensitive to field, considered from an institutional viewpoint, i.e. as not merely authorising certain ways of knowing but also authorising certain persons as persons who authoritatively know. (Cf. the discussion on locating social role in field rather than tenor in 3.1.3 above).

Looking at tenor from the point of view of the linguistic choices its systems redound with, POWER is the tenor system inevitably skewed by any form of monologism because its key realisatory domain is at the level of conversational structure: the monologue inevitably positions addressees as non-equals, because it is inherently non-reciprocal. Some spoken forms of monologue call for minimal indications of interactiveness, in the form of audience backchannels, but once the audience is distanced electronically or gets beyond a certain size, or the setting becomes 'status-marked', much less when the medium becomes writing rather than speech, commonly the only markers of response - i.e. interactiveness - are affective phenomena such as laughter, vocalisations indicating disagreement or revulsion, and refusing to attend any longer: walking away, switching off, putting the book down. Theoretically, a reader may always reply to a written text, but only after varying lapses of time: letters to newspaper editors responding to a specific article or earlier letter appear very quickly (if they are going to appear at all) but readers may only meet other kinds of texts long after they were originally produced, and authors may be long dead.

With respect to DISTANCE, because its central realisatory domain is lexicogrammar, it can be clearly realised in a monologic text but again the reader has only the options of accepting or rejecting the position made available: there is no possibility of negotiation.

Things are more complicated with the AFFECT system. AFFECT loses much of its central realisatory domain of phonology in written form. This is ultimately not simply a matter of medium but of ideological conviction about the proper 'experiential distance' to maintain between self and the phenomena of the world. Along the second mode cline of action-to-reflection, paralleling the dialogue-to-monologue scale that has so far been the focus of attention in this subsection (Martin 1984), more writing than speech will be found at the reflection end of the scale. This is culturally legitimised in terms of 'objectivity', particularly in relation to scientific discourse, which is expected to make an AFFECT choice of [unmarked]. AFFECT is not inherently unmarked in written text, however; merely marked in other ways. Attitudinal lexis and grammatical forms of amplification take on greater salience in written text, as do the evaluative components of genre (v. Rothery,



forthcoming; Rothery & Plum 1987). The kind of attitudinal lexis used depends on the genre: in the print media, advertisements for consumer products and by-lined columns expressing strong ideological points of view use overt attitudinal lexis most freely, while news and editorials make more use of covert attitudinal lexis - items such as *mob*, which combine experiential and attitudinal meaning, and 'objective' forms of interpersonal grammatical metaphor (Halliday 1985) which disguise the personal point of view.

Two significant issues emerge from this discussion. The first is the significance of the interaction between the register variables tenor and mode for an understanding of tenor in relation to monologic texts, whether such texts are spoken or written. The second is the powerful sense of writing as a technology of control that emerges from even a superficial investigation of tenor in relation to writing. This work of necessity can pay only fleeting attention to the kinds of questions of reader/subject positioning dealt with in the contemporary literature on social/critical/semiotic theory, but the above comments suggest that further exploration of the intersection of the interpersonal with the experiential in terms of such positioning would prove fruitful.

### **3.5 Locating subjects in social space: historical and cultural perspectives**

Given that location in social space is not simply given but, in speech at least, negotiated, it follows that preferred locations in social space for particular kinds of social relations are historically and culturally specific. This has enormous ramifications in terms of the constitution of people within a particular society as different kinds of subjects, on the basis of different practices pertaining to social categories such as race, gender, class and generation. It has equally important consequences in terms of cross-cultural understandings.

It is possible to map long-term changes in preferred social locations, as was done in Brown & Gilman (1960), but shifts over much shorter periods of time can also be mapped, shifts of considerable significance in terms of class mobility or ethnic integration. For example, children of my generation in the upper working/lower middle class were not addressed by full names such as *Catherine* and *William* but as *Cathy* and *Bill*. The *Catherines* and *Williams* of the new middle class are now addressed as such by their upwardly mobile parents, themselves in some cases insisting on the use of full forms of their own given names to match their new social identities. For many women, this process is further motivated by a rejection of 'childish' forms of given names, seen as infantilising and hence trivialising them. Hence *Pamela*, *Jennifer* and *Valerie* take the place of *Pam*, *Jenny* and *Val*. Such changes indicate that full forms of given names are being seen as class markers, certainly by the adults of the new middle class. There is evidence that their children are

also sensitive to the difference between full and 'shortened' forms, but it is difficult to ascertain the precise meaning the difference has for them.

Full forms of given names are not simply class markers, however: they are a means of maintaining distance in social relations, along with other lexis conventionally referred to as formal (v. 2.1.3 above). In considering changes in marital address practices over several centuries, for example, one can note first a gradual shift towards increased intimacy, with the decline in Title + Last name as an option for middle class couples as the use of some form of given name became the norm. This new usage, however, turned out to be non-reciprocal, i.e. manifesting inequality, since women have tended to be addressed by diminutive forms and men by full or truncated forms. This pattern of address is only recently being shifted again, as a consequence of the women's movement of the last 20 years - but at the cost of increasing distance again.

What is clear is that there is no way one can superimpose one such map on another, with respect to sub-groups within a single society, much less with respect to comparisons across nations/polities. And if one cannot do this, then what one is up for is accepting different options for subjectivity within and across different societies. From such a perspective, the multiculturalism that is official Australian Government policy, in a racially/ethnically diverse society, comes to seem much less mushy and romantic than some of its apologists present it as being, and considerably more challenging. The basis for a genuine politics of difference, within a society as diverse as that of contemporary Australia, has to lie in the recognition of real difference - differences in the constitution of persons as social beings. If some real understanding of this issue within this society can be developed, the implications extend far beyond the boundaries of Australia, into the realm of international relations.

Work directed towards an understanding of people as constituted as different kinds of social beings has met with considerable opposition in some cases, e.g. the response to the work of Bernstein & his co-workers on language and class in Britain (Bernstein 1971, 1973, 1975). Some of the negative reaction to this work can be attributed to the linguistic naivete of some of Bernstein's earlier work and to the even more naive interpretation and application of his work by others, but a response like that of Labov's 'The logic of non-standard English' (Labov 1969/72) has to be seen as motivated by a rejection of any suggestion of there being real differences between people. Labov's response was that of classic American liberal individualism, on the positive side rejecting what was interpreted as a model of social identity locking people in to continuing inequality, but on the negative side seeing any attempt to explicate the role of linguistic practice in constructing social persons as purely deterministic.

The choice is not between a totally deterministic model of the formation of human subjects and a conception of individual 'personality' as present, in latent form, in every newborn child, merely awaiting the proper developmental sequence to show its 'real' nature and to play its role in determining the proper life course of the individual. The kind of model implied here is one which sees the formation of persons, as social subjects, as a function of interaction between the individual person and the social and biological ecosystem they are part of. Each such moment of interaction, however, affects not merely the individual person but also that same social and biological ecosystem. A model based on choice, on options, however abstract those choices/options may be, is a model which allows for the individual subject not merely being determined by but also playing a role in determining their own subjectivity, the subjectivity of those others they interact with and, ultimately, the very shape of the semiotic systems deployed in these processes.

**PART II: THE GRAMMAR OF VOCATION IN ENGLISHÍ**

## Introduction

### The scope of Part II

Where Part I was primarily theoretical in orientation, concluding with the presentation of a model of social relations as a semiotic system, Part II is primarily descriptive. Its major concern is with providing a detailed grammatical description of the resources in English for address. Address has long been regarded, by those exploring the complex dialectic of language and culture/society, as a particularly rich site for such exploration. The pioneering work of Brown & Gilman (1960), discussed in Part I, was followed by a steady stream of work by other scholars investigating aspects of address practice in various languages throughout the 60s and 70s, and into the 80s - Braun's monograph appeared in 1988. (V. Philipsen & Huspek, 1985 and Braun, Kohz & Schubert 1986 (in German) for relatively recent bibliographies). The primary focus of such studies has been on pronominal address, central to address practice in many of the world's languages but not a relevant consideration in most varieties of modern English, where the relevant forms are nominal rather than pronominal.

This has led to a situation where studies of address practice, some incorporating some attention to forms of address, are far more widespread than studies which integrate a grammatical account of address forms with an account of address practice, even when the language at issue is English (e.g. Zwicky 1974). Apart from the obvious reason for such an imbalance, more languages having pronominal systems of address than not, a set of further considerations having to do with the linguistic status of nominal forms of address would seem to be relevant. These include:

1. The looser integration of nominal forms of address in English into the structure of the clause. Pronominal forms of address are inevitably tightly integrated into the structure of the clause, appearing as arguments (participants, in systemic-functional terms) attached to the verb, sometimes literally attached as clitics. Nominal forms of address in English, however, appear as adjuncts, which not only have no fixed place in clause structure but are grammatically optional.
2. The fact that many nominal forms of address in English are names (personal names, family names and nicknames). Names have traditionally been given a marginal status as a linguistic category - even more so when they are diminutive forms like *Rosypops* and *Mikeypoodles*.

3. The fact that many nominal forms of address in English are attitudinal, including slang and non-polite forms, appearing either alone or as part of nominal groups (abusive and appreciative), whose internal structure is not adequately describable in traditional constituency terms. For all the reasons discussed in Chapter One, such a territory has not been seen by many linguists as worth exploring.

Part II consists of just such an exploration. The position adopted here is that an adequate account of address practice has to incorporate an adequate account of the forms used in such practice, on the basis of the paradigmatic principle that the place of a term in a system is a significant aspect of the meaning of that term. We need to know what kind of lexicogrammatical resource speakers have at their disposal in making address choices in order to build up a more explicit understanding of the role of those choices in negotiating social relations. A model of language as social semiotic pays serious attention to linguistic form, while not seeing such attention as an end in itself, because linguistic form is regarded not as arbitrary but as shaped by the uses made of it.

Part II then deals with the grammar of address forms, which will be handled as group and word rank structures, functioning as realisations of the clause-rank interpersonal system, VOCATION. The term address will be reserved for the actual deployment of vocative forms as kinds of linguistic practice. Such forms function as realisations of all three systems of tenor, providing thereby a particularly sensitive indicator of the social relations which are being constructed/negotiated in any particular context. Since vocatives are grammatically optional (though by no means interactively so), and since tenor is always realised configurationally - sometimes involving a choice from one system being played off against a choice from another, a study of address will by no means tell the whole story of what is happening concerning POWER, DISTANCE and AFFECT. It is the lexicogrammatical resource which is most explicitly directed at engaging with an interlocutor, however, and perhaps precisely because it is grammatically optional, it can be manoeuvred with great subtlety: it will be the task of Part III to explore some aspects of how that lexicogrammatical resource is in fact deployed among speakers of Australian English in the negotiation of social relations.

Three kinds of issues will be dealt with in Part II. Firstly, the system of VOCATION as a clause rank system, including the location of its realisations in the (syntagmatic) structure of the clause and the limits of its optionality, is discussed. Secondly, a range of discourse considerations involving vocatives will be investigated, including such matters as the correlation between speech function choice and the likelihood of vocative occurrence, whether vocatives can function independently as particular speech function choices, especially Call, and whether vocatives have any role to play in the structuring of discourse

in terms of units larger than the individual speech act or exchange, i.e. in terms of the schematic structure or staging of genre. Thirdly, the actual forms of vocatives will be described. Many kinds of items functioning as vocatives seem relatively unproblematic and do not call for detailed grammatical description. Such items include formal terms of address (*Ma'am* , *Madam* , *Sir* ) and titles, whether everyday courtesy titles attached to family names (e.g. *Ms Smith* , *Mr Jones* ), occupational titles attached to family names or used on their own (e.g. *Captain Brown* , *Matron* ), or kin titles attached to personal names or used on their own (e.g. *Mum* , *Uncle Bob* ).

Two kinds of vocative items do call for extended treatment, however: names and the kinds of attitudinal nominal groups commonly functioning as vocatives, particularly as insults. Names have certainly long been recognised as significant vocative forms in the literature on address in English, but there are no comprehensive grammatical descriptions: names would seem to have been presumed to have no grammar, as a marginal grammatical category. Attitudinal nominal groups, whether consisting of head alone or particularly modifier + head constructions, seem to have been rarely dealt with, but are of particular significance in any attempt to use the data of address practices to explore the construction of social relations in a particular society. The choice of head words, and the patterns of attitudinal modification characteristic of these forms, calls for detailed description.

The overall structure of Part II is as follows. Chapter 4 focuses on VOCATION as a clause rank interpersonal system and on discourse considerations. It deals with the formalisation of this system as a system network, the identification and communicative roles of vocatives, the optionality of vocatives (because although grammaticality may not be at stake, social acceptability certainly can be) and the location and functions of vocatives as discourse markers. Chapters 5 & 6 provide what is in effect an account of interpersonal structure at word (Chapter 5) and group (Chapter 6) rank for English nominals.

## Data

A grammatical study is not always expected to account for its data - a practice which has contributed not a little to the continued separation of system from process or text in linguistic theory. I want to pay attention to the sources of data for Part II for two reasons:

i) because the grammatical account of forms of address in Part II is intimately linked to the account of address practices in Part III;

ii) because the kinds of data needed for a comprehensive study of VOCATION come from sources not widely used in conventional linguistic description: they are spoken not written, they draw on private (even intimate) rather than public linguistic practice, they involve phenomena regarded as 'periphery' rather than 'core' in terms of linguistic description.

The starting point for the investigation was native-speaker knowledge as a speaker of English, specifically Australian English, formalised initially as a set of 35 categories of vocative (Poynton 1981). This was initially augmented by information from interviews about family address patterns, using a detailed interview schedule. I did collect a certain amount of natural data, ranging from tape-recordings of casual peer interaction to verbatim written records of brief interactions (or parts of interactions) in which I was sometimes a participant and sometimes merely an observer. These interactions took place in a number of contexts: e.g. service encounters, casual peer interaction, parent/child interaction in both private and public situations.

My students, in Linguistics at the University of Sydney and in Communication Studies at the South Australian College of Advanced Education: Magill Campus, provided invaluable data on patterns of address in families, among peer groups and in various work contexts both in class discussions of the topic and in their papers. Friends and colleagues likewise provided me with tokens of less common types of vocative, exemplary examples of address practices, as well as opinions based on their own experience of the validity of claims made by other informants or of hypotheses I had formed.

And finally, for the more quantitative aspects of the study, concerning the positions in which vocatives occurred in clauses and the frequency of vocative occurrence in clauses playing different speech function roles, I drew on written texts in the form of contemporary Australian plays and novels, using relatively relaxed or colloquial forms of Australian English. The texts used were two contemporary Australian detective novels by Peter Corris, **The Dying Trade** (1980) and **White Meat** (1981); three Australian plays: Ray Lawler's **The Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** (1957), Dorothy Hewitt's **This Old Man Comes Rolling Home** (1976) and David Williamson's **Don's Party** (1973); a comic



book designed for teenagers with reading problems, consisting solely of naturalistic conversation: Rick and Tina Amor's *Sylvia* (1976).

Though the written texts used were naturalistic and authentically Australian in idiom, two kinds of comment are called for. Firstly, the situations and interactions occurring in this material in no way reflect the entire range of possible situations and interactions in contemporary Australian society. While there was some attempt to choose material which included a range of class, gender and generation relations, no attempt was made to control for institutional setting (most material involved primarily private interaction, often in domestic settings) or for interaction between those of differing ethnic or racial origin. Both of these are significant omissions, the first in terms of an adequate contextual theory of language as social semiotic, the second in terms of adequately representing a significant dimension of difference in contemporary Australian society.

Secondly, not even the most naturalistic play provides an accurate representation of natural conversation (Burton 1980). It is not my intention to advance any such claim, particularly as far as the incidence of vocatives in discourse is concerned: it seems likely that dramatic texts have a higher overall incidence than natural conversation. It is likely also that certain vocative forms are over-represented in this material, particularly those whose significance the writers, along with other members of the speech community, are likely to be aware of. I would suggest, however, that such data does not seriously misrepresent any other discourse or clause aspect of vocatives, such features being below the threshold of any conscious awareness and hence control.

All forms cited will be authenticated in actual discourse, unless otherwise indicated.

## Four

### Vocative identification, function, location & incidence

Chapter 4 investigates the identification and function of vocatives, and includes empirical investigations of vocative position in clauses and vocative incidence in relation to speech function or speech act choices. This chapter can be seen as an elaboration of the account of vocatives found in Quirk et al. (1985). 4.1 identifies vocatives as nominal groups (noun phrases or adjective phrases elsewhere) and distinguishes nominal groups functioning as vocatives from other nominal groups referring to addressees in face-to-face interaction. 4.2 explores the function of vocatives, starting with the distinction between vocatives as calls or summonses and as addresses (Zwicky 1974, Schegloff 1968). 4.3 & 4.4 are empirically based. 4.3 investigates the location of approximately 1500 vocatives in the clauses in which they occur, finding that although vocatives can indeed occur in a variety of positions, the overwhelmingly favoured position is clause-final. 4.4 goes beyond the questions of form, function and location to explore the question of whether the incidence of vocatives correlates in any way with the overall speech function of the clause in which they occur. The investigation, conducted on a corpus of more than 9,500 individual speech function (speech act) choices, concludes that there is a cline or hierarchy of interactiveness of speech function choices, and that vocatives are more likely to be included in - or even constitute the sole realisation of - speech function choices which are more inherently interactive. 4.4 concludes with some observations and speculative comments on the use of vocatives as, or in conjunction with, boundary markers in the organisation of discourse.

#### 4.1 The identification of vocatives

Quirk et al (1985: 773-4) note that in form vocatives are usually what they call 'noun phrases'. They include examples of what they call 'adjective phrases' and 'nominal clauses' in their listing of forms of vocatives. The terminology that will be adopted here is that of Halliday's functional grammar (1985), in which the term 'nominal group' is used to refer to Quirk et al's 'noun phrase' and 'adjective phrase', and their 'nominal clause' would be a rank-shifted clause functioning as a nominal or a 'nominalisation'.

Halliday's functional description of the nominal group accounts for it in terms of (i) logical structure, i.e. Head + Modifier(s), so that an 'adjective phrase' is simply a nominal group with an adjective as Head, and (ii) experiential structure, i.e. a potential structure

consisting maximally of Deictic + Numerative + Epithet + Classifier + Thing + Qualifier. These functional elements are defined and their typical realisations in terms of word classes are listed below. (All quotations from Halliday 1985):

**Deictic:** 'indicates whether or not some specific subset of the Thing is intended; and if so, which.' (p. 160).

**Realised by :** determiner or possessive.

**Numerative:** 'indicates some numerical feature of the subset' (p. 163).

**Realised by:** cardinal or ordinal number.

**Epithet:** 'indicates some quality of the subset' (p. 163).

**Realised by:** adjective.

**Classifier:** 'indicates a particular subclass of the thing in question' (p. 164). **Realised by:** adjective, noun.

**Thing:** 'the semantic core of the nominal group' (p. 167).

**Realised by:** noun.

**Qualifier:** post-head modifier characterising the thing in question.

**Realised by:** embedded prepositional phrase or clause.

From the experiential point of view, Thing is the 'semantic core' (p. 167) of the nominal group and the other functional categories provide specific kinds of extra information with respect to that core. This element may be realised by a common noun, a proper noun or a (personal) pronoun. From the logical point of view, the Head is the core of the structure, but this may or may not be Thing. Halliday notes that it is quite normal for Deictic or Numerative to be Head, as in *those two* , and *(Look at) those* , but that Epithet (with the exception of superlatives) and Classifier normally do not function as Head (p. 173). Some vocatives do have Epithet as their Head, but no potential for modification other than by Deictic: *my beautiful* , *my handsome* . These forms seem only to occur with positive attitude/ evaluation. Forms like

*\*you stupid*

*\*you greedy*

*\*you selfish*

do not seem to occur, although *you silly* does. What do occur, however, are attitudinal nominal groups which insert a pro Thing, using the word *thing* itself:

*you stupid thing*

*you greedy thing*  
*you beautiful thing*  
*you scrumptious thing*

An alternative way in which the meanings usually coded in adjectives functioning as Epithets end up as Head is when they are nominalised by the addition of the suffix *-y* (spelled *-y* or *-ie*), as in *littly*, *biggy*, *softie*, *toughie*, *sweetie*.

All vocatives in this study, then, will be characterised as nominal groups, using the functional categories outlined above. Let us now turn to the question of the various types actually occurring as vocatives. Quirk et al. (1985: 773-4) identify the following categories:

(a) Names: first name, last name, full name, with or without a title, or a nickname or pet name: *David*, *Caldwell*, *Sarah Peterson*, *Mrs Johnson*, *Dr Turner*, *Ginger*

(b) Standard appellatives, usually without modification:

(i) terms for family relationships: *mother*, *father*, *son*; or more familiar forms like *mom(my)* (AmE), *mum(my)* (BrE), *auntie*, *grandpa*.

(ii) titles of respect: *madam*, *sir*, *your Honour*, *your Majesty*.

(iii) markers of status (may be used at all times - cf terms for occupations): *Mr President*, *Father* (for priest), *professor*, *doctor*, *general*, *vicar*.

Items in (bi) & (bii), unless the terms have unique reference (as in *mother*<sup>1</sup> or *Mr President*), may be combined with names in (a): *Uncle David*, *grandma Peterson*, *Professor Johnson*.

(c) Terms for occupations (normally used as vocatives only when the person addressed is functioning in that role): *waiter*, *driver*, *cabbie* (informal), *attendant*, *conductor*, *nurse*, *officer* (for a member of the police force).

(d) Epithets (noun or adjective phrases) expressing an evaluation:

(i) favourable (some also preceded by *my*): *(my) darling*, *(my) dear*, *honey* (esp AmE), *handsome*, *sweetie-pie* (esp AmE).

(ii) unfavourable (also preceded by *you* in noun phrases): *bastard*, *fatty*, *idiot*, *rotter* (BrE), *slowcoach* (BrE), *slowpoke* (AmE), *swine*.

(e) General nouns, but which are often used in more specialized senses: *brother*, *buddy* (AmE), *girl*, *lady*, *ladies and gentlemen*, *mate* (BrE).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Mummy Susan* is attested for a stepmother, after a child's divorced father has remarried, i.e. the role of 'mother' is seen as less biological than social and hence can be duplicated.

<sup>2</sup> For an Australian audience, there is considerable irony in this item being labelled British, since it is regarded as the basic term of solidary male address in Australia.

(f) The personal pronoun *you* or an indefinite pronoun, e.g. *somebody* .

(g) Nominal clauses (very occasionally): *whoever said that, what's your name*

(h) Items from (a), (d), (e) and (f) may be expanded by the addition of modifiers or appositive elements of various kinds:

(a) *my dear Mrs Johnson ; young David*

(d) *my very dearest ; you silly bastard ; you filthy liar*

(e) *young man ; old boy* (BrE); *my dear fellow* (BrE)

(f) *you over there ; you with the red hair* . Less impolite and more jocular in tone are the appositives like *you boys , you chaps* (BrE). *You -all* (Southern AmE) and *you guys* (esp AmE) are not impolite.

Various points of difference in analysis and/or terminology will emerge in more detail in the course of the analysis provided in this and the two subsequent descriptive chapters. For instance, Quirk et al. analyse *you guys* as an appositive structure, where the systemic-functional analysis proposed in Chapter 6 would view this as a nominal group structure consisting of Deictic + Thing. Others forms which Quirk et al. term appositive structures would be termed noun (or nominal group) complexes in a systemic-functional analysis. (See Chapter 6).

Some differences in terminology will be noted here. The term 'appellative' is not used in the systemic-functional account of nominal group structure, and the term Epithet as used in that model is used as a functional label referring to the class of modifiers within the nominal group which specify quality, whether 'an objective property of the thing itself; or ... an expression of the speaker's subjective attitude towards it' (p. 163). The systemic-functional account generally prefers the term 'attitude' to 'evaluation' - I certainly do use the term 'evaluation' but tend to use it with reference to ideological position or judgment rather than to feelings or emotions.

Using Quirk et al.'s categories as a starting point, one can distinguish the following types of vocatives in terms of their structure:

single item forms with no (apparent) internal structure:

pronouns: personal *you* , indefinite *somebody* ;

names, first or last: *Sophie* , *Wayne* , *Sabatini* ;

deference or respect titles: *Ma'am* , *Madam* , *Sir* ;

occupational identifiers: *waiter* , *cabbie* , *officer* ;

unmodified general nouns: *mate* , *buddy* (AmE), *son* , *girl* , *boy* (racial put-down in US), *woman* , *comrade* .

compound/word complex /appositive structures:

full name: *Anna Russo, Damien Wright* ;

title (ordinary, family relationship or occupational) + name: *Mr Sams, Auntie Meg, Professor Chan, Nurse Preston* ;

endearment + name: *Sally darling, John dear* ;

general noun complexes: *ladies & gentlemen, boys & girls* .

modifier + head structures of varying levels of complexity (note that the function Epithet can be recursive), including:

Deictic + Thing: *you darling, my friend* ;

Epithet<sup>n</sup> + Thing: *young Susan, stupid silly twit* ;

D + E + T: *my dearest love, you filthy swine, you lucky thing* ;

D + E + C + T: *my sweetest darling love, you rotten commie bastard* .

Some of these forms of vocatives are entirely unproblematic and do not call for any extended grammatical description. Such items include pronouns, respect or deferential titles, occupational identifiers and those general nouns which occur without modification of any kind. Others, mainly the appositional or word complex forms, call for a minimal grammatical description. These include full name and title + name structures, whether courtesy titles attached to family names, occupational titles attached to family names, or kin titles attached to personal names. These will be dealt with in Chapter 6, along with other compound or word complex structures used as vocatives such as name + endearment (*John dear* ) and solidarity term + name (*Comrade Tyson* ). Two types of vocative structures do call for an extended grammatical description, however, and significantly neither of them are included among Quirk et al's categories.

Names may appear to have no internal structure, but as soon as one looks at pet or diminutive (hypocoristic) forms then considerable morphological complexity needs to be accounted for. The term 'pet name' is mentioned by Quirk et al., referred to in a disjunctive structure along with the term 'nickname', but it would seem that a distinction is not being made between these terms because the only example given that is possibly relevant to either is *Ginger* , which in my categorisation is a nickname, not a pet name. The kinds of pet or diminutive name-forms that need to be identified as significant vocative items and then to be described are forms like *Tom, Cathy* and *Johnno* as well as the more exotic *Suse, Bobbles, Shazza, Megsikins* and *Mikeypoodles* . Chapter 5 provides a detailed description of these forms.

The other type of structure commonly functioning as a vocative that needs to be further described is the nominal group consisting of Head + Modifier(s). Further potential of the

nominal group structure than that illustrated so far can be realised in vocatives. This potential seems primarily mobilised for the expression of attitude/evaluation, particularly negative attitude (i.e. insults), but positive attitude is also coded in such structures. The structures at issue are those involving the choice of Classifier as well as Thing (as in *you filthy mongrel cur*, *my gorgeous darling girl*), and the iterative amplification of attitude by piling up Epithets, as in *you rotten filthy lousy swine*, *my gorgeous itty-bitty little darling*, *you great big silly*). These can of course combine and be further intensified by the insertion of intensifiers such as *bloody*, as in *you rotten lousy mongrel bloody bastard*. Such structures demonstrate that the full potential of nominal group structure has not yet been described, particularly as far as what will be called attitudinal nominal groups are concerned.

Having identified a range of nominal forms that vocatives can take, the next question is the identification of particular nominals as vocatives. Consider the following set of examples which include a range of elements that have the potential to function as vocatives, in a range of contexts, grammatical and situational. (All examples are taken from written sources as indicated in the Introduction to Part II: titles and page numbers are given). The first eight examples all involve names used in interaction between the speaker and the named addressee:

- i. **Simon. Jody.** *Long time no see.* (**Don's Party**, p.18)
- ii **Mal. Jenny.** *I'd like you to meet Simon and Jody.* (**Don's Party**, 23)
- iii **Hardy?** *This is Bryn Gutteridge.* (on phone) (**Dying Trade**, 36)
- iv. *Look, Miss ...?*  
*Steiner, Mrs.*  
**Mrs Steiner**, *this is a serious business.* (**Dying Trade**, 119)
- v *'This concerns your stepson and stepdaughter, Mrs Gutteridge.'*  
*'Sleeman!' she rapped out.*  
*'Mrs Sleeman,' I said quickly.*  
*'Miss!'*  
*'All right, Miss, but i'm still here to talk about the Gutteridges.'* (**Dying Trade**, 17)
- vi OLIVE: *I suppose you two have met by now - uh?*  
BARNEY: *Well, we've got as far as Barney and Missus Cunningham.*  
OLIVE: *Ah, Pearl it is. Don't let's have any of that Mister and Missus stuff.*  
*Pearl!*  
BARNEY: **Pearl!** (He smiles, then swings jovially up to OLIVE). (**The Doll**, 25-6)
- vii. *That's a lovely dress ... Jody wasn't it?* (**Don's Party**, 24)
- viii. DON: *I don't think you know the other people here do you?*

(KERRY and EVAN shake their heads.)

***Kerry and Evan ... Simon, Mack, and Jenny over there in the chair. (Don's Party, 31)***

The first three examples are clearly vocatives, with a different speech function realised in each case: (i) Greeting, (ii) Call, (iii) Question.<sup>3</sup> Note that a secondary function of the Calls in (ii) is to make known to others the names of the new arrivals who are being addressed and then introduced to others. (iv) also clearly contains a vocative, separated into two components, with the second involving a correction of the title form originally used plus the previously unknown family name that was asked for (implicitly) and supplied by the addressee. Contrast this with (v), where the first speaker (Hardy) uses three name or title forms designating the addressee, only the first of which is a vocative. From Miss Sleeman's initial correction down to Hardy's *All right, Miss* constitutes a kind of information-clarifying side-sequence and the return to the main conversation is signalled by Hardy's use of *but* at the beginning of the last clause. (vi) involves a similar clarification of how one of the characters is to be addressed, concluding with Barney using to Pearl the address form that Olive has decreed is the form to be used, but it is unclear whether this use of *Pearl* is a vocative or a Statement equivalent to *OK then, Pearl it is* or something of the kind. Another kind of clarification is found in (vii), where the speaker presumably intended to conclude the compliment being paid to Jody with a vocative (the intonation, as indicated with dots by Williamson, would seem to signal that the utterance was unfinished) but decided instead to check that she had got the name right, having just met the addressee. In (viii), performing introductions, all the people being introduced are named but this is by way of identification rather than address. A more extended, and slightly more formal, form for introductions is to preface the mention of the names of those being introduced with a vocative addressed to those to whom they are being introduced, i.e. Don could have said something like: *Kerry, Evan, this is ...* (naming the others present).

On the basis of these examples, then, for a name to be a vocative it is necessary but not sufficient that the person designated by the name be the addressee in an instance of the use of that name. Such use must go beyond mere reference and involve some kind of actual interaction with the addressee, where the name (or other nominal element for that matter) is in some sense deictic (see 4.2 below) rather than purely referential.

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<sup>3</sup> The categorisation of speech function used is that of Martin (1981 and in press), based on Halliday 1985. Martin originally identified thirteen categories of speech function (later fourteen), on the basis of (i) grammatical differences with respect to MOOD and (ii) type of response to initiating moves. The system will be presented in detail below in 4.4, investigating the correlation of speech function choice with vocative incidence.



A test that works for names and for some titles or name + title forms, to distinguish vocatives from other nominals naming addressees, is to see whether an item such as *dear*, *love*, *pet* etc. can be added to form a vocative compound such as *Jane pet*, *John dear*, *Mummy darling*. Such additions in actual address will not always be situationally appropriate, of course, although they can be used ironically in confrontation situations. In this case, such forms will have a different stress pattern, the second element of the compound receiving the extra strong stress that otherwise would appear on the stressed syllable of the title or name, and with the voice quality becoming much tighter/tenser, in contrast with its greater relaxation in intimate situations.

Intonation, as Quirk et al. point out, is of crucial importance for the identification of vocatives.<sup>4</sup>

In the final turn of example (v), the nature of the exchange (and Corris' punctuation) indicates that *All right, Miss* would be uttered as two feet, tonic on *Miss*, on a wide Tone 1. If the *Miss* were a vocative the tonic would not be on it but on *all* (the whole produced on a neutral Tone 1) or possibly on *right*, for emphasis, in which case the tone would be a wide Tone 1. Halliday (1970: 37) includes vocatives among a set of elements which 'cannot themselves carry tonic prominence' and which 'therefore if in final position always occur after the tonic syllable, as *tails*', i.e. continuing the pitch movement of the tonic segment or, in some cases, actually initiating the change of direction. For example, Tone 4 would be normal in *All right, Miss*, uttered as a threat to a female child or adolescent, with the *Miss* starting at the bottom of the fall and rising to mid position. That the vocative here is a tail is very clear when one listens to the *All right* produced with the same force but without the vocative: here the fall-rise occurs on the *right* since it is the Tone 4 contour which carries the meaning 'threat'.

Since clause final position is the unmarked position for vocatives (see 4.4 below), most instances of real vocatives are readily identifiable not merely because of their form but because they constitute intonational 'tails'. Most of the problematic cases occur in minor clauses where the potentially vocative nominal element constitutes the entire utterance, i.e. they contain a tonic. There are very few instances such as (xv) and (xx) below, where the element in question certainly may occur as a 'tail' but where even so its status as vocative is dubious.

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<sup>4</sup> The account of intonation used here is that of Halliday 1970 (a brief account is contained in 1985, Ch. 8), which identifies five basic pitch contours, or tones: Tone 1, falling; Tone 2, rising; Tone 3, low rising; Tone 4, falling-rising; Tone 5, rising-falling. The scope of these contours is the TONE GROUP, consisting of one or more feet, one of which 'carries the main pitch movement: the main fall, or rise, or the change of direction. This feature is known as TONIC PROMINENCE, and the element having this prominence is the TONIC element (tonic foot, tonic syllable).' (1985: 275)

Turning now to the nominal group type of vocative, the actual or potential Deictic element in the nominal group structure functions as a useful grammatical test. The vocative is inherently second person, hence the use of the second person pronoun *you* as a realisation of Deictic, as in *you darling* or *you so-and-so*, in nominal group type vocatives. Where *you* is, or could be, used as Deictic then generally the item in question will be a vocative. Consider the following examples:

- ix. ***Liar! Filthy upjumped rotten liar!*** (**The Doll**, 97)
- x. ***Bristly blackbearded bastard.*** (**The Dying Trade**, 72)
- xi. ***Pair of flamin' larrikins.*** (**The Doll**, 99)
- xii. ***Bunch of croaking amachers!*** (**The Doll**, 71)
- xiii. (EVAN leaves. COOLEY waits until he is out of earshot and bellows. *Don't show your face in here again you shit!* (**Don's Party**, 69)
- xiv. *Yeh - you , the great lover that's never had a knock back.* (**The Doll**, 101)
- xv. *You got no sense a property, yous bloody kids.* (**This Old Man**, 44)
- xvi. ***Some protector.*** (**The Dying Trade**, 89)
- xvii. ***'Hardy,' she said, 'the great protector.'*** (**The Dying Trade**, 115)
- xviii. ***The two great bruisers.*** (**The Doll**, 120)
- xix. ***Men your age, you ought to have more sense.*** (**The Doll**, 99)
- xx. *Tarred with the same brush, the lot of yer.* (**The Doll**, 89)
- xxi. COOLEY: *I don't have to deny it. I'm not posing as the champion of the oppressed.* (He walks out to the bathroom.)  
MAL: ***Cunt.*** *At least I have a social conscience.* (**Don's Party**, 77)

The first four examples can all be prefaced by *you*, (ix) and (x) addressed to a single individual, (xi) and (xii) to more than one person. None of them is necessarily vocative, however. They may be Exclamations, equivalent to *What a ...*, not directed to an addressee at all, though they may well be intended to be overheard by the person or persons to whom the utterance refers. Intonation will not always help in deciding whether these are addressed to someone or not. More useful indicators will be voice quality features such as the use of whispering or sotto voce techniques which will indicate fairly unambiguously that the utterance is not directed to an addressee. Deliberate (albeit temporary) avoidance of eye-contact, or even averting one's gaze from the person(s) being referred to, may also be clear indicators that a vocative is not being used. Deliberately ensuring that the person being referred to cannot hear what you say is no guarantee, however, that a vocative is not being used. In (xiii) Cooley's whole utterance, including the final vocative, is still addressed to the now-out-of-earshot Evan despite the fact that he hears none of it. That Cooley is staging (at Evan's expense) a performance for the benefit

of the others present, using the form of direct address as a dramatic device, must remain a fact several orders of analysis removed from the grammatical and speech functional considerations I am concerned with here.

Whether one can appropriately preface a nominal group with *you* rather than *what a* is one test, then, for vocative versus non-vocative. Other nominal groups which are clearly addressed directly to their referents but are nevertheless not vocatives are examples such as (xvi) - (xix). These are not vocative because they are third-person, as is Mal's use of *cunt* in (xxi). This is a comment made about Cooley, which could very well have been made to him (or at him in his absence, as in Cooley's insult to the departed Evan in xiii). (Here I am reading Williamson's use of full stops rather than exclamation marks, together with the absence of appropriate stage directions, as indicating that Mal's line was not shouted after the departed Cooley). The choice of item to realise Deictic is a clear indication that (xvi), (xvii) and (xviii) are third person, this oblique mode of utterance producing an ironic effect. Even the name *Hardy* in (xvii) is third not second person, despite being addressed to Hardy, because it is in apposition with the clearly third-person *the great protector*, the whole being functionally equivalent to an information-giving Statement such as *Here's Hardy the great protector*.

Despite the Deictic *the* in (xx), which should automatically rule it out as a vocative, *the lot of yer* still retains a vocative flavour and seems similar in its effect to (xv) which contains *yous* as Deictic and therefore ought to be clearly vocative. In both cases the sense (and the punctuation) indicates that the questionable item constitutes an intonational 'tail', rather than a separate tone group, since it is co-referential with the subject *you* present in (xv) and ellipted in (xx). It is clear in context however, that the *you* and *yous* of (xv) are not second person but third person, a kind of generic roughly equivalent to *all*. Laurie is addressing her son Don, who is reading with his feet on the sofa, the relevant lines being:

*Get your feet orf me good Genoa. You got no sense a property, yous bloody kids .*

Likewise (xx) turns out to be third person not second. A fuller context is:

PEARL: *I know what he did, don't you tell me. Propositionin', that's what he was.*

DOWD: *I didn't hear nothin' about no propositions . . .*

PEARL: *That's what you say. Making her way upstairs. Tarred with the same brush, the lot of yer.*

Pearl is in effect making a comment about men in general, realised as a comment about the particular males in this situation.

Finally, example (xiv) includes both the second person pronoun and the definite article, i.e. it seems to be both second and third person. The context is as follows:

BARNEY: *You damned fool - do you think I would have told them?*  
 ROO: *Well, it's about time they knew what they was dealin'*  
*with, anyway, a coupla lousy no-hopers.* BARNEY'S head  
 jerks around and ROO'S eyes glint as he sees a weapon for  
 revenge.  
*Yeh - you, the great lover that's never had a knock*  
*back. Tell 'em how lucky you've been lately -*  
 BARNEY almost pleading . *Don't, Roo.*

There is no doubt that the *you* of *you, the great lover that's never had a knock back* is second person and that it is addressed to Barney. The same kind of ironic distancing effect is created by the third person nominal group which follows as was noted in example (xvii) *Hardy, the great protector*. In the latter case, however, the name itself was treated as third person. There are three options for analysis here: (i) a vocative pronoun in apposition with a co-referential non-vocative nominal group, (ii) the whole thing as vocative, (iii) the whole thing as referential - this last option being the least satisfactory.

Though all vocatives are inherently second person (including vocatives addressed to oneself), *you* is not the only possibility as Deictic. If one changes one's perspective from orientation towards addressee-as-other to orientation towards addressee-in-relation-to-speaker, then one finds that first person possessive forms used as Deictic make perfect sense. The predominant first person possessive form used in Australian English is *my*, with *our* used in other varieties of English where speaker and addressee share membership of a tightly-knit group such as a family. When adults are speaking to young children, another possessive form (equivalent in function to a first person pronoun) that can occur is the possessive form of the name that the child would normally use in addressing that adult, eg. *Mummy's/ Grandpa's little darling*.

There seem to be no instances of vocatives which may only be prefaced by these third-person-functioning-as-first-person possessives, but there are certainly items which may be preceded by *my* but not by *you*: solidary words such as *mate, friend, pal*; general nouns referring to people, such as *girl* and *son*; and attitudinally-positive Epithets used as Heads in nominal groups, such as *gorgeous* and *beautiful*. (See 6.3.1 for a discussion of these forms of Deictic). Thus the possibility of *my* occurring as Deictic provides another test for the identification of vocatives. Since some vocatives can have either *my* or *you* as Deictic (e.g. most endearments), it is better to characterise this test as a single test involving the possible realisation of Deictic as either of the pronouns *my* or *you*.

## 4.2 Functions of vocatives

Quirk et al. characterise the vocative as

an optional element, usually a noun phrase, denoting the one or more persons to whom the sentence is addressed. It is either a CALL, drawing the attention of the person or persons addressed, singling them out from others in hearing, ... , or an ADDRESS, expressing the speaker's relationship or attitude to the person or persons addressed. (Quirk et al. 1985: 773).

This account makes use of Zwicky's distinction between vocatives as calls, 'designed to catch the addressee's attention,' and as addresses, to 'maintain or emphasise the contact between speaker and addressee' (Zwicky 1974: 787). Essentially the same distinction is made by Schegloff, who distinguishes between 'terms of address' and 'summons items', used 'to summon, to seek to get attention' (Schegloff 1968: 383). This distinction is a useful starting point for a discussion of vocative function. The summons or attention-getting function of vocatives has sometimes been the only function recognised (e.g. Fawcett 1980: 235), but the addressing function is in fact the more general function.<sup>5</sup> Vocatives as addresses have both a larger repertoire of forms and a wider range of locations of occurrence in discourse. Levinson notes both these features:

Summonses are naturally utterance-initial, indeed conversation-initial ... Addresses are parenthetical and can occur in the sorts of locations that other parentheticals can occupy. Not all summons forms can be used as addresses ... although it may be that all addresses can be used as summonses ... (Levinson 1983: 71).

At a more general level, vocatives can be seen as forms of deixis. Levinson characterises deixis as follows:

... deixis concerns the ways in which languages encode or grammaticalize features of the context of utterance or speech event, and thus also concerns ways in which the interpretation of utterances depends on the analysis of that context of utterance. Thus the pronoun *this* does not name or refer to any particular entity on all occasions of use; rather it is a variable or place-holder for some particular entity given by the context (e.g. by a

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<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, an assumption that the summons or attention-getting function would predominate in talk between adults and children, especially young children, proved to be unfounded in a small preliminary survey of some of the material in a corpus collected for an ongoing study of child language, kindly made available by Associate-Professor Ruqaiya Hasan, School of English and Linguistics, Macquarie University. Of the set of five interactions between mothers and their four-year-old children examined, attention-getting vocatives ranged between approximately 3% to approximately 15% of those clauses containing vocatives. The fact that this data consisted of taped face-to-face interaction is undoubtedly relevant to such a finding, as is the age of the children: younger children may require more calls/summonses to get them to come or to maintain attention.

gesture). The facts of deixis should act as a constant reminder to theoretical linguists of the simple but immensely important fact that natural languages are primarily designed, so to speak, for use in face-to-face interaction, and thus there are limits to the extent to which they can be analysed without taking this into account ... (Levinson 1983: 54).

Levinson sees the distinction between vocative calls or summonses, on the one hand, and addresses, on the other, in terms of a distinction between gestural and symbolic usage with respect to deixis. He presents the distinction as follows:

Terms used in a gestural deictic way can only be interpreted with reference to an audio-visual-tactile, and in general a physical monitoring, of the speech event. ... In contrast, symbolic usages of deictic terms require for their interpretation only knowledge of (in particular) the basic spatio-temporal parameters of the speech event (but also, on occasion, participant-role and discourse and social parameters). ... We could formulate the distinction thus: gestural usages require a moment by moment physical monitoring of the speech event for their interpretation, while symbolic usages make reference only to contextual co-ordinates available to participants antecedent to the utterance. (Levinson 1983: 65-6).

The vocative examples he cites (p. 71) exemplify this distinction:

summons:     ***Hey you**, you just scratched my car with your frisbee*  
 address:     *The truth is, **Madam**, nothing is as good nowadays*

Deixis is not just a matter of pointing or distinguishing with respect to 'the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the act of utterance' (Lyons 1977: 636), however, but can also involve a different kind of location of speakers within the situation of utterance. Levinson notes that:

... titles of address and all vocative forms seem invariably marked for speaker-referent relationship: there is no such thing, it seems, as a socially-neutral summons or address ... (Levinson 1983: 92).

Levinson calls this kind of location 'social deixis', distinguishing it from the other kind of deixis relevant to vocatives, 'person deixis':

Person deixis concerns the encoding of the **role** of participants in the speech event in which the utterance in question is delivered: the category **first person** is the grammaticalization of the speaker's reference to himself [sic], **second person** the encoding of the speaker's reference to one or more addressees, and **third person** the encoding of reference to persons and entities which are neither speakers nor addressees of the utterance in question. Familiar ways in which such participant roles are encoded in language are of course the pronouns and their associated predicate agreements.

... social deixis concerns the encoding of social distinctions that are relative to participant-roles, particularly aspects of the social relationship holding between speakers and addressee(s) or speaker and some referent. In many languages, distinctions of fine gradation between the relative ranks of speaker and addressee are systematically encoded throughout, for example, the morphological system, in which case we talk of **honorifics**; but such distinctions are also regularly encoded in choices between pronouns, summons forms of vocatives, and titles of address in familiar languages. (Levinson 1983: 62 & 63, emphases in original).

Note that the use of the term 'role' in the two quotations does not distinguish between 'conversational role' and 'social role'. In discussing person deixis, role means the former, whereas in discussing social deixis, role means the latter. Conversational role, as speaker or addressee, initiator or responder, is not entirely unrelated to considerations of social role, however that is conceptualised; but they should not be confused. On the question of social role, Levinson makes clear in his discussion of social deixis that he views roles as existing independently of those who occupy them by referring to 'the social identities of participants (properly, the incumbents of participant-roles)' (p. 89). A more satisfactory view of role in terms of the position adopted in this work is to see it not in terms of available slots that people fill but rather as a product of human semiotic work: people act in situations in ways they see as appropriate, such ways including the reproduction of (stereotypical notions of) appropriate forms of interaction. Social relations are very much an achieved social phenomenon, however much a society purports to be organised on the basis of ascribed roles. In any case, role is interpreted in this work as a matter of field not tenor - v. 3.1.3 above.

Levinson sets up a set of categories which distinguish between four types of relational social deixis:

- (i) speaker and referent (e.g. referent honorifics)
- (ii) speaker and addressee (e.g. addressee honorifics)
- (iii) speaker and bystander (e.g. bystander or audience honorifics)
- (iv) speaker and setting (e.g. formality levels) (Levinson 1983: 90).

noting that the relevant category for terms of address is in fact the first, not the second, category. He credits Comrie (1976b) with distinguishing (i)-(iii) above, pointing out that

traditional descriptions have often confused (i) and (ii): the distinction is that in (i) respect can only be conveyed by referring to the 'target' of the respect, whereas in (ii) it can be conveyed without necessarily referring to the target. (ibid.).



Pronominal systems of address, such as the T/V systems discussed by Brown & Gilman, are thus systems of referent honorifics, as are titles and vocative forms generally. It should be noted, however, that respect is not the only attitude that can be adopted towards an addressee: insult, whether serious or joking, is a ubiquitous phenomenon (e.g. Algeo 1977, Douglas 1975b, Huang & Warren 1981, Labov 1972b, Noland & Warren 1981) and one with considerable implications for the ideological underpinnings of the social order. Douglas notes (1975a: 12) that 'In any culture insulting terms are the most illuminating indication of accepted values.' This issue provides a nice exemplification of a more general point concerning deixis made by Lyons:

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that person deixis in any language that manifests it (and, as far as we know, all natural languages do) is something that cannot be analysed away in terms of anything else. Deixis, in general, sets limits on the possibility of decontextualization; and person-deixis, like certain kinds of modality, introduces an ineradicable subjectivity into the semantic structure of natural languages (cf. Benveniste, 1958). (Lyons 1977: 646)

Vocatives constitute a particularly telling instance of such subjectivity, from the perspective not only of person deixis but also of social deixis: simultaneously locating self and other(s), not only in terms of the immediate communicative event, both experientially and interpersonally, but within a broader cultural framework. Before developing this issue further, however, and using it as a basis for proposing a subcategorisation of the vocative function address, one final general issue concerning deixis should be noted. Levinson refers to the 'essential assumption of that basic face-to-face conversational context in which all humans acquire language' (p. 63), going on to cite Lyons:

The grammaticalization and lexicalization of deixis is best understood in relation to what may be termed the canonical situation of utterance: this involves one-one, or one-many, signalling in the phonic medium along the vocal-auditory channel, with all the participants present in the same actual situation able to see one another and to perceive the associated non-vocal paralinguistic features of their utterances, and each assuming the role of sender and receiver in turn ... There is much in the structure of languages that can only be explained on the assumption that they have developed for communication in face-to-face interaction. This is clearly so as far as deixis is concerned. (Lyons 1977: 637-8)

Vocatives undoubtedly derive from this 'canonical situation of utterance' and have their greatest force in constructing social relations in such interactive contexts, but are not restricted to face-to-face interaction between a speaker and an addressee both of whom are co-present and able both to hear and to respond to what is being said. Vocatives can be addressed to those who are:

- (i) not visible or even physically present, as in conversations from one room to another or on the telephone;
- (ii) not within hearing of the addressee, as in abuse of other drivers on the road or of umpires of sporting contests. In the former case, the target of the abuse is not necessarily meant to hear the abuse, while in the latter case, the abusive vocatives may constitute a performance for one's fellow-barrackers, with the possibility of getting under the skin of supporters of the rival team as a secondary consideration. In both cases one should perhaps say that the vocatives are addressed at rather than to the addressee. Such items can be seen as realisations of the speech function category Exclamation (see 4.4 below);
- (iii) not human, as in address to pets, which can involve as much proliferation of types as to any human intimate;
- (iv) not even animate, as in 'address' to cars, which not uncommonly have names, but also to other objects - usually when proving recalcitrant. Generic names such as *Fred* or *Bruce* may be used to 'address' objects; or *thing* preceded by appropriate Epithet, especially attitudinal, e.g. *you stupid bloody thing* ; or the headword may be a metaphorical use of an item normally used only to refer humans, eg. *you silly poof* was overheard addressed by a workman to a set of metal shelving that was proving troublesome to put together.

In the case of (i) & (iii), vocatives can clearly have the function of either call or address - for the purposes of vocation, at least, pets are to be regarded as human. In the case of (ii) & (iv), call is not a relevant category. One might also want to develop a more elaborated set of what Levinson refers to as 'participant roles', i.e. the roles of those participating in a speech situation,<sup>6</sup> e.g. distinguishing between addressee, hearer and target, with respect to at least the umpire abuse kind of example in (ii). But it will be no help with respect to abuse (or praise) when either no audience is present or when an object rather than a person is apostrophised.

What the kinds of vocative in (ii) and (iv) have in common, together with more direct instances of abuse (or praise) referred to above, is a strong attitudinal component. If any of these are to be categorised as instances of vocative address, then a distinction would seem to be appropriate between these attitudinal forms and other forms which may socially locate people but do not so clearly involve an expressive, personal or 'subjective' meaning. In relation to tenor, all vocative usage can be seen as relevant to the systems of POWER and DISTANCE, but only the attitudinal ones will also realise the AFFECT system.

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<sup>6</sup> Not to be confused with grammatical participants, or arguments, in a systemic-functional analysis of experiential meaning at clause rank.

Finally, one might suggest the possibility of a category intermediate between gestural and symbolic deixis, at least with respect to attitudinal vocatives, particularly abuse based on race/ethnicity, gender, or (presumed) sexuality. Gratuitous public insult can be seen as simultaneously gestural and symbolic: not only does visual information within the context of situation give rise to the insult in the first place, but the use of the insult functions both to reinforce and to create anew social relations of a particular kind between speaker and addressee. It certainly is the case that no vocatives are neutral - a fundamental function seems to be to identify and place people with respect to significant social categories. This issue will be taken up again in Chapter 6, which will specify what the relevant categories seem to be on the basis of the lexis for praise and abuse.

### 4.3 Vocative position in clause structure

Vocatives certainly do occur in a variety of positions within clauses, but their location is firstly constrained by the disposition of the elements of the principal clause rank interpersonal structure, MOOD. In noting that vocatives can 'take initial, medial, or final position in the sentence', Quirk et al. (1985: 773) fail to take sufficient account of their precise locations, particularly with respect to what they call medial position. Secondly, although it is certainly the case that vocatives can occur in a variety of positions in the clause, the overwhelming probability is that they will occur in final position.

A caveat is necessary, however. The strong likelihood of vocatives occurring in clause-final position is undeniable in adult-to-adult talk but does not necessarily hold for adult-to-child talk, which seems to be characterised by a much higher proportion of initial vocatives (see 4.4 below). This could be interpreted as a higher proportion of calls compared to addresses in vocatives to children compared with vocatives to adults (but note footnote 5).

The data on which the claims in this section are based consists primarily of written material, all by Australian authors: three contemporary naturalistic plays: Ray Lawler's **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** (1957), David Williamson's **Don's Party** (1973) and Dorothy Hewett's **This Old Man Comes Rolling Home** (1976); two contemporary thrillers by Peter Corris, containing a high proportion of naturalistic conversation: **The Dying Trade** (1980) and **White Meat** (1981); and a comic book designed for teenagers with reading problems, consisting solely of naturalistic conversation: Rick and Tina Amor's **Sylvia** (1976). This material contains nearly 1500 instances of vocatives of all kinds, occurring in different positions in clauses, and occurring in a variety of dyadic interactions in clauses realising the whole gamut of speech function choices.

Because vocatives in natural conversation occur with fluctuating (but rarely high) frequency, it was decided to use written material for the quantitative analysis in this, and the following, section of this chapter in order to obtain sufficient vocative tokens without having to handle unmanageable amounts of natural data. The kinds of spoken corpora available in Australia are largely based on the classic sociolinguistic interview. However useful such data may be for other purposes, it is unlikely to yield many vocative tokens, much less types, because much of the interaction is taking place between strangers and on relatively neutral topics. Other bodies of data, such as the dinner-party conversation data collected by Elaine Daisley for Dr Barbara Horvath and by Suzanne Eggins for her doctoral thesis (Department of Linguistics, University of Sydney), were still in the process of collection and transcription when the quantitative aspect of this study was being undertaken.

No claims will be advanced that the frequencies of occurrence of vocatives in the written texts investigated reflect actual frequencies in natural conversation.<sup>7</sup> What can be reasonably claimed, however, is that two basic patterns, if they exist in natural conversation, ought to be accurately reflected in written texts: firstly, the pattern of vocative placement in clauses and secondly the incidence of vocatives in clauses realising different speech functions. The analysis of the written texts reveals clear patterns of both types which it seems not unreasonable to extrapolate to natural conversation, since such patterns may be presumed to derive from conversation in the first place and are not matters likely to be under any significant degree of conscious control, unlike vocative selection. (See Burton 1980 for a comparison of dramatic and conversational interaction). Table 4.1 sets out the findings on vocative placement, using a three-way distinction of initial, medial and final position:

TEXT	VOCATIVE WITHIN CLAUSE - POSITION						VOC AS		Total		N	%
	Initial		Medial		Final		Total		N	%		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
<b>PLAYS</b>												
The Doll	48	39.02	-	0.00	75	60.98	123	73.65	44	26.35	167	
Don's Party	10	8.62	1	0.86	105	90.52	116	76.80	35	24.20	151	
This Old Man	65	11.02	11	1.86	514	87.12	590	94.55	34	5.45	624	
<b>NOVELS</b>												
Dying Trade	16	6.4	-	0.00	234	93.60	250	90.58	26	9.42	276	
White Meat	26	13.27	-	0.00	170	86.73	196	89.50	23	10.50	219	
<b>COMIC</b>												
Sylvia	5	10.64	-	0.00	42	89.36	47	94.00	3	6.00	50	
<b>TOTALS</b>	170	12.86	12	0.91	1140	86.23	1322	88.90	165	11.10	1487	

**Table 4.1 Vocative position in clause**

<sup>7</sup> My impression is that in general written texts, especially plays, do in fact use more vocatives, and do so by a factor of possibly five or more, but I do not have enough natural data of sufficient variety to demonstrate this.

Note that for each text, a certain number of vocatives occur as complete minor clauses realising independent speech functions - in particular Call and Greeting. Since the question of position in clause is not relevant for these tokens, they have been excluded from the tallies relating to this issue. They appear in Table 4.1 in a separate column.

The pattern of vocative placement in clauses revealed in this table is quite clear-cut: vocatives favour final position over initial or medial position, and do so for five of the six texts in a ratio of approximately 9:1, thereby providing another instance of the unbalanced system, whose terms always seem to be in this particular ratio, in contrast with the balanced system whose terms have equal probabilities of occurrence, i.e. are in a ratio of approximately 1:1. (See Plum 1981, Nesbitt & Plum 1988 for an extended discussion of this phenomenon and a demonstration of its operation in relation to the verbal group and to logical structure in the clause complex).

Further, those vocatives which did occur in non-final position in the written texts strongly favoured initial rather than medial position - in fact, five out of the six texts did not contain a single instance of a clause-medial vocative and there was no instance in the natural data examined. (I have no explanation to offer of why the ratio of final to non-final vocatives should be of the order of 3:2 in **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll**, i.e. very much closer to a balanced system. Since this text does not contain significantly different proportions of types of speech function choices compared with the other texts, one possible explanation for the discrepancy, the answer must lie either in some difference in the nature of the interaction portrayed in this play compared with the other material - an issue which has not been taken up - or else it is due to Lawler: either his awareness of a real difference in vocative placement by the kinds of people he depicts in his play (which, if it were the case, would be a further dimension of the question of coding orientation in relation to vocatives raised in Chapter 7 below) or his defective 'ear' as far as this aspect of usage is concerned.

What has been regarded as constituting an occurrence of initial, medial or final vocative requires elaboration, however. The functional organisation of the clause from the interpersonal perspective, i.e. with respect to mood, distinguishes in the first instance between the functional components Mood and Residue (the ordering of these, and of the elements which constitute them being what differentiates the different mood choices, e.g. declarative, interrogative, imperative etc.). The unmarked order in a declarative clause is Mood ^ Residue, with the functional elements of the Mood occurring in the order Subject ^ Finite and those of the Residue in the order Predicator ^ Complement(s) ^ Adjunct(s). This position for Adjuncts applies particularly to circumstantial Adjuncts, 'those that express some circumstance attendant on the process represented in the clause.' (Halliday 1985: 81). Other kinds of Adjunct, textual or interpersonal in their function, tend to occur

in different locations. The two types of Modal Adjunct, interpersonal in orientation, are likely to prove most relevant to vocatives. The type of Adjunct most relevant to the vocative is the Comment Adjunct, expressing a more overt intrusion of the speaker's point of view. The kinds of meanings involved include admissive (e.g. *frankly, to tell you the truth* ), desiderative (e.g. *luckily, regrettably* ), validative (e.g. *broadly speaking, objectively* ), evaluative (e.g. *wisely, understandably* ). (A more comprehensive list is to be found in Table 3(3), Halliday 1985: 50). Comment Adjuncts 'tend to occur thematically, finally, between Theme and Rheme, or between Mood and Residue; and when medial, they are typically associated with a boundary between information units.' (op. cit. 83). The pattern for vocatives is remarkably similar. In tabulating the results presented in Table 4.1, vocatives occurring thematically were classified as initial and those occurring between Theme and Rheme, or between Mood and Residue were classified as medial. There was no problem with identifying final position

Initial vocatives are those which occur as part of the Theme, but preceding the topical theme. They may themselves initiate a clause or they may be preceded by an attention-getter such as *Look, Listen, Hey, Here* etc., e.g.

*Barney, maybe it'd be better if we left it the way it was.* (**The Doll**, 88)

*Hey, missus, where's your rubbish heap?* (**The Doll**, 23)

Other interpersonal thematic elements may also precede the vocative, e.g.

*Honest, Ol, that's one thing just seemed to happen.* (**The Doll**, 110)

While a combination of attention-getting and interpersonal thematic elements, plus textual elements, is clearly possible, e.g. Halliday's example of a maximally extended theme, including a vocative:

Well	but	then	Ann	surely	wouldn't	the best idea	be to join the group
continuative	structural	conjunctive	vocative	modal		finite	topical
textual			interpersonal				
Theme							Rheme

**Figure 4.1 Thematic structure, including vocative (Halliday 1985: 55. Figure 3-13)**

nothing of this degree of thematic complexity occurs in any of the data examined.

Medial vocatives occurred in two positions, either preceding an adjunct, as in

*What's on the stove, love, for a hungry workin' man?* (**This Old Man**, 10)

*You put Berrigan up to it, **Noni**, at Ricky's suggestion . (White Meat, 177)*

or immediately following a thematic equative, as in

*One thing that really shits me about you, **boy**, is your compulsive politeness (Don's Party, 51)*

*Best thing you c'n do, **Ede**, is settle down 'ere till yous get your Housin' Commission place . (This Old Man, 49)*

The former position was considerably more common than the latter, the two post thematic equative vocatives cited above being the only two examples of this type. The nature of the structure involved, an embedded clause functioning as a nominalised Subject, presumably explains the lack of any effect of markedness of the vocative occurring between Subject and Finite, i.e. breaking the unity of the Mood element of the clause. Contrast the effect of the examples above with the following invented but entirely plausible, if marked, example:

*This investigation, Sir, will be pursued with the utmost rigour*

In both paratactic and hypotactic clause complexes the vocative normally seems to occur after the first element so it seems reasonable to suggest that by analogy this pattern might be extended to include embedded clauses in subject position. If this explanation is correct, it would also explain the oddity of a vocative occurring between Subject and Finite, i.e. breaking the unity of the Mood element of the clause.

Rhythmic considerations may be involved, but deictic factors are probably the deciding ones for many instances of medial vocatives: in all the cited examples, and in a number of other examples found, the vocative is appended to that part of the clause which refers explicitly or by implication to the addressee or actions of the addressee. One other interesting example does not involve such reference but the vocative does immediately follow the first non-self deictic element, in this case a locative:

*I've come to have a discussion 'ere, **Mrs Dockerty**, about your son and my daughter ... (This Old Man, 25)*

In other instances the adjunct would seem to be more of an afterthought, so that it is understandable that the vocative appears in what would have been a perfectly acceptable clause-final position but turns out not to be, e.g.

*My husband c'n do all that's necessary, **Mrs Keeler**, with my help . (This Old Man, 29)*

This example demonstrates one of the difficulties involved in dealing with written texts, in that it is perfectly possible for this sentence to be spoken as a major clause with a vocative in final position, followed by a minor clause (the genuine afterthought). Only intonation would differentiate between the two. In cases like this, punctuation has been used as a guide to intonation, a not unreasonable decision in dealing with works intended for stage performance, and the comma after the vocative has been interpreted as an indication that the final prepositional phrase is indeed an adjunct. In another set of instances, however, involving repetition after the vocative of some or all of what immediately precedes it, the use of the comma cannot be taken as an accurate guide to intonation. In utterances like:

*... and therefore you represent no problem at all **Mr Hardy**, none at all .*  
(**The Dying Trade**, 33)

*You get your beauty sleep and don't worry about nothin', **Pet**, nothin', d'ya hear?* (**This Old Man**, 31)

the repeated element would have to duplicate the intonation of its original occurrence, which could not be the case if the repetition formed part of a single clause, i.e. the contour containing the vocative is in no way incomplete or unfinished without the repetition.

Finally, clause final vocatives, though by far the most frequent, were the most straightforward to deal with - there are no ifs or buts about 'final' meaning the last element in a clause. There are two points of interest, however. Firstly, vocatives seem to occur fairly commonly at the end of the first clause in both paratactic and hypotactic clause complexes. I have not carried out a detailed analysis of these to see whether any deictic factor seems to be involved, as seemed to be the case with a number of the clause-medial vocatives. This may be the explanation, or it may be that the need for reminding one's addressee that this utterance is indeed addressed to them is greater in complex clauses (i.e. deixis in another guise, of course). This is one issue that would be of considerable interest to investigate in natural data.

The second issue of some interest is the non-occurrence of tagged declaratives with the vocative preceding rather than following the tag. This sequence is clearly possible but even in the text with the highest incidence of tagged clauses (**This Old Man**) it is not to be found. The last example above comes closest, insofar as the appended *d'ya hear* certainly has the same function as a tag while not being strictly classifiable as such. The repetition of an element after the vocative, however, indicates that two clauses are involved here, with the vocative appended to the first. A clause like



*We seen enough apples ter last us a lifetime, 'aven't we, **Fay?*** (**This Old Man**, 48)

could have taken the form

*We seen enough apples ... **Fay,** 'aven't we?*

Where the tag pronoun is second-person or first-person plural, then deictic considerations will probably draw the vocative next to the pronoun: of twelve instances of tagged declarative + vocative, only three have third-person pronouns all of which involve reference to the situation (present or past): in other words, deixis in another guise.

*That'll do fine, real fine, won't it **Ede?*** (**This Old Man**, 28)

*Just like ol' times, ain't it, **love?*** (**This Old Man**, 32)

*Never let 'em forget it! That's the drill, ain't it, **Tommy.*** (**This Old Man**, 64)

The other two tagged clauses with vocative following the tag are both imperative, where one would hardly expect the vocative in any position other than next to the co-referential pronoun:

*Well, don't make a welter of it, will you, **love?*** (**This Old Man**, 51)

*Remind me ter get you a new 'at with me next pay packet, will you, **love?***  
(**This Old Man**, 52)

Hence, though it is undoubtedly the case that the vocative is a the 'floating element' Halliday characterises it as, insofar as its position is not fixed, its likely position within the clause is highly predictable. Clause final position is the unmarked position for the vocative, with non-final options (the principal one being locating the vocative somewhere within the Theme) presumably realising more emphatic variants of its fundamental deictic function. Where clause-final vocatives function simply as reiterated acknowledgments of the presence and identity of one's addressee, i.e. as addresses, thematic vocatives seem to function more as calls or summonses.

Clearly the occurrence of vocatives in different positions will be influenced by a number of factors. The nature of the interaction will be particularly important, e.g. instruction or control should generate more initial vocatives than casual conversation. Role shifts within an interaction should also be significant, e.g. one interactant moving out of equal-co-participant role in a discussion into the more power-oriented role of solver-of-problem is likely to signal this shift with a vocative. This is likely to be an initial one. And finally

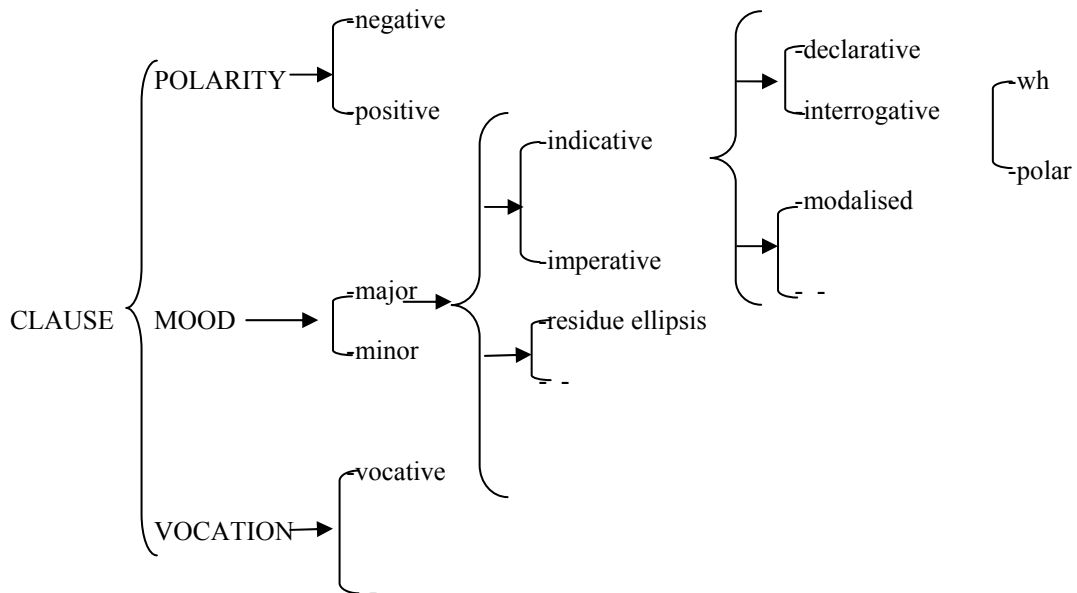
schematic structure seems relevant to the question of the likely occurrence of vocatives. This issue will be taken up at the end of 4.4.

In what has been said so far, nothing has been said about the possibility of more than one vocative occurring in a single clause or clause complex. Clauses containing more than one vocative certainly occur, as in

*Catherine darling, put this on the table would you dear*

where three vocative items are used at two points in the clause, the first two appearing together in a nominal group complex while the third appears on its own (see Chapter 6 below on nominal group complexes as vocatives). This particular kind of example is likely to be used by an adult to a child, as in this instance, and so involve some special discourse considerations.

The occurrence of vocatives at different positions in the same clause is, in fact, predictable in an interpersonal system, such systems being realised prosodically rather than in terms of constituency. The interpersonal structure of the clause can be seen as consisting of a number of places in structure, each of which can potentially contain realisations of interpersonal systems such as VOCATION and MODALITY. A simplified version of clause rank interpersonal systems is presented below as Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2** Clause rank, interpersonal metafunction, grammatical stratum (after Martin 1981: 52)

The primary interpersonal system at clause rank is that of MOOD, with POLARITY as a second obligatory system and VOCATION as a grammatically optional system. These

three systems constitute simultaneous choices available from the interpersonal metafunction at clause rank.

#### 4.4 Vocative incidence in relation to SPEECH FUNCTION choice

The issue that will be explored now is the question of the interaction between the system of VOCATION and that of SPEECH FUNCTION, the system on the discourse stratum lying most immediately behind the lexicogrammatical system of MOOD, from the perspective of the clause viewed as a mode of exchange. The account presented here is based on Martin (1981, & in press c), which in turn builds on that of Halliday (v. 1985, Chapter 4, 'The clause as exchange'). Halliday's functional account of MOOD in the English clause sees the options available in terms of a resource for negotiation in interaction. The two relevant considerations are what it is that is being negotiated and what role is adopted by the initiator of the interaction. Each of these dimensions involves a binary choice: what is being negotiated is either information or goods and services (knowledge or action, in accounts of exchange structure - see below), while the role adopted by the initiator of the exchange is either giving or demanding. These distinctions give rise to a set of four fundamental speech function categories as follows:

Role in exchange	Commodity exchanged	(a) goods-&-services	(b) information
	(i) giving Offer	Statement Would you like this teapot?	He's giving her the teapot
(ii) demanding	Command Give me that teapot		Question What is he giving her?

Figure 4.3 Basic speech function categories (after Halliday 1985: 69).

The information-oriented categories, Statement and Question, are grouped together as 'propositions', while the goods-&-services-oriented categories, Offer and Command, are called 'proposals'. Martin notes that:

Semantically oriented labels of this kind highlight the meaning of the grammatical terms (in this case their typical function in dialogue) and are used throughout Halliday 1985 to focus on the grammar as a functionally organised meaning making resource (rather than as a syntax or set of forms). (Martin in press c: Chapter 2)

Each of these categories, with the exception of Offer, is congruently realised by a major option from the MOOD network:

Statement by [declarative]  
 Question by [interrogative]  
 Command by [imperative]

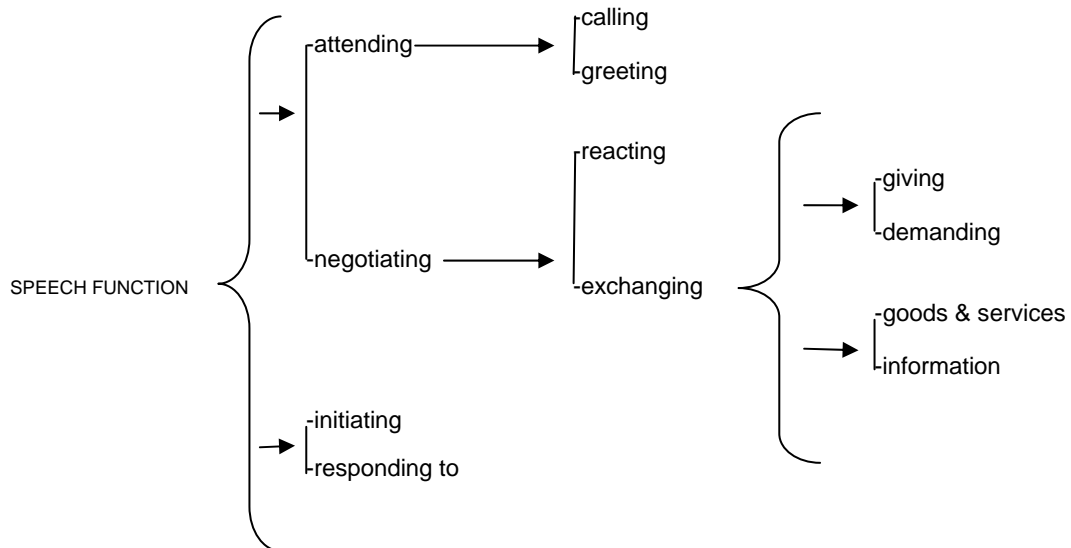
The category Offer (give goods-&-services) is not associated with a specific mood choice in English, nor in most other languages, but is realised (incongruently) through choices which congruently realise other speech functions: in Australian English, usually by either an interrogative (*Would you like some?*) or an imperative (*Have some more*). (The use of *thank you* or *thanks* in response to such initiating moves indicates that they are Offers: Martin notes these as indexical markers of proposals, i.e. moves negotiating goods-&-services). This is one of the factors, along with the well-recognised fact that 'the relation between grammatical form and illocutionary force is not bi-unique' (Martin 1981: 52), which has led to systemicists setting up of a stratified model of MOOD and SPEECH FUNCTION, with a SPEECH FUNCTION network on the stratum of discourse semantics underlying the MOOD network on the lexicogrammatical stratum.

Halliday (ibid.) identifies expected responses to the four initiating moves identified above and what he refers to as 'discretionary alternatives' to these four basic speech function categories as follows:

		initiation	expected response	discretionary alternative
give	information	statement	acknowledgement	contradiction
demand	information	question	answer	disclaimer
give	goods & services	offer	acceptance	rejection
demand	goods & services	command	undertaking	refusal

**Figure 4.4 Speech functions and responses (after Halliday 1985: 69).**

Martin's current formalisation of the SPEECH FUNCTION network underlying these, and a further set of choices (listed below), is set out in Figure 4.5. The network differs somewhat from earlier versions, having progressively taken account of work done by Ventola (1987), Poynton (earlier versions of this chapter, especially concerning the potential role of Exclamations in initiating exchanges) and other honours and research students working on exchange structure.



**Figure 4.5 SPEECH FUNCTION: basic adjacency pairs (Martin in press, Chapter 2 [1992: 44, Fig. 2.8]).**

This network gives rise to seven adjacency pairs, exemplified below (from Martin, in press). A dash indicates a change of speaker):

Call [attending: calling/initiating]  
*John.*  
 Response to Call [attending: calling/responding to]  
 -*Huh?*

Greeting [attending: greeting/initiating]  
*See you.*  
 Response to Greeting [attending: greeting/responding to]  
 -*Bye-bye.*

Exclamation [negotiating: reacting/initiating]  
*Utter rubbish!*  
 Response to Exclamation [negotiating: reacting/response to]  
 -*Absolutely.*

Offer [negotiating: exchanging: giving/goods & services//initiating]

*Let me get you a beer.*

Acknowledge Offer [negotiating: exchanging: giving/goods & services//responding to]

*-Please do.*

Command [negotiating: exchanging: demanding/goods & services//initiating]

*Get me a beer.*

Response Offer to Command [negotiating: exchanging: demanding/goods & services//responding to]

*-I'd love to.*

Statement [negotiating: exchanging: giving/information//initiating]

*He's won.*

Acknowledge Statement

[negotiating: exchanging: giving/ information//responding to]

*-Oh, has he?*

Question [negotiating: exchanging: demanding/information//initiating]

*Has he won?*

Response Statement to Question

[negotiating: exchanging: giving/information//responding to]

*-Certainly.*

Martin notes that 'Both MOOD and SPEECH FUNCTION classify individual interacts, not sequences' (p.17), and goes on to present the exchange network which will generate exchanges or 'interacts'. This network will not be of further direct relevance to this section, since questions concerning the occurrence and role of vocatives in interacts will not be pursued here, but is presented for the sake of completeness in a grammatically-based approach to interaction. It is the account assumed in remarks in Chapter 3 above on the taking up by speakers of particular exchange roles, but it seemed more appropriate to present details here, in the context of a discussion of interaction, than to introduce it out of context earlier.

Berry's work on the exchange (1981 a, b, c) built on earlier work on the shape of interaction, e.g. Sinclair & Coulthard 1975 (v. Stubbs 1983 for an overview of work on exchanges). Berry's original formula for the basic exchange was as follows:

$$((DX1) X2) X1 (X2f)$$

where

X = either a knowledge-oriented (K) or an action-oriented (A) move.

1 = primary knower or actor (the one authoritatively in control of the knowledge or the one who is to perform the action being negotiated).

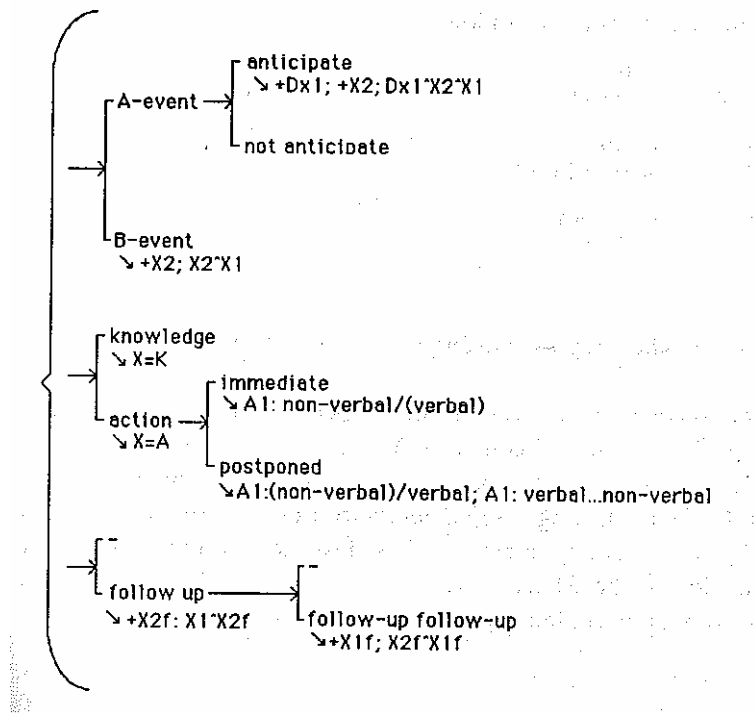
2 = secondary knower or actor (interactants other than the one authoritatively in control of the knowledge or the one who is to act).

D = delayed primary move, i.e. an initiating move which does not declare itself that of a primary knower/actor.

This formula generates the following possible set of exchanges:

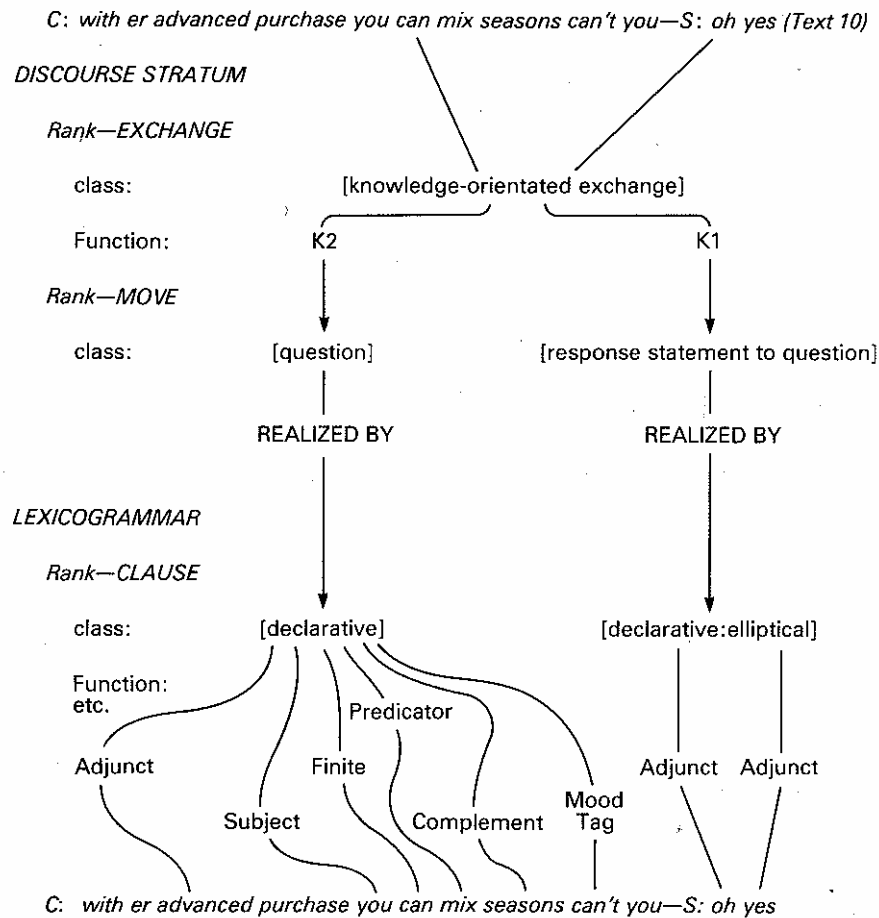
- (i)  $DX1 + X2 + X1 + X2f$
- (ii)  $Dx1 + X2 + X1$
- (iii)  $X2 + X1 + X2f$
- (iv)  $X2 + X1$
- (v)  $X1 + X2f$
- (vi)  $X1$

Taking into account both knowledge-oriented and action-oriented exchanges, and adding in Martin's suggested X1f move (optionally occurring after an X2f move), this accounts for a sizeable number of basic exchanges. What it does not do, and nor does Martin's EXCHANGE network (Figure 4.6 below), based on Berry's work and taking into account modifications suggested by Ventola (1987), is take account of dynamic moves concerned with interruptions and suspensions of exchanges. (See Ventola 1987; Martin, in press, 2.6; Eggs, forthcoming; Thwaite, forthcoming).



**Figure 4.6 Exchange structure: extending Berry 1981c (Martin in press, Ch. 2 [1992: 49, Fig.2.10])**

Finally, to complete this account of MOOD, SPEECH FUNCTION and EXCHANGE, Figure 4.7 presents Ventola's stratified account of a knowledge-oriented exchange:



**FIGURE 4.7** A stratified analysis of a knowledge-orientated exchange (Ventola 1987: 104, Fig. 4.4).

In the analysis below of vocative incidence in relation to speech function, there has been no investigation of the actual MOOD choices of clauses containing vocatives. Only the least delicate MOOD option, the choice between [major] and [minor] clause is relevant to what follows. It may well be the case that the configuration {speech function realised by particular MOOD choice} is of particular interest as far as the incidence of vocatives is concerned. But since limits had to be set for the total analysis, this was one of the points where an arbitrary decision was made not to go beyond a certain stage in delicacy. In the light of the looseness of the purely grammatical ties of VOCATION with the other interpersonal systems of MOOD and POLARITY, it seemed of more immediate importance to take up the question of whether certain speech function choices (which will be realised by those MOOD choices) predisposed more to the choice of VOCATION than others. It became clear that there is indeed a relationship between SPEECH FUNCTION choice and the likelihood of a vocative occurring in the clause realising that choice.



Three of the six written texts used earlier for an analysis of vocative placement in clauses were further analysed for speech function choices: two of the plays, Ray Lawler's **Summer of the Seventeenth Doll** and Dorothy Hewett's **This Old Man Comes Rolling Home**; and one of the Peter Corris thrillers, **The Dying Trade**. As noted in the preceding section, no claims are being advanced that the frequencies of occurrence of vocatives in these texts reflect the actual frequencies in naturally-occurring conversation across a range of situations. The use of written texts merely enables larger numbers of utterances containing vocatives to be investigated.

A total in excess of 9,500 clauses was distributed among Martin's original thirteen speech function categories (Martin 1981). No instances of the fourteenth category, Response to Exclamation, occurred in the data examined, although observation and personal experience suggested that this category existed. (Criteria for assigning conversational moves to speech function categories are as set out in Martin 1981, & in press a).

Offers occurred in only two of the three texts, constituting an extremely small percentage of the total speech function choices in those two texts, and though vocatives did appear in a third of these utterances, in each text the numbers were too small for anything other than the most tenuous conclusions to be drawn. It would make sense, however, if Offers did contain a relatively high incidence of vocatives in the light of what will be discussed below as a cline of interactiveness of speech function choices, those choices more interpersonally-oriented than others (including Offers) being more likely to contain vocatives.

The pair parts to the speech function choices Statement, Question, Command and Offer will also be excluded from further consideration because of their low rate of occurrence in this data (though a small number of Acknowledge Statement utterances did contain a vocative). Thus, six speech function choices are considered, all initiating: Statement, Question, Command, Exclamation, Call Greeting.

The findings are summarised in Table 4.2.

TEXT:	<b>The Doll</b>		<b>The Dying Trade</b>		<b>This Old Man</b>	
	Speech fn incidence	Vocative incidence	Speech fn incidence	Vocative incidence	Speech fn incidence	Vocative incidence
Statement	65.0%	2.7%	69.1%	4.1%	72.1%	13.4%
Question	15.9	4.0	15.6	7.2	10.3	23.8
Command	7.0	19.7	4.8	26.0	9.3	39.2
Exclamation	1.4	38.0	0.7	25.0	2.4	33.3
Call	1.9	60.7	0.5	100.0	2.0	90.2
Greeting	0.6	44.4	0.3	72.7	0.9	87.5
Other	8.1	0.4	9.1	1.3	3.0	18.2
TOTAL VOC %		5.8%		6.1%		20.1%

**Table 4.2 Speech function and vocative incidence in three texts**

Each relevant speech function choice is expressed as a percentage of the total speech function choices for the text, and for each speech function type the percentage of tokens actually containing a vocative is indicated. The first procedure was necessary since speech function types occur with very different frequencies and this overall rate of incidence is important for gaining a clear understanding of the incidence of vocatives. Though the actual figures vary somewhat, the rank orders of speech function types are virtually identical in all three texts and the orders of magnitude are very similar.

Statements comprise around two thirds of each text, Questions 10-15%, Commands 5-10% and none of the other speech function options occurs more than 3% of the time in any text, the rank order being Exclamation, Call and Greeting. The two plays (**The Doll** and **This Old Man**) are roughly comparable in terms of the type of interaction presented, both dealing with working-class people in domestic settings. Though two generations are present in Hewett's play, the considerably higher incidence of vocatives compared with **The Doll** does not seem to be related to this factor: all characters make considerable use of vocatives to all other characters (with the exception of the poor waif, Fay, who is 'adopted' by one family member and destroyed by another but never becomes part of the

Dockerty clan). It may be that Hewett is more accurately reflecting a generally higher rate of usage of vocatives among working-class people than does Lawler. (See Chapter 9 below on rate of vocative usage as a possible coding difference in relation to class). As for the third text, though a wider range of types and contexts of interaction is dealt with in Corris' novel, the overall rates of usage of different speech functions and the incidence of vocatives does not differ significantly from those obtaining in Lawler's play, suggesting strongly the possibility that for all his use of colourful Australian idiom, Lawler may be employing middle-class modes of vocative usage for his working-class characters.

Returning to the findings tabulated in Table 4.2, two findings are of particular relevance to the suggestion above, positing a cline of interactiveness of speech function choices. Of the six speech function categories which occur in significant numbers, and which contain significant numbers of vocatives, all but Statement can be realised by a minor clause consisting only of a vocative (i.e. with all MOOD functions, and POLARITY, ellipsed). And of all speech functions which contain significant numbers of vocatives, it is the Statement which is in fact least likely to do so. The reason for both these facts would seem to be the same: the Statement is the least interactively oriented of all speech functions. A vocative can certainly be attached to a Statement as a kind of memo to the effect '*Addressee, please take note*', but one cannot produce a Statement by means of a vocative alone: one either realises some other speech function or else there is no vocative, even if an addressee's name is used to that addressee. The closest one comes to the possibility of a vocative functioning as a realisation of Statement is in utterances like:

*The two great bruisers.* *You can bear to be together in the same room again, can you?*  
(**The Doll**, 120: addressed to Roo and Barney after a fight)

*'Hardy,' she said, 'the great protector.'* (**The Dying Trade**, 115: addressed to the private detective, Cliff Hardy, by a client who has been tortured and is now in hospital).

In both cases the Deictic *the* in the nominal group makes it plain that there is no vocative, yet clearly such utterances derive their ironic effect from the tension involved in saying something to someone's face using a form which one would expect only to be used in saying something about them in the third person. This same oblique approach can be used to go beyond irony to downright insult, as in:

*Well, well, well.* *Little Penny the La Perouse picaninny.* *I always said you'd end up with a nice white man.* (**White Meat**, 172: addressed by a white girl to an Aboriginal girl)

Such utterances tread a fine line between Statement and Exclamation. The presence of attitude, indicative of the feature [reacting], suggests more strongly an interpretation as Exclamation; but the tendency of such forms to consist of a minor clause in the form of a nominal group, i.e. a form with the potential to function as a participant in the representational structure of the clause, suggests that these have a different status from [negotiating: reacting] moves which consist of adjective, expletive or exclamative forms such as *What a pity!*

The rank order of SPEECH FUNCTION choices ordered with respect to incidence of vocatives is very different from that obtaining for the overall rank order of SPEECH FUNCTION choices. Calls and Greetings are the choices most likely to contain, or be realised entirely by, a minor clause (all functions other than vocation being ellipsed), the likelihood ranging from around 50% to categoricity. The incidence of vocatives steadily decreases as one considers Exclamations, Commands, Questions and finally Statements, which contained the smallest percentage of vocatives while constituting the most frequent speech function choice. Further decreasing the percentage of vocatives occurring in ordinary Statements is the fact that in each text a number of utterances classed as Statements involve thanking or apologising, the incidence of vocatives in such utterances being around 50%. **The Dying Trade** has a much higher proportion of such utterances than the other two texts (11.8% of such Statements containing vocatives as against 3.9% for **The Doll** and 3.3% for **This Old Man**) so it is a little difficult to see where to place thanking and apologising in a rank order of likelihood of containing a vocative. What is clear, however, is that the category Statement is too broad and needs to be subcategorised for an adequate analysis of the interaction of SPEECH FUNCTION with VOCATION.

One should note, however, the occurrence of Statements with (attention-getting) continuative and vocative elements thematised, functioning like a kind of fused Call + Statement, e.g.

*Listen Hardy, I've been looking into this Brave.* (**Dying Trade**, 91)

*Barney, look, it's time me and Pearl left for the pub.* (**The Doll**, 51)

*Here, you, if you want any breakfast, you'd better get a move on.* (**The Doll**, 48)

While the same Call elements can precede Commands and Questions, e.g.

*Hey, missus, where's your rubbish heap?* (**The Doll**, 23)

*I say Simon old chap, where's your pornographic object?* (**Don's Party**, 22, a joking transformation of *phonograph* )

*Come on Ol, finish your hand.* (**The Doll**, 68)

*Listen love, just answer in one word or shake your head, understand?* (**The Dying Trade**, 89)

they do not seem to constitute such a separate component within the total structure, suggesting the possibility that the interactive hierarchy is partly dependent on the distinction between proposals and propositions, with the former being inherently more interactive, or interpersonally oriented, than the latter.

Finally, the question of a scale or cline of interactiveness of speech function choices needs to be addressed. Halliday's position with respect to seeing Statements as inherently less interactive than other speech function choices is that, from the point of view of the grammar, the mood element of the clause makes the propositional content of declaratives as negotiable or arguable as any other major clause type. While this is certainly the case as far as individual choices are concerned, it is also the case that Statements, typically in the form of declaratives, are more likely to be chained together to constitute - from the perspective of mode - monologue rather than dialogue, i.e. to be inherently less interactive. One can, of course, find instances of long sets of other single speech function choices, e.g. an examination paper consisting of a set of Questions and a recipe of a set of Commands. But the incidence of such genres is much lower than the incidence of monologic genres consisting wholly of Statements.

The lower incidence of vocatives in Statements would seem in itself to be further evidence of a lower level of interactiveness, as would the requirements for appropriate responding moves: acknowledgement of individual Statements and ongoing tracking or backchannelling of longer stretches of connected discourse are deemed adequate. What a listener is called on to do in response to Statement is to attend, whereas they are called on to play a somewhat more active role with respect to other speech function choices: to accept, to undertake, to respond, to greet, to support. Taking experiential issues into account, while it does seem to be the case that everyday casual conversation is very strongly focussed on speaker and addressee, *I* and *you* being the most common Subjects in clauses (Halliday 1985: 45), suggesting a strong interpersonal focus, it may well be the case that Questions, Offers and Commands can be considered more strongly interpersonally-oriented since their focus on speaker and addressee is as participants in the immediate situation as well as on situations in the past and in the future: Statements may well be more common with respect to the past and the future than with respect to the present. So we are back to the deictic function of vocatives again, the anchoring of the interaction itself, as an interaction between this specific speaker and this/these specific addressee(s). This suggests the possible relevance of the second mode dimension, the scale

of language-as-action to language-as-reflection. Statements seem much more inherently concerned with language as reflection, less with language as action.<sup>8</sup>

Such reflection, when coding ideological positions of various kinds as a proposition (rather than as attitude which is not as directly arguable), may very well be tagged, as a means of inviting the addressee, in acknowledging it, to collude with the position being adopted. But the very strategy of including the tag, thus turning the move into something commonly regarded by those not familiar with forms of linguistic analysis as a question, is an indication of the interactive difference between the two forms.

All of which gives rise to some interesting reflections on the use of the declarative as the base form in transformational models of syntax, as well as the implications of Berry's formula for exchange structure, in which the only obligatory move is the single voice speaking or the single actor doing or proposing to do. There is still a way to go before the ramifications of viewing language as inherently dialogic are extended to all domains of linguistic analysis. It is, of course, true that after centuries of literacy, contemporary western societies are thoroughly accustomed to the monologic voice (though note the ubiquitousness of talk-back radio and the television interview in the contemporary experience of the electronic media). This may be part of the explanation for the pervasiveness of the Statement in what purports to be interaction.

The final stage in pursuing the incidence and function of vocatives in interactive discourse would be to investigate their occurrence either accompanying or constituting discourse or boundary markers. Continuatives such as *well, now, OK, right* etc. are recognised as having a role in the organisation of discourse into stages or elements of schematic structure (Schiffrin 1987; Ventola 1982, 1987). Such markers are often accompanied by vocatives; more rarely the use of a vocative in itself constitutes such a marker. Two examples from the Film Australia film, **Talking Shop: demands on language** (1978), will illustrate. This film is an unscripted record of the experiences of two teenagers applying for and working in their first jobs in a department store. In the first example, the preliminaries of greeting, references etc. in a job interview have been dealt with, and the interview proper is initiated with the following move by one of the two interviewers:

*Stephen, this job which you're applying for is through a very busy period, immediately before Christmas.*

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<sup>8</sup> To the extent that this is true, it may be an effect of the status of statements as propositions, 'something that can be argued about - something that can be affirmed or denied, and also doubted, contradicted, insisted on, accepted with reservation, qualified, tempered, regretted and so on', as distinct from proposals, which use language 'simply as a means towards achieving what are essentially non-linguistic ends', and 'cannot be affirmed or denied' (Halliday 1985: 70).

Two further examples involve Anne, the other subject of the film. In the first example, the continuative *right* is followed by the vocative *Anne* at a similar stage in the job interview, the continuative seeming to mark the end of the preceding stage in the schematic structure and the vocative to initiate the next stage:

*Right, Anne, it's going to be a very busy period that you're working in this department store ...*

In the second example, the manageress of the silverware department where Anne has been initially located is inducting her into the job and begins her instruction with:

*In this job, Anne, we're working with silver*

The initial marked topical theme (*in this job*) alerts listeners to the fact that what she is about to say is concerned with the job, while the vocative makes quite explicit that Anne in this context is to be seen (and hence, presumably, to see herself) as a key participant in the job of selling.

Wootton (1981) notes a similar phenomenon in her discussion of children's use of address terms in discourse. She suggests that children use vocatives to signal the initiation of 'new lines of development within what might be considered to be topically tied conversation' (p.157). Clearly, much work remains to be done on the functions of vocatives in discourse.

## Five

### The grammar of names

This chapter presents an account of the grammar of English proper nouns or names, the most obvious choice of vocative. The chapter begins by noting the traditionally marginal status of names as a linguistic category, a factor relevant to the paucity of available linguistic descriptions. The approach adopted here for providing a comprehensive and coherent description is to map the various operative distinctions paradigmatically, building up a systemic network. After a general introduction distinguishing between major categories of names and establishing terminology, the chapter is divided into two major sections. The first, and most extensive, focuses on personal names (also known as first or Christian names) and explores the grammatical resources utilised in producing the wide variety of forms that personal names take. These resources include truncation, suffixation (single and multiple) and reduplication. This section discusses the massively redundant gender-marking of personal names and deals also with nicknames, to be distinguished from hypocoristic or diminutive forms of personal names. The second section focuses on family names (also known as last names or surnames). Many, but by no means all, of the same resources are utilised in producing variant forms of family names.

Much of what little discussion of names exists in the linguistic literature focuses on how they differ from other types of linguistic items in terms of meaning, linguistic properties and ultimately linguistic status. Features commented on include the following:

- i. Names are claimed to have reference but not sense (Lyons 1977: 219-22) or to have sense only contingently (Markey 1982).
- ii. Personal names are not ordinarily translated, so seem to be outside the language, though they are usually accommodated to the phonological system of the language in which they are being used and to that extent can be seen as part of that language (Lyons 1977: 222).
- iii. Flouting conventions of personal name assignment on the basis of gender, e.g. by naming a girl *John*, may occasion comment, even severe disapproval, but can hardly be said to be ungrammatical (Lyons 1977: 221, who suggests that a



clause like *John has just cut herself* is probably not semantically problematic either).

iv. Names are less likely to appear in plural form or with modification of any kind than are common nouns (Long 1969; Quirk et al. 1972; Halliday 1985).

As a consequence of such characteristics, names are commonly regarded as linguistically marginal. Two comments, already cited in Chapter 1, are worth repeating. Hudson (1980: 125) suggests that names as the main markers of power and solidarity in English

might fairly be described as peripheral to the system of English as a whole, in the sense that proper names used as vocatives ... could be handled in a separate section of the grammar with little or no consequence for any other parts of it.

while Markey (1982: 141) questions whether names ought even to be regarded as linguistic items insofar as they

do not share the developmental properties of 'normal' grammatical items ... (and) are peripheral to concerns which lie at the core of the theoretical investigation of language.

Hudson's comment, in particular, calls for comment. It may be the case that choices elsewhere in the grammar of English do not depend on choices made with respect to names, the most obvious interpretation of Hudson's remark (where 'depend on' is to be understood in terms of the organisation of networks in terms of multiple entry conditions to more delicate options). That remains to be demonstrated. What seems clear, on the basis of the system described below, however, is that the morphological options deployed in the formation of variant forms of names constitute a considerable linguistic resource for interpersonal meaning in the English language. One obvious question is why this resource has not been adequately described: the range of options for constructing diminutives has certainly been described in other languages (e.g. Gooch 1967 for Spanish). Why has this not been done for English?

Three factors are relevant. The most obvious is the marginalising of interpersonal meaning, not only within linguistics but within English-speaking culture generally discussed in Chapter 1. A second factor is that while there are many hypocoristic, diminutive or 'pet' forms of names in English, the use of the morphological options involved in their formation does not always extend beyond the construction of names. Where it does, such items are commonly regarded as baby- or nursery-talk

(v. Mühlhäusler 1983). Further, multiply-suffixed diminutive names, such as *Franglekins* and *Mikeypooodles* (two of Mühlhäusler's examples), have a restricted distribution. They are by no means used by all speakers of English (age, class and gender seem relevant - see Chapter 7). When they are used, they tend to be restricted in terms of both the nature of the relationship between speaker and addressee and the situation of appropriate use. The unmarked or 'straight' use is by intimates, in private. The use of such a name by a non-intimate constitutes either a claim to intimacy or an implicit assertion that the addressee is behaving childishly. Before dealing with the details of such hypocoristic or diminutive names, however, some clarification of basics with respect to names is needed.

### 5.1 Fundamental name distinctions

For most speakers of Australian English (though not for the immigrant who changed his name by deed poll to *Lord Bloody Wog Rollo* as a provocative and ironic comment on Australian attitudes towards immigrants), the full name consists of two parts, made up of two different kinds of names. One part generally identifies the individual as the offspring of a particular parent or parents. Parents may have little or no choice in determining this part of a child's name, e.g. in many parts of the English-speaking world it has been mandatory for a child to be given the surname of the person registered as the father or, if no father is registered, of the mother. In the Australian state of Victoria, for example, it was only in the 1980s that it became legally possible for parents to 'agree on and specify the surname of a child, so long as it is the father's surname or the mother's surname or a combination of both.' (*The Age*, 29.12.1982). (See Ashley 1971 for range of information on rights concerning names). People from non-English-speaking backgrounds may choose to Anglicise their names or to adopt an English name unrelated to their original surname, so that their children may automatically acquire the new name. For example, Hungarian immigrant *Sandor Buchalter* changed his name to *Alexander Barton* and, with his son *Thomas Barton*, became a household name in Australia because of failed financial dealings. This part of the full name in English comes last in the sequence of names that make up the full name. It is variously known as the surname, family name or last name. It will be referred to in this study as family name.

The other part of the full name consists of one or more items chosen with greater freedom, particularly in the case of names for females. The first of these names has a special status and is commonly (but by no means universally) the name by which

the person is usually known. Everyone is expected to have one such name, variously known as the Christian name, personal name or first name. Many (perhaps most) people have two or more, in which case they will be said to have both a first, or Christian, name and one or more middle names. Not everyone has a middle name but, though this is unusual in Australia, its absence is not marked as it would be in the United States. Such names will be referred to in this study as personal names, distinguished from family name, which will always be the last in the sequence of names.

Personal names occur in a variety of forms. They may be traditional English personal names such as *Elizabeth* and *James* or personal names borrowed from other languages such as the French *Danielle*, the Swedish *Axel*, the Finnish *Tarja*, the (biblical) Hebrew *Jesse*. They may be unmistakably female or male names such as *Amy* or *Andrew*, *Zachary* or *Zoe*, or 'sexually ambiguous' names (the term used by Leslie Dunkling (1977: 268), himself the bearer of such a name) such as *Leslie*, *Robin*, *Kim* or *Kerry*. They may be spelt in a standardised orthography or varied, either to indicate the sex of the possessor (*Robin/Robyn*, *Kerry/Kerrie*), or simply according to fancy, either by choosing among traditional variants (e.g. *Clare/Claire*, *Geoffrey/Jeffrey*, *Catherine/Katharine/Kathryn*, *Stephen/Steven*) or by orthographic variants such as *Traecey*, *Dene*, *Sharyn*, *Kevern*, *Valarie*, *Marrion*, *Dayne*, *Ginette*. Such orthographic variation is more common in the names of females than of males. (See 5.2.2 below for a detailed discussion of gender-marking in personal names).

Also more common with respect to females is the use of items from the general lexicon. Certain semantic domains are particularly favoured, e.g. flowers and plants (*Heather*, *Ivy*, *Jasmine*, *Primrose*, *Violet*, *Willow*) or precious stones (*Ruby*, *Amber*, *Crystal*, *Pearl*). More common with respect to males is the use of family names as personal names. In this case, only their position in the sequence of names distinguishes them from family names.

Withycombe, in his introduction to *The Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names* notes that in Britain

... though family names are still very generally given as a second or middle name, they are less frequent as first names. The use of surnames as christian names is now much more common in the U.S.A. than in England. It has been calculated that three out of four eldest sons of American families of any pretensions bear their mothers' maiden names either as first or middle names. ... Many surnames for various historical reasons, have also become generally used in America as

christian names, e.g. *Calvin, Chauncey, Dwight, ... Grant, Lee, Jefferson, Lincoln*  
 ... *Washington, Wesley*. (Withycombe 1950: xlii)

In contemporary Australia, currently fashionable names such as *Brooke, Kelly, Ryan, Todd* are on the way to becoming conventional personal names, as has already happened with names such as *Cecil, Shirley, Sidney* and *Kimberley*, at one stage exclusively family names (Withycombe 1950: xliii).

These two name elements, family name and personal name, correspond basically with last name and first name in other studies (e.g. Brown and Ford, 1964). It should be noted, however, that the personal name an individual is known and addressed by is by no means always the first of the series of personal names or even one of them at all, e.g. *Christina Marion Louise* is known as *Louise*, former Australian Prime Minister *John Malcolm Fraser* is known as *Malcolm* and *Joseph Horace Harold Jarman*, now deceased, was apparently addressed as *Ted* (death notices, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 7.4.1983).

For certain immigrant groups, e.g. Hungarians, Chinese and Vietnamese, the family name is the first element in a full name in their native languages, but this pattern rapidly changes once settled in Australia. Since second and subsequent generation children are commonly, though by no means universally, given personal names which identify them as members rather than non-members of the dominant Anglo-Australian culture, their full names tend to be very different from those of their parents and grand-parents. For first generation individuals, there can sometimes be difficulties, especially when the original names are not easy for English-speakers to pronounce. For example, one naturalised Vietnamese-born male chose as legal family name that part of his Vietnamese personal name which was comparatively easy for English-speakers to pronounce. There is no problem for his Anglo-Australian wife and their Australian-born children, all of whom have Anglo personal names preceding the man's legal surname; but there is certainly a problem for the man himself, since the name he adopted as legal family name is also the name he was usually addressed by as personal name. He has now himself adopted an Anglo personal name, so as to conform to English-speaking practice: the alternative, having only one name, proved too socially awkward.

Many people, of course, are always addressed by a nickname rather than by any form of any of their actual names. (The term 'nickname' is used in a variety of ways in everyday discourse, and will be defined precisely in 5.2.1 below). Such items are best handled as a type of personal name, since they can combine with the surname to give an alternative full name, though they may originate as epithets

(*Curly*), comparisons (*Matchstick, Doll*), acronyms (especially from initials) or be pure inventions.

Although an individual's full name<sup>2</sup> can provide much information about gender, kin group membership, ethnic ancestry, religious affiliation, generational and social status, when names are used as vocatives most of such information is rarely foregrounded (one exception would be when a male is implicitly accused of being effeminate or homosexual by being addressed with a female equivalent of his personal name). If attention is being focussed on any specific social characteristic of an individual then the vocatives will generally be explicit and often affectively loaded, e.g. *slut, animal, lady, lass, mister, son, Jew-boy, wog* (any non-English speaking immigrant, especially from a Mediterranean background), *Salvo* (member of the Salvation Army), *Mick* (Catholic), *snob, westie* (coming from the western, suburbs of Sydney, 'below' the northern, eastern and southern suburbs on the socioeconomic scale). It is not the case, however, that social characteristics are irrelevant in determining appropriate usage of names: sex and age of interactants are particularly important in determining the choice not only of the type of name (personal name, nickname, full name) but also of the form of the name (short form, suffixed form, reduplicated form etc.). These social variables interact with the tenor features [power], [distance] and [affect] in a complex pattern not all of the details of which are yet clear. See Part III for a preliminary investigation of the use of vocatives in address in terms of the tenor dimensions.

The subsequent sections of this chapter provide a comprehensive overview of the various types and forms of names used in Australian English, and of the relationship of such types and forms to general word-formation processes in English. \_

## 5.2 Personal Name

The first distinction that will be made in dealing with personal names in Australian English is between nicknames and other kinds of personal name. The distinction is made very clearly in the following exchange from Lawler's *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*:

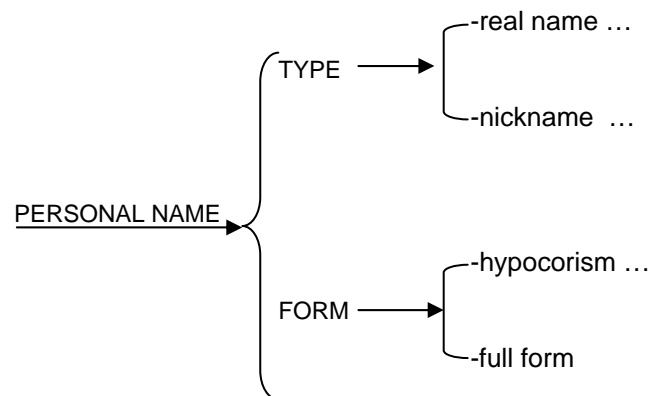
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<sup>2</sup> The inclusion of name, along with age and place of residence, for all persons referred to in news reports, functions as a most convenient and economical way of locating people socially in relation to four critical dimensions: place of residence roughly locates in terms of class, age in terms of generation, personal name in terms of gender, and personal and/or family name in terms of ethnicity.

Dowd: *What did you say your name was again?*  
 Bubba: *Bubba Ryan.*  
 Dowd: *Bubba? Is that what they call you? ... What's your real name?*  
 Bubba (softly): *Kathie.*  
 Dowd: *Kathie? Well, that's what I'll call you. Okay?*

(Lawler 1957: 93)

The terms [real name] and [nickname] will be used as the names of features in one system, at primary delicacy, of the systemic network PERSONAL NAME. The least delicate options in this network are presented in Figure 5.1. PERSONAL NAME is initially cross-classified in terms of type and form, the choice of types being between [nickname] and [real name], and the choice of forms being between [full form] and [hypocorism].



**Figure 5.1 PERSONAL NAME (primary delicacy).**

(Word rank, lexicogrammatical stratum)

The distinction between [full form] and [hypocorism] is exemplified in the contrast between full forms of names, such as *Alexander* or *Elizabeth*, and hypocoristic (pet or diminutive) forms, such as *Al/Alec/Alex/Lex/Sandy* etc. or *Liz/Lizzie/Beth/Bet/Betty/Eliza* etc. Nicknames can also appear in hypocoristic form, e.g. *Curl* from *Curly*, though generally the full range of choices opened up by this initial choice is not utilised with respect to nicknames. There are restrictions also on the applicability of some options with respect to real names also, which will be discussed below.

### 5.2.1 Real name and nickname

[Real name] is realised by any legally bestowed or conventionally used given name that is accepted as a personal name. (v. Dunkling 1977 and especially Pyles (1947, 1959) for some truly extraordinary choices). Such names can be regarded as constituting a lexical class with the following characteristics:

- i. It overlaps the class of family names, to the extent that some items regularly occur in both sets, e.g. *Kimberly, Dean, Kelly, Todd*) and many family names may be used as personal names, though they will be marked as unusual (e.g. *Blake, Manning*).
- ii. It readily admits personal names from languages other than English, e.g. Aboriginal *Kylie, Bindi*. French *Simone, Nicole, Danielle, Jaqueline*; Scandinavian *Astrid, Axel, Halvard, Inge*; Russian *Natasha, Sasha*; Finnish *Tarja*; Greek *Cheris*; ubiquitous European names such as *Maria* and *Anna*. Note that such borrowings are usually Anglicised in pronunciation and are more common as names for females than for males: 'exotic' can be synonymous with 'pretty' in a female name but more like 'sissy' or 'pansy' in a male name.
- iii. It has some tolerance for additions, either invented (e.g. *Jiann*, from parents *Jim* and *Fran*) or taken from the general lexicon (e.g. *Tuesday, April, Sunshine, Willow, Fern*). Such names, as noted above, are almost invariably given to females rather than to males.
- iv. Orthography can be quite variable, compared with the rigid standardisation of the general lexicon. Some people react quite negatively to this but clearly many others make use of the potential for such variation in order to make their own or their children's names more distinctive. Common orthographic variants include *Catherine/Katharine/Kathryn, Leslie/Lesley* (by no means always used to distinguish between female and male bearers of the name), *Kelly/Kellie, Jonathan/Jonothon, Anne/Ann, Gillian/Jillian*.

Realisations of [nickname], by contrast, are only identifiable as such from their actual use as terms of address: the set is open and does not form a lexical class in the same way as do the realisations of [real name]. Nicknames can be:

- standard words not conventionally regarded as names but regularly used as names for particular individuals (e.g. *Scruff*, *Curley*, *Doll*, *Tup* (from *twopence*), *Matchstick*, *Sosh* (from *sausage*), *Wicks*);
- what Partridge 1937 calls 'inseparables', or 'inevitable nicknames', based on nationality (eg *Frog*, *Taffy*) or one's last name eg *Tug Wilson*;
- acronyms or letter pronunciations of initials ( e.g. *Cappy* from initials C.A.P., *O.C.* from O'Connor);
- forms which originate as corruptions produced by small children either of ordinary words ( e.g. *Boosey* based on a child's attempts to imitate the word *beautiful* in the vocative *you beautiful boy* regularly addressed to him by his mother) or of their own or other people's names (e.g. *Bissy* or *Wizzy* used to address someone with the given name *Elizabeth*). This last type seems potentially to merge with immature pronunciations of personal names such as *Andoo* for *Andrew* and *Saiwah* for *Sarah*, but where the general phonological shape of the name is recognisable it tends to be treated as a realisation of [real name], rather than of [nickname].

The use of the term nickname as a technical term here is in contrast with a common use of the term in everyday English where it is used to refer to any name other than full name, any modification of a given name ( or of a surname) counting as a nickname. Truman Capote, in his novel *The Glass Harp*, uses 'nickname' in this way, using an account of vocative usage to one of his characters, Elizabeth, as an economical but telling means of indicating how her manner discouraged the use of more expressive hypocoristic forms:

For Elizabeth no one used a nickname; you might begin by calling her Betty, but in a week it would be Elizabeth again: that was her effect. Languid, banana-boned, she had dour black hair and an apathetic, at moments saintly face - in an enamel locket worn around her lily-stalk neck she preserved a miniature of her missionary father. (Capote 1951: 65)

It may be the existence of this opposition which has given rise to the somewhat curious fact that though the system as presented in Figure 5.1 above is functional for many speakers, many other speakers are bitterly opposed to the use of anything other than real (i.e. full) name, especially for their children. Not all such speakers would regard forms such as *Kathie* etc. as nicknames, though some do, but the generally used terms 'shortening' or 'shortened name' (to cover forms that include



not merely truncations of given names, such as *Sue* for *Susan* and *Jeff* for *Jeffrey*, but also instances of what will be discussed below as -y suffixation such as *Andy* from *Andrew* and *Patsy* from *Patricia*) are commonly used pejoratively. Objectors to the use of 'shortened' forms not uncommonly feel besieged, since not all active resistance to such a widespread practice is effective, and some consciously adopt avoidance strategies by giving their children monosyllabic or not easily altered names or even by enrolling them in school by whichever of their personal names is regarded as least liable to alteration.<sup>2</sup> The strategy of parents using the name least liable to alteration, however, can lead to another problem since 'real name' for many speakers is not only that which contrasts with 'shortened' name (or nickname) but is also the first personal name. It is not uncommon to hear as a response to 'What's your name?' something like 'I'm called Y but my real name is X. My full name is X + Y + family name.' This distinction can also be used to reclaim some personal space when encroached on by pushy used car salespeople or real estate agents who insist on using a client's personal name. If the name they are given is indeed one's first name, but not the name habitually used, then as far as the client is concerned, such sales people might as well be addressing someone who is not present.

There is yet another way in which a name that is neither a shortened form of a given name nor a nickname may nevertheless not be a real name. Some individuals are called by a name other than any of their own given names. There is in many instances a practical case to be made for treating these as a kind of nickname, e.g. in one family, the name *Bill* derived from a fondness for playing the role of Bill the Burglar in childhood games of cops and robbers. Presumably for this individual, and for his immediate family, *Bill* is functionally a nickname, as is indicated by family members regularly addressing him and referring to him among themselves as *Bill* but also referring to him, and certainly introducing him to outsiders, by his real name ('real' on three counts: **first given** name in **full** form). For outsiders, however, *Bill* is perfectly adequate as a real name, as is *Peter*

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that currently many children's names do not seem to be being altered either by adults (parents or teachers) or, apparently, by peers. Many children named *Elizabeth* and *James* (perennially popular middle class names) are addressed by those full forms, never by *Cathy*, *Jim/my* etc. It may be the case that this is largely a middle-class phenomenon (see comments in 3.5), not unrelated to the current popularity of such old-fashioned names as *Emma*, *Sarah*, *Emily*, *Lucy*, etc., which lose their special 'old-fashioned' flavour if altered), or that the overall balance of the system presented above is in the process of change, or simply that I have not had enough access to information about address practices in middle class peer groups. Note as further evidence for the system-change hypothesis the frequent contrast between generational sets of names in death notices: older generation names will tend to be hypocoristic (particularly truncated) while younger generation names will be full form.

(whose 'real' [real name] is *Dale* !) Since such apparent real names are only identifiable as such on the basis of inside knowledge, they cannot be distinguished in a grammatical network.

Figure 5.2 below represents a typology of nicknames, based largely on the categories identified by Morgan et al. (1979) and Partridge (1937), and formalised in a system network. Nicknames may be either traditional (what Partridge (1937: 221), calls 'inevitable' nicknames, i.e. the user simply makes an appropriate choice from items already in use), or they may be individual, in which case they are new inventions. All traditional nicknames were once individual and may have a long or short history. Partridge cites a number of examples which derived from the British navy in the 1860's, spread subsequently to the British army and hence widely among 'the lower classes' and even some few among the 'upper classes' during the course of World War 1. Morgan et al. found some of these (e.g. *Nobby* Clark and *Tug* Wilson) still in use among British primary school children in the 1970's. On Australian usage, Sydney Baker, writing in the 60s, claimed that

... any male possessing the name Kelly is invariably nicknamed *Ned*. In the same way a Paterson or Patterson earns the nickname *Banjo* from the popular Australian poet, A.B. Patterson, who styled himself *The Banjo*. (1966: 275)

but my impression is that traditional nicknames, whether characteristically Australian or not, are no longer widely used among young people in Australia. Certainly none of them turned up in data obtained from teachers on address practices among school-children.

Nicknames can be classified according to type and according to source or origin. Type is the simpler categorisation, distinguishing between traditional or generic nicknames and individual nicknames. Source or origin is the more complex categorisation. In the first instance one can distinguish between nicknames based (justifiably or not) on characteristics attributed to the addressee (addressee-based), those based on the name of the addressee (name-based), and those derived from an incident in the addressee's personal history (event-based). In this last case, the choice of traditional type of nickname will be precluded and the range of ways in which an incident may give rise to a nickname are so various that no further sub-classification is possible. Examples include:

*Mooch* (from *smooch*): used for a particularly affectionate child.

*Tup* (from *twopence*): mother's comment on small size of child: 'as big as twopence'.

*Kodak*: always begins a speech with: 'Let me put you in the picture'.

*Feathers*: to an ex-poultry farmer.

*Beirut*: who got bombed every night.

*Minerals*: 'has silver in his hair, gold in his teeth and lead in his bottom'.

*Carburetta*: 'never worked unless he was full'.

*Sputnik*: is always circling a particular hotel.

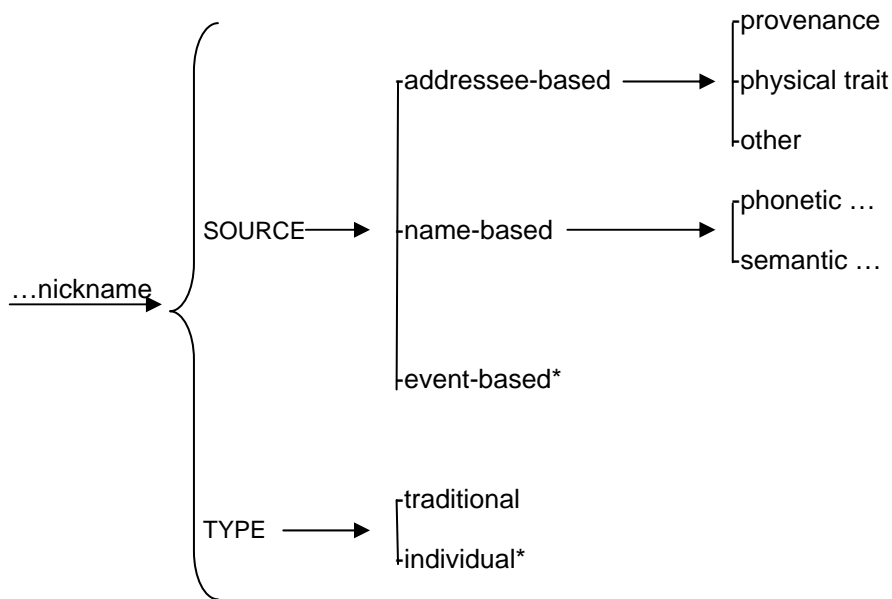
(Last four examples from the Back Chat column of *The Advertiser*).

Addressee-based nicknames are sub-classified into three types: those based on nationality or ethnicity (which are always traditional), those based on a physical trait (e.g. size, shape, hair-colour, physical deformity) and a third residual category. Figure 5.2 illustrates.

	Traditional/Generic	Individual
Nationality	<i>Frogg(y), Fritz, Taffy</i>	(not applicable)
Physical trait: hair colour hair type size height deformity/ abnormality	<i>Ginger, Snow(y), Blue(y), Red, Carrots Curly Porky, Fatty, Skinny Tiny (tall), Titch (small)  Gimpy (limps)  one testicle); Spot (acne)</i>	<i>Hippo, Oxfam, Rosetub, Chubs, Legs (tall), Matchstick, Doll (small as a child)  Duckarse (one leg shorter than the other makes bottom stick out when walking); Oddball (born with only</i>
Other	<i>Brains, Prof(essor); Roxby (used in SA for supporters of uranium mining at Roxby Downs)</i>	<i>Fudge (loves it); Tiger(bites); Smudge (messy worker); Gusty ('because she's so disgusting').</i>

**Figure 5.2 Nicknames based on characteristics attributed to addressee**

Name-based nicknames can be sub-classified firstly in terms of those based on the actual form of the name contrasted with those that involve some kind of association of meaning, i.e. phonetic contrasted with semantic. Each of these categories can be further sub-categorised. Since the systems that each of these terms provides entry to are moderately complex, I shall summarise the categorisation to this point in the form of a system network as follows:



**Figure 5.3 NAME: nickname (\* features do not combine)**

Phonetic name-based nicknames are of four kinds: rhymes, forms involving phonetic similarity (with children, to a 'suitably obnoxious word' if possible, Morgan et al. (1979: 38)), acronyms and corruptions. Attested examples of each type are listed below (the name from which the nickname derives appears in brackets).

**Rhyme:** *Cabbage* (Babbage), *Paris* (Harris), *Flea* (Leigh), *Pills*, *Hills* (Mills).

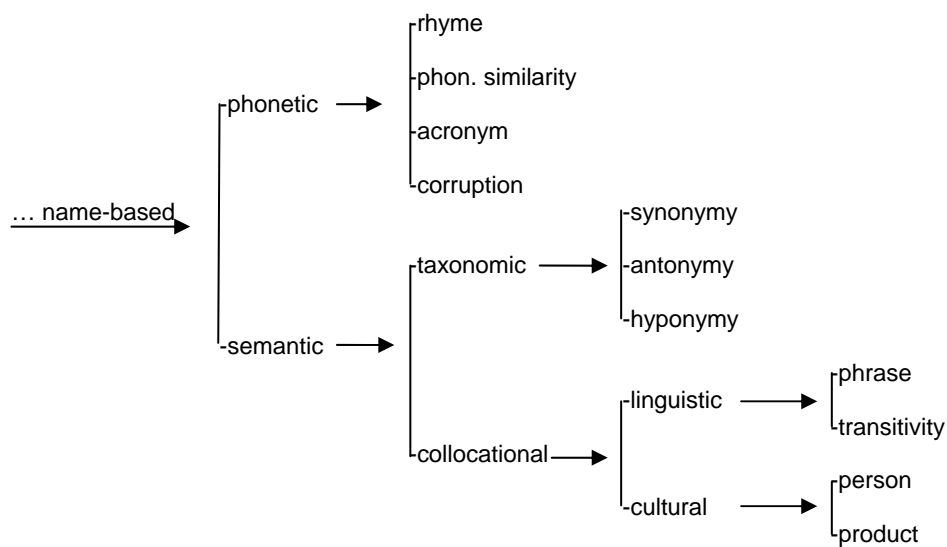
**Phonetic similarity:** *Sewers* (Suresh), *Alligator* (Ali(son)), *Underwear* (Underwood), *Gladys* (Gladstone), *Beef* (Keith), *Hiccups* (Hickox), *Ridiculous* (Nicholas), *Garrulous* (Gareth - used of Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Australian Federal Government), *Loogoobrious* (Louisa - Stead 1940); *Toad* (Thodey), *Britches* (Britchford), *Smelly* (Samele), *Freezer* (Fraser). Even religious names can be subjected to this process: Sister *Antoninus* became *Sister Antirrhinum* by means of phonetic similarity and then *Sister Snapdragon* by synonymy.

**Acronyms:** *CP* (initials personal + family name), *OC* (family name O'Connor), *Cappy* (initials C.A.P.), *Snap* (initials S.N.A.P.), *Harpy* (initials R.P.), *Jaws* (anagram of initials A.J.W.S.).

**Corruptions:** *Wizzy*, *Bissy* (Elizabeth), *Om* (John, later extended to *Omlette* by phonetic similarity).

Semantic name-based nicknames can be distinguished firstly in relation to whether the nature of the connection between name and nickname is one of taxonomic or of collocational relations. Taxonomically-related nicknames are related to first or last name of addressee by one of three processes: synonymy, antonymy or hyponymy. I have no attested instances of meronymy, but there is no a priori reason why this should not occur.

The options are presented below in Figure 5.4.



**Figure 5.4 Name-based nicknames**

Figure 5.5 displays attested [name-based: semantic: taxonomic] nicknames:

	Traditional	Individual
Synonymy	<i>Shiner</i> (Bright) <i>Timber, Lackery</i> (Wood)	<i>Coldarse</i> (Winterbottom) <i>Phys</i> (initials PT), <i>Chic</i> (Smart), <i>Tin Bum</i> (via <i>Nickel Arse</i> from Nicholas).
Antonymy	<i>Darky</i> (White)	<i>Bluntles</i> (Sharples), <i>Queen(y)</i> (King), <i>Summerdrought</i> (Winter- flood)
Hyponymy	co-hyponyms).	<i>Y-front</i> (Underwood via Under- wear), <i>FE</i> (=iron, from Steele,

**Figure 5.5 [Name-based: semantic: taxonomic] nicknames**

Collocationally-derived nicknames are either linguistic or cultural (though the boundary is a bit blurry). [Collocation: linguistic] nicknames are further sub-categorised into [phrase], i.e. a more literal sense of collocation as words that habitually go together, and a second category labelled [transitivity], since the relation of nickname to original name bears some similarity to the relation of participants to process in transitivity structure, hence is referred to as transitivity. [Collocation: cultural] nicknames are further sub-categorised into [person] and [product], where the former is usually a figure from popular culture and the latter a consumer product, especially one widely advertised.

Figure 5.6 displays attested [name-based: semantic: collocational] nicknames:

	Traditional	Individual
Linguistic phrase	<i>Happy Day, Dusty Rhodes</i>	<i>Christmas Carroll, Broad Bean</i>
transitivity Sheriff	<i>Weed Gardner, Shotty (shot-gun) Carpenter</i>	<i>Snowy /Doughy Baker, Chippy</i>
Cultural: person	<i>Ned Kelly, Spike Sullivan, Tug Wilson</i>	<i>Flash Gordon, Donald Duck, Speedy Gonzales (v. tennis player Speedy Gonzales)</i>
product	<i>Blanco White, Johnny Walker,</i>	<i>Sauce (for Kerren tomato sauce: first name Karen)</i>

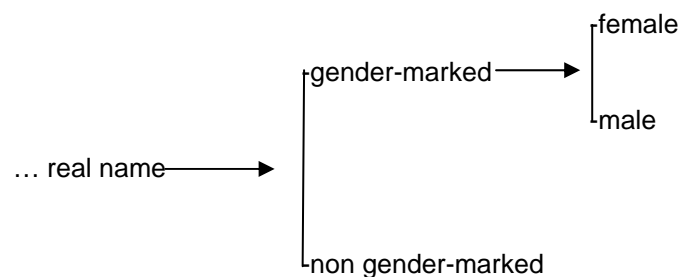
**Figure 5.6 [Name-based: semantic: collocational] nicknames**

Again most such nicknames are individual rather than traditional, but the fact that some at least of such forms do recur in different contexts (see Morgan et al. pp. 43-5) suggests that the distinction between traditional and individual nicknames is not simply a matter of an either/or choice but rather is a matter of a cline ranging from totally predictable to totally unpredictable. The total range of linguistic processes involved in the formation of 'new' nicknames is moderately extensive, but certainly specifiable, so that it is hardly surprising if some items recur. Two facts make it harder to see that this is unsurprising. The iterative potential (which I have not attempted to map) that operates in this part of the network to such an extent that it is normal to choose a second and even a third time from the derivational options available in order to form new nicknames. For example, *Meadowcroft* becomes *Meadowlea* by partial phonetic identification, and then *Margie*, a hypocoristic (-y suffixed) form of *margarine* which is in a hyponymous relationship with *Meadowlea* (a well-known local brand of margarine).

The total effect of such a series of changes, especially if combined with a strong ideological predisposition to regard derivational inventiveness as deriving from the individual rather than the linguistic system, is to create the illusion of unfettered linguistic creativity. It is certainly true that some individuals display greater facility in manipulating the available linguistic options than do others, e.g. Sam Pollitt, in *The Man Who Loved Children* (Stead, 1940), Christina Stead's fictional but entirely plausible arch-manipulator of the vocative system, and Morgan et al's account of the range of creations of an Australian father (Morgan et al. 1979: 35). It is also true that while the processes involved in nicknaming are describable, the outcomes are not only not entirely predictable but frequently involve a blurring of distinctions between the category of names and the general lexicon and between established and newly-coined words, the net effect of all of which is to emphasise the open-ended play nature of nicknaming as a linguistic activity. Linguistic play ought not to be underestimated as an interpersonal phenomenon (v. Kirschenblatt-Gimblett 1976), particularly when it focusses on that most personal possession, one's name. This is one interpersonal area where men seem to excel, presumably for somewhat the same reasons that they are more commonly the joke tellers and the story tellers of the culture (Poynton 1985/90). Such monologic, performance-oriented genres provide opportunities for competitive display. Given the propensity of nicknames not only to 'mark' the recipient but to provide entertainment for others, versatility in creating new nicknames seems to belong in the same category.

### 5.2.2 Real name: gender-marked

A basic distinction between personal and family name is in terms of gender-marking. At first glance, the situation would appear to be clearcut, with the bulk of [personal: real] names being gender-marked and family names not so marked. The discussion below will demonstrate that the distinction is not quite so clearcut. Figure 5.7 presents the basic options with respect to [personal: real] names.

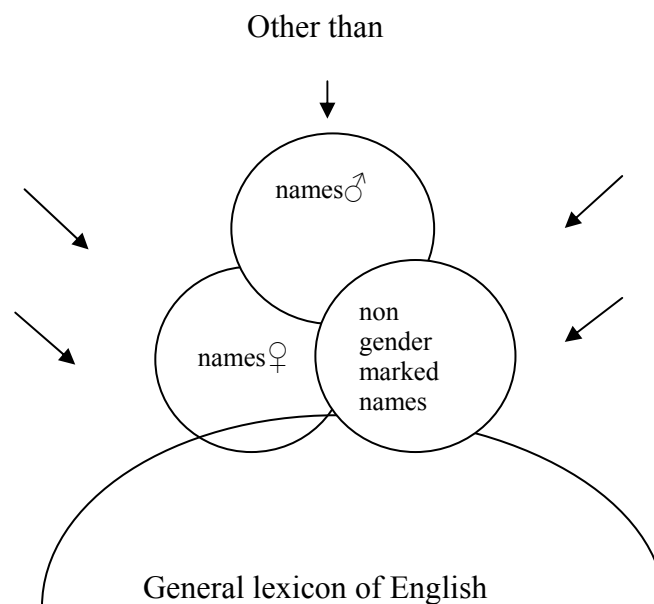


**Figure 5.7 [Personal:real name]**

(Lexicogrammatical stratum, word rank)



Three sets of names can be identified, realising the features [non-gender-marked], [gender-marked: female] and [gender-marked: male]. Each of these sets has some degree of overlap with at least one other set (and in the case of two of the three types with what will be referred to as the general lexicon), but the extent of the overlap and the degree of tension at the point of overlap vary. The facts regarding overlaps of name categories (where an item can be a member of more than one category) can be represented diagrammatically as in Figure 5.8 below. (Note that no attempt has been made to represent possible quantitative differences in the sizes of the three sets of names nor the extent of the overlaps between them. Likewise, the incomplete circle representing the general lexicon of English is to be understood merely as larger than any of the other sets).



**Figure 5.8 Co-membership of name categories in English**

Starting with female names, there is a very small amount of overlap with, i.e. co-membership of, the classes of both male and non-gender-marked names. The absence of significant overlap with the set of male names is readily interpretable culturally in terms of a premium placed on the ability to readily identify individuals as belonging to one gender or the other in a culture with a powerful ideological commitment to maintaining as clearcut a gender distinction as possible. The basis of the gender distinction in names is partly conventional (i.e. certain names become known as female or male names on the basis of usage as such) but it

is also phonological. Gender-marking is achieved by means of distinctions with respect to:

i. **Syllabicity:** While the majority of gender-marked names in English are bisyllabic (slightly under two-thirds of both female and male names in the contemporary lists in Dunkling 1977), over a third of female names are longer than this and nearly a third of male names are monosyllabic. When one takes into account that the form of male name most likely to be chosen is the truncated, i.e. monosyllabic, form (see Lawson 1973, on preference for this form by both males and females, and Part III below) and also notes that female names are less likely to be truncated but more likely to be suffixed forms ending in -y, i.e. bisyllabic forms, then the difference in syllabicity becomes more marked.

ii. **Phonotactics:** Female names typically end vocally, while male names end consonantly and there are differences in the choice of and frequency of use of final consonants in female and male names. Approximately two-thirds of female names in contemporary use end vocally, while three-quarters of male names end consonantly; and while final -n is the most favoured consonant in final position for both female and male names, more than twice as many male as female names end thus.

Where a name can be used for either gender (e.g. *Leslie/Lesley*, *Ashley*, *Kerrie/Kerry*, *Kim*, *Shannon*, *Noel*, *Lee/Leigh*, *Robyn(ne)/Robin* - see below on orthographic gender-marking), there is a strong tendency for such items to become 'feminised': either in the sense that they are regarded as inadequately masculine names for males or in the sense that they come to be used exclusively for females. A nice example of the first kind was provided some time ago in the state of New South Wales when the then Premier, known generally as *Bob Askin*, was to be knighted. He chose to become *Sir Robert Askin* rather than to use his actual given name of *Robin*. If Askin had been of the newer generation of Australian political leaders, he may very well not have seen his name as an issue but he was of the older iron-hand-and-not-much-velvet-glove school and presumably felt that being publically known as *Robin* would not go with this image.

Instances of the second kind of feminisation are not hard to find. The name *Shirley* was originally used as a family name, came to be used as a male name (see below) and then as a female name - no doubt helped by Charlotte Bronte's 1849 novel of that name, where the heroine was given the name *Shirley* by parents who would have used it for a son if they had had one, and later by the enormous popularity of film star Shirley Temple in the 1930s. More than a century after Bronte's highly

marked choice, it would be inconceivable for a male to be named *Shirley*. A very recent example of the same feminisation process involves the name *Ashley*. This has until very recently been a male name (as listed in Dunkling 1974: 32, 'The central stock of boys' names') but appears among the most popular choices for girls in the 1980s (e.g. *Sydney Morning Herald* 3.1.1984). In both these cases the final -y sound is likely to have been a significant factor in the switch, both because it is vocalic but also because it has the same shape as the hypocoristic suffix -y which is more widely used to females than to males.

iii. **Borrowing from general lexicon:** Traditionally there has been significant borrowing of items from the general lexicon as names for females, but very little for males. There are no instances of such male names in Dunkling's main or supplementary lists of the basic name stock, for example (Dunkling 1974). Among 'alternative lifestyle' people, however, whether the hippies of the 60s and 70s or the new age people of the 80s and 90s, such borrowing is more common, with names such as *Sunshine*, *Zephyr*, *Peace*, *Halcyon*, *Phoenix*, *Azure* and *Dream* used, many for both boys and girls. Unusual borrowings from the general lexicon by entertainers are also reported, e.g. Charlene Tilton's daughter *Cherish* (*Woman's Day*, 21.3.1989). It is almost impossible, however, to get accurate information about the incidence of such names: many of the people who choose such names are the least likely to record the birth of their children in newspaper birth columns and access to registers of births for such research is not available in Australia.

Certain semantic domains are particularly favoured in the adoption of words from the general lexicon as names, as was pointed out above. Categories mentioned there were flowers/plants and precious stones. These are the perennially popular categories, with new items displacing those regarded as old-fashioned, e.g. newer names such as *Fern* and *Willow* have currently replaced the older *Hazel*, *Iris* and *Ivy*, and *Amber* and *Topaz* the older *Pearl* and *Ruby*. Other, usually less extensive, categories include:

seasons/months/days: *Summer*, *Autumn*, *April*, *Tuesday*

ideals: *Destiny*, *Liberty*, *Harmony* (The -y ending of such names is assumed to be a significant factor in their use as female names. Cf. *Melody*, *Memory*).

iv. **Borrowings from other languages:** Items from languages other than English (including some general lexical items and endearments as well as names) are readily borrowed into the set of female names, appropriate adjustments being made to the original phonology. Examples include:

French: *Aimee, Blanche, Cherie, Desiree, Fleur, Mignon, Nicole ...*

German/Scandinavian: *Anneliese, Astrid, Freya, Gerda, Heidi, Ingrid ...*

Russian/Slavonic: *Anika, Lara, Natasha, Olga, Tania, Tamara ...*

Italian: *Bianca, Cara, Donna, Gemma, Mia ...*

Spanish: *Anita, Elena, Dolores, Ines, Juanita ...*

Hebrew (biblical): *Hannah, Leah, Naomi, Rachel, Rebecca, Ruth, Tamar ...*

Male names are borrowed from other languages but much less frequently. Probably the largest set would be borrowings from (biblical) Hebrew, e.g. *Aaron, Adam, Daniel, Jesse, Joel, Joshua, Nathan, Tobias, Zachary*. (Most of these names, of course, have a long history as English names, and would be regarded as 'biblical' rather than 'Hebrew'). In many cases the phonotactics of non-English name forms would inhibit the borrowing of male names: English gender-marks by a word-final opposition between vocalic and consonantal sounds, whereas in many languages both female and male names end vocalically and it is the choice of vowel that is significant for gender-marking. This factor probably explains why borrowings from Germanic languages (including *Carl, Conrad, Eric, Kurt*) and some Russian names (e.g. *Boris, Ivan*) are acceptable as English male names but Italian and Spanish male names if they ending in a vowel are largely not.

v. **Orthographic variation:** Orthographic variation occurs in both female and male names but is more widespread for female names. Not only are there more sets of conventional orthographic variants of female names (the set including *Catherine/Katharine/Kathryn* being one of the best known examples), but female names are much more likely than male to appear in idiosyncratic spellings. For example, of the 43 most popular female names for 1983, no less than 17 appeared in variant spellings, some of them decidedly idiosyncratic, e.g. *Amie, Leesa, Rachelle, Anabel, Ashlea, Jacalyne*. Only eight from the parallel list of 46 most popular male names appeared in variant orthographic form, however, and only one of these could be regarded as in any way unusual, by virtue of using French rather than English spelling, i.e. *Marc* rather than *Mark*. (Name lists from *Sydney Morning Herald*, 3.1. 1984). Orthographic variation is used in attempting to identify 'sexually ambiguous' names as female or male, but is not to be relied on. One might fairly reasonably assume that *Keri* and perhaps *Kerrie* were female, for example, but *Kerry* could be either.

vi. **Invented names:** Invented names, including items combining elements of other names, may readily enter the set of female names as long as they are phonotactically appropriate: e.g. *Jiann*, from the names of parents Jim and Fran, is perfectly acceptable as a female name, while the other possible combination of these parental names, *Frim*, is not possible as a female name but perfectly acceptable as a nickname and is so used. Other invented names include *Frusannah* (from *Frances* and *Susannah*) 'occasionally used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' (Withycombe 1950: 117) and *Kahlia*, invented for her second daughter by Lindy Chamberlain, convicted of the murder of her first daughter, Azaria, later pardoned and exonerated, in one of the most sensational series of trials, appeals and acquittal in Australian criminal history. Male invented names are rare, if they occur at all.

vii. **Parallel forms:** Many variants, including borrowings and hypocoristic forms, of female names become independent names, but this is much less common for male names. Dunkling includes numerous examples among 'The central stock of girls' names' (Dunkling 1974: 36-9), including *Ann/Anne/ Anna/Annette, Catherine/Karen/Karina/Kate/Katie/Kathleen/Katrina, Mary/Marie/Maria/Miriam*, but very few instances are to be found among the comparable lists for boys: *Robert/Robin, Carl/Charles, John/Ian/Ivan/Sean, Mark/Marcus, Tobias/Toby* is the complete list from this source. (op. cit. 32-3).

The identification of these seven aspects of the gender-marking of English names gives rise to an obvious question: why so many? Why does gender need to be marked over and over again? Gender-marking of names is not uncommon in various languages, including Anglo-Saxon, where the elements which made up personal names appeared in different positions depending on whether the name was female or male (Barley 1974). This is a long way away from the situation with respect to contemporary English. Such a combination of features suggests that gender difference is a particularly salient cultural and ideological category. (See Ch. 8 below for discussion of gender and address). It is notable that despite what one might refer to as redundancy overkill with respect to gender-marking, one does find individuals with names that are normally assigned to the opposite gender. This happens rarely with males, but somewhat more commonly with females. 'A boy named *Sue*' was the subject of a popular song some years ago, and *Judy Patching* was well-known in Australia as Chair of the Australian Olympic Committee. Women with male personal names include *Quentin Bryce*, former Convenor of the National Women's Advisory Council, and *Neville Membery*, whose son is designer

Stuart Membery. Other male names known to be used for females include *Michael*, *Rowan* and *Vaughn*.

Turning now to the relationship between gender-marked (in particular male) and non-gender-marked names, there is considerable overlap which needs to be looked at from several points of view. Diachronically, many names which are now non-gender-marked were derived from gender-marked items. Names such as the following derive from male personal names: *Dawkins*, *Johnson*, *Lucas*, *Pritchard*, *Aitken*, *Ransome*, *Garrett*, *Elliott*, *Robertson*. Family names originally derived from female names are also to be found, e.g. *Annison*, *Empson*, *Maudling*, *Tillotson*. Any gender-marking such items may once have had seems to have entirely disappeared, however. Many items which, as personal names, are currently gender-marked (predominantly as male) seem synchronically to have lost their gender-marking when used as family names, e.g. *Meredith*, *Leonard*, *Martin*, *James*, *Douglas*, *Joyce*. A further set of items that can occur as either personal or family name are gender-marked when used as personal names but are regarded as borrowings from the set of family names: e.g. *Mitchell*, *Todd*, *Seymour*, *Wade*, *Ryan* (from a very large set of male names); *Brooke*, *Kelly*, *Courtney* (from an extremely small set of female names. I also have evidence of *Brooke* and *Kelly* being used as names for males, as well as females). And finally, there are non-gender-marked names which can be used as personal names but which have no overt gender-marking, e.g. ***Manning*** *Clark* (doyen of historians of Australia), ***Harlean*** *Carpenter* (original name of actress Jean Harlow), ***Spangler*** *Arlington* *Brough* (original name of actor Robert Taylor).

It is likely that these last three groups represent three stages in a diachronic process which begins with the use of a non-gender-marked name as a personal name, a phenomenon with a long history in English (v. Langenfelt 1940; Withycombe 1950: xl-xlii). Such items are presumably initially interpreted as family-names-used-as-personal-names, as is *Manning* today, but where they become more widely used (rather than merely being an idiosyncratic choice or confined to a single family as a family name) then they may begin to acquire gender-marking (as have *Courtney*, *Mitchell*, *Ryan* today). Where such names become commonly used, then the gender-marking presumably becomes fixed (although phonotactic and historical considerations may lead to a subsequent change in the marking) and a gender-marked item exists side by side with a non-gender-marked item with the same phonological shape. The names *Cecil* and *Shirley* are instances of names which were originally non-gender-marked family names and which subsequently acquired gender-marking through use as personal names, in the case of *Shirley*

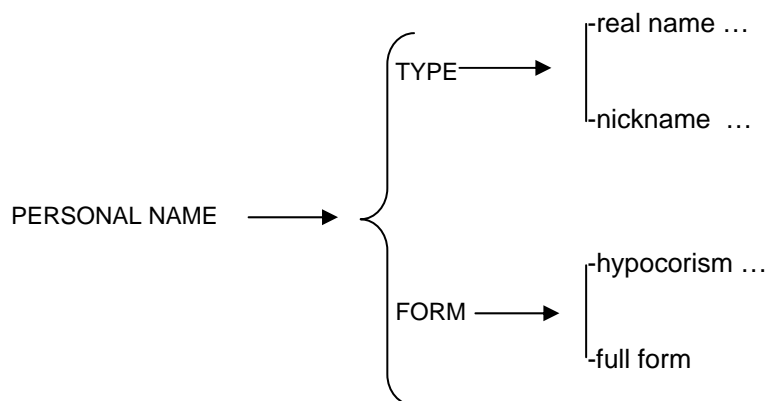
(whose history is outlined above) the gender-marking changing from male to female.

The practice of borrowing a family name for use as a personal name is, and seems always to have been, largely restricted to males, however, and it is still a minority practice: the vast majority of full names consist of one or more gender-marked items as personal name(s) and one non-gender-marked item as family name. Particularly in the United States, and now starting to occur more frequently in Australia where it has not been a widespread practice, one does find a family name (particularly the mother's family name) used as a middle name.

The relationship between male names and non-gender-marked names would seem then to be different again from that obtaining between either female names and the general lexicon or female and male names. It would seem that any Anglo non-gender-marked name is potentially available for borrowing for use as a personal name by males and consequently may come to be included in the set of male names. The implication is of an implicit maleness associated with the apparently non-gender-marked set of names, which is reflected in the fact that use of a non-gender-marked name with reference to an unknown individual will be assumed to be reference to a male, whether such an item is in fact a family name (widely used in address or reference to males but seldom to females) or a personal name. In other words, another instance of maleness being the grammatically unmarked choice (Baron 1986, Martyna 1980).

### 5.2.3 Hypocorism and full form

Returning to the network presented originally in Figure 5.1, PERSONAL NAME is sub-categorised in terms of form into [hypocorism] or [full form], the feature [hypocorism] constituting the entry condition to further systems. Figure 5.1 is represented below as Figure 5.9.



**Figure 5.9 PERSONAL NAME (primary delicacy).** (Word rank, lexicogrammatical stratum)

Formally, the distinction involves a contrast between those names which have been subjected to the operation of some word-formation process such as truncation (clipping), suffixation or reduplication and those names which have not been so subjected. Functionally, the contrast is one between a range of derived forms used principally to decrease social distance and indicate positive affect and a more neutral base form used principally as a marker of increased social distance and the absence of affect. Because of the ubiquitous usage of hypocoristic forms in Australian English, the full form comes to have a negative expressive function, i.e. as a marker either of withdrawal of intimacy/affection etc. (especially in the case of adult/child interaction, but note children's alternation of *Mum(my)* and *Mother* for a similar effect) or as signalling reluctance or even refusal to enter into a closer relationship.

Some of the derivational processes used to produce hypocoristic name forms, e.g. truncation, seem to be widespread in English-speaking communities, while others either have restricted distribution (e.g. baby-talk or nursery forms) or may occur with different frequencies in different communities. For example, many informants have claimed that such forms as *Kaz* and *Baz* from *Karen* and *Barry* only occur in Australian English. While they are certainly not exclusively Australian, it may well be the case that they occur more commonly here. What is notable about hypocorisms in general is that they not only apply all of the relatively limited number of derivational processes generally available in Modern English but make productive use of others that are either no longer generally productive or that seem unique to hypocoristic forms, whether names or other items (see especially the suffix *-s*, dealt with in detail below). Stankiewicz (1964: 256) suggests that such high productivity of 'expressive derivation' of proper names, which he notes are 'formally more variegated than the derivations of other lexical domains', is the norm.

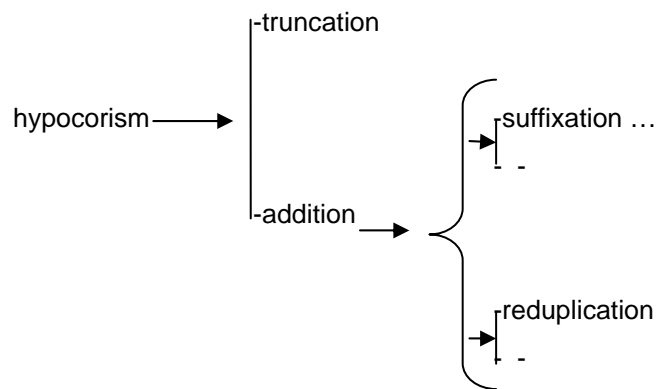
What follows in this section on hypocoristic name forms mainly applies to real names. Hypocoristic forms of nicknames are certainly to be found but they tend to be somewhat restricted in type, e.g. mostly truncated forms (*Curl* from *Curly*) or suffixed forms, principally involving *-y* suffixation (*Dolly* from *Doll*, *Wicksie* from *Wicks*). This is to some extent predictable, since in functional terms nicknames can be regarded as equivalent to hypocoristic rather than to full forms, both being markers of less than maximal distance. It should also be pointed out that not all real names allow one unrestricted entry to the systems for which [hypocorism] is the entry condition: some names have multitudinous hypocoristic variants and others very few. In some cases the restrictions are phonological (e.g. a



velar stop in final position of the base name form seems to preclude the addition of *-kin(s)*), while in other cases the identification of a name as foreign seems to make some (or all) hypocoristic forms unavailable or their use marked. Marchand (1969: 216) notes that for native (English) suffixes, 'the derivative basis is always native'. Note however, the existence of forms like *Deek* or *Deke* (truncation of *Di Castella*), *Campo* (suffixed form of *Campese*), *Gunty* (suffixed form of *Guenter*), *Albertipoo* (from *Alberto*).

#### 5.2.4. Truncation and addition

Figure 5.10 below specifies that portion of the personal name network for which hypocorism is the entry condition.



**Figure 5.10 PERSONAL NAME: [hypocorism]**

[Hypocorism] can be subcategorised initially in terms of [truncation] and [addition], the latter feature being the entry condition for a further more delicate system, consisting of the features [suffixation] and [reduplication]. Each of these may be individually selected, in the case of [suffixation] this being a potentially iterative selection (see 5.2.5 below), or both features may be selected simultaneously, producing multiply-hypocoristic forms such as *Jimmy-Jimkins* from *James*.

The feature [truncation] is realised by truncated forms produced by shortening and/or phonological alteration of a full form. Such forms are almost invariably

monosyllabic. The few exceptions being bisyllabic, e.g. *Alex* from *Alexandra* or *Alexander*, *Tony* from *Antony*, *Cilla* from *Priscilla*. Shortened forms such as *Sandra* from *Alexandra* and *Celia* from *Cecilia*, which also exist as independent names, i.e. as full forms, appear to present a problem in that the realisation of [full form] will be identical with that of [hypocorism: truncation]. Functionally the problem may not exist, however: *Sandra* to someone whose full name is *Alexandra* may be generally understood to be hypocoristic, paralleled by some form such as *Sandy* as a hypocoristic form of *Sandra*.

Most truncated forms involve the selection of one syllable from a full name (bi- or poly-syllabic). There are, however, quite a number of common names whose truncated forms exhibit various degrees of phonological difference from the corresponding syllable in full name: *Meg* from *Megan* or *Margaret*, *Jim* from *James*, *Dot* from *Dorothy*, *Bob* from *Robert*, alter a consonant; *Kate* from *Catherine* and *Peg* from *Margaret* exhibit both vocalic and consonantal alteration. Where pairs of truncated forms exist, usually with one closer to the contemporary phonology of the full name, the contrast may be functional, marking, for example, ethnicity (e.g. *Peg* rather than *Marg*, from *Margaret*, and *Din* rather than *Den*, from *Denis*, are Irish forms) or being up-to-date or trendy as opposed to old-fashioned (e.g. *Kate* rather than *Kath*, from *Catherine/Kathleen*, and *Rick* rather than *Dick*, from *Richard*). Where a full form is monosyllabic, the only possible truncated forms necessitate phonological change, e.g. *James* to *Jim*, or else the use of a form that is largely unrelated to contemporary phonology but is conventionally regarded as a 'short', i.e. truncated, form e.g. *John* to *Jack* (from an old diminutive). There do not seem to be many such forms.

In selecting one syllable from a full form to realise [truncation], generally the initial syllable will be chosen unless it is unstressed, in which case a subsequent syllable (usually the first stressed) will be chosen, e.g. *Liz* from *Elizabeth* and *Baz* from *Sebastian*. (An elided form of this latter name, *Spaz*, has also been noted, which retains the characteristic sibilant opening consonant and likewise voices the closing syllable).

A large number of names do have truncated forms formed from an initial syllable which does not have primary stress, e.g. *Lou/ise*, *Chris/tine*, *Di/ane*, *Lyn/ette*, *Pen/elope*, *Fi/ona*, *Pat/tricia*, *Vic/toria*. This is relatively frequent with female names, but relatively infrequent with male names. Note also that alternate truncated forms sometimes exist, e.g. *Tina* for *Christina*, *Nettie* for *Lynette* or *Antoinette*. Interestingly, one does hear pronunciations of some of the bisyllabic

full names which reverse the usual stress pattern. I have heard *Louise*, *Christine*, *Dianne*. This may be an indication that speakers perceive a relationship between stress placement in the full form and the choice of a truncated form. Jespersen claimed that although stress played some role in 'deciding what to leave out and what to retain' in clipped (i.e. truncated) forms, that 'on the whole its role ... is surprisingly small' (Jespersen 1942: 559) and, more specifically with respect to shortened forms of names, that they were formed 'with practically no regard to the place of the stress in the prototype' (p. 540). Certainly the preference for initial syllable is very strong. Jespersen sees the retention of the beginning of a word as 'the natural way of shortening' (1942: 534) (amplified in his paper on monosyllabism, where he notes that much of the substance of polysyllabic words is redundant. Jespersen 1928/33). There are quite a number of truncated forms which use the last syllable of a name (again, to some extent regardless of stress placement in the full form). Jespersen's list includes *Belle* for *Christabel* and *Isabel*, *Bert* for *Albert*, *Herbert* or *Hubert*, *Drew* for *Andrew*, *Bet* for *Elizabeth*. These are still in fairly common use but there are also many others where either the full name is no longer in regular use or where the currently used truncated form has changed, generally to a form based on the initial syllable, e.g. *Etta* for *Henrietta*, *Gar* for *Edgar*, *Tory* for *Victoria* (although used by one of my current students), *Val* for *Percival*, *Totty* for *Charlotte*, *Mun* for *Edmund*. It may be that a strong preference for initial syllable as the source of truncated forms is influencing name choice: certainly the majority of the most frequently chosen names for babies born in 1982, as appearing in birth notices in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (8.1.83), have stress on the first syllable and nearly half of those do not use the initial syllable to form a truncated form.

If the relevant syllable is open it may sometimes be left open if the vowel is long or a diphthong (e.g. *Fee*, *Stew*, *Ro*, *How*, from *Fiona*, *Stewart*, *Rosemary* and *Howard*). Otherwise it will be closed, generally by the initial consonant of the subsequent syllable (e.g. *Pat*, *Greg*, *Jude*, *Steve*, *Kyle*, *Jase* from *Patricia*, *Gregory*, *Judith*, *Steven*, *Kylie* and *Jason*).

A set of monosyllabic forms does exist, however, with [z] as the final consonant, where this sound is not the initial consonant of the subsequent syllable, which is most commonly (though not always) [r]. Such forms include *Caz* from *Carol*, *Caroline* or *Karen*, *Baz* from *Barry*, *Tez* from *Teresa* or *Terence*, *Viz* from *Vivienne* and *Oz* from *Oliver*. Such forms are not at all unusual in Australian English, and some at least seem to occur in both British or American English. Two very small sets of data indicate that such forms do exist in British English but with

no indication of their distribution. Morgan, O'Neill and Harre (1979) note a small number of such forms, including *Cas* [sic] for *Karen* (p. 66) and a set of three such forms *Caz*, *Saz*, *Diz* (p. 61, no information provided on the full form of the relevant names, which do however have the appropriate initial consonant) used by members of a solidary group of school girls in a London school. The second set of data provides two such forms, where the full forms of the personal names are known: two of the three members of British pop group *Bananarama* are known as *Kez* (*Karen*) and *Sez* (*Sarah*), (*Australian Women's Weekly*, January 1983). It may, of course, be the case that Australian hypocoristic forms of this type have provided the model (e.g. Barry Humphries' creation of the quintessential ocker, *Bazza McKenzie*, was well known in London through the original cartoons and later a film).

Whatever the actual distribution of this phenomenon, an explanation is clearly called for. Figure 5.11 sets out a range of these forms, arranged according to the vowel nucleus:

i	e	a	o	other
Viz (Vivienne)	Kez (Kerry, Kerin, Kevin Mez (Meryl) Nez (Neroli) Jez (Jeremy)	Az (Andrew) Baz (Barry) Caz (Carol/ine) Chas (Charles) Daz (Darren, Darius, Darryl) Gaz (Garry) Jaz (James) Maz (Marion) Raz (Rachel) Saz (Sarah) Shaz (Sharon)	Oz (Oliver) Moz (Maurice) Toz (Thomas)	Daze (David) Morz (Maureen) Mairz (Mary)

**Figure 5.11 Monosyllabic personal name forms ending in [z]**

As well as these personal name tokens, there are a small number of similar forms derived from surnames or from names of pets (the addition of a further *-a* suffix to such forms is quite regular : see 5.2.5 below):

	e	a	u
Family name	Jez (Jellet) Pez (Perrin)	Kazza (Carroll) Faz (Farrer)	Duzza (Durham)
Pet name	Fez (Pharoah)	Paz (Paddington)	

**Figure 5.12 Family names & pet names ending in [z]**

Two facts are immediately obvious. Almost all such forms have short vowel nuclei, and the vast majority are derived from full forms whose second syllable begins with /r/. A short vowel is normally not possible in syllable final position in English (though one linguist-informant attested /g / for *Garry* as a vocative form) but the normal syllable-closing procedure of taking the initial consonant of the subsequent syllable is not available in Australian English where that syllable begins with /r/. The most obvious explanation for the use of /z/ to close the syllable is a phonological explanation in terms of some kind of de-rhoticisation.

Rhoticisation and de-rhoticisation phenomena are attested for a number of Indo-European languages, including Classical Greek, Classical Latin, eighteenth century French (Jespersen 1942: 244), Germanic (Verner's Law), Czech and contemporary Guatemalan Spanish; but not for Modern English. In any case, where such phenomena occur, the /r/ involved is generally trilled not tapped. If such a de-rhoticisation phenomenon were to occur in Modern English, one would expect it to occur in forms other than vocatives - though a possible counter-argument would point to the fact that truncated (monosyllabic) hypocoristic vocative forms are highly functional, particularly in Australian English, so that the need to have such forms for as many names as possible may well have led to a specialised response peculiar to vocatives. Despite a degree of phonological/phonetic similarity between /r/ and /z/ in Modern English, native speaker intuitions seem to keep them well apart. Alternations between them are not as far as I know found in child language (suggesting that they are naturally perceived as more different than similar) and historically the attested consonant to close a syllable when the subsequent syllable began with /r/ was /l/ - another liquid, e.g. *Sal* from *Sarah* and *Hal* from *Harry*. Jespersen (1928/33: 394-5, 1942: 541) cites also *Dol* from *Dorothy* and *Mal* for *Mary* and explains these in terms of children's difficulties in pronunciation, citing various other substitutions in the latter source, including *Biddy* for *Bridget*. and *Dick* for *Ricard* (the old form of *Richard*). Withycombe (1950) interprets this last as a rhymed form (cf. *Peg* for *Meg*) but offers only

further examples of what he claims, without explanation, is 'the same process of formation' for deriving *Biddy* from *Bridget*, e.g. *Fanny* from *Frances*, *Kit* or *Kester* from *Christopher*. He cites all the short forms with /l/ with no explanation.

An alternative explanation is morphological rather than phonological and not only accounts for the data but does so in a way which treats these forms not as a vocative oddity but as merely one manifestation, albeit somewhat unusual, of a much more general hypocoristic process in English. There is a hypocoristic suffix -s (most commonly realised as /z/ which occurs in a variety of vocative and non-vocative forms (Thielke 1938/9, Langenfelt 1941/42, Mühlhäusler 1983). This suffix can be added to truncated forms, to produce forms such as *Jules* from *Julie* or *Julian*, *Madz* from *Madeline*, *Dinz* from *Denis*, *Wenz* from *Wendy*, and also kin-title forms such as *Gramps*, *Pops*, *Mums*. By virtue of its use in such monosyllabic forms and its general productivity (see 5.2.5.5 below for a detailed account), it would seem an appropriate choice to close an open syllable where this cannot be done from within the full name, i.e. where the following syllable begins with /r/.

A range of hypocoristic suffixes is utilised in vocative forms but -s would seem to be the only suitable one to use to close open syllables since it is the only one which is neither vocalic nor syllabic, hence the only one which will produce monosyllabic forms. Furthermore, it is the only suffix which cannot be treated as a diminutive or augmentative, nor as 'baby-talk'. While clearly hypocoristic, it is general enough in function for forms produced by merely using it as a convenient phonological choice (as I am proposing) to be closer in their effect to more straightforward truncated forms than to any other possible derived forms. That is, *Caz* and *Baz* as truncated forms of *Carol* and *Barry* are closer to *Pam* and *Bob* (from *Pamela* and *Robert*) than to derived forms of these latter names such as *Pammy*, *Pamble*, *Bobbles*, *Bobbikins*.

If this explanation for monosyllabic vocalic forms ending in /z/ is sound, one is finally left with a categorisation problem. Should forms like *Caz* and *Baz* be treated as truncated forms or as suffixed forms? There seem to be two grounds for regarding them simply as truncated forms:

- i. No ordinary speaker of Australian English would see such forms as composed of two elements - the explanation proposed is not at all self evident;
- ii. if the /z/ does derive from the -s suffix, then it is being used more as a phonological than a morphological item.

A partial counter argument, on functional rather than grammatical grounds, suggests that these forms are not perceived in quite the same way as more conventional truncated forms, insofar as they would not generally be used unless speakers and addressee were known to one another and on reasonably good terms, i.e. their use is much less neutral in terms of tenor. It may be that they should be classified as a special sub-type of [truncation], i.e. that greater delicacy is needed in the network.

Another aspect of the formal behaviour of these names that may be relevant to the problem of classification is that most of them do not appear in any of the more common suffixed forms, not even the ubiquitous *-y* form. *Terry* from *Teresa* or *Terence* and *Maurie* from *Maurice* seem to be sole exceptions. *Carrie* from *Caroline* used to be a common derived form which has now largely gone out of fashion (but note Carrie Fisher, best known for her role as Princess Leia in the *Star Wars* films) and one source attested not only *Sair* as a truncated form of *Sarah* but both *Sairdie* and *Sairsair* as further derived forms. Further investigation may well throw up a variety of such forms for this and other names whose second syllable begins with /r/ which would help to clarify their status in terms of availability for the operation of any or all of the possible addition processes.

Several other matters need to be dealt with in relation to these /z/ items. Firstly there are three items appearing in Figure 5.11 which are best explained simply as spelling pronunciations of conventional short written form, i.e. *Chas* for *Charles*, *Jas* for *James* and *Thos* for *Thomas*. These seem to be used largely among older speakers; if they were derived from the same linguistic process, one might expect that younger speakers would use them along with *Caz*, *Baz* etc. All three names appear among the *Sydney Morning Herald's* top boys' names for 1982 so it is not the case that rarity of the name makes it less likely that such hypocoristic forms will be noticed. Given that a number of the forms cited in Figure 5.11 seem best explained in terms of analogy, however, it is a little surprising that parallel forms of whatever origin should appear to have gone out of use.

Secondly, the above account may provide a satisfactory explanation of /z/ forms for names whose second syllable begins with /r/ but hardly for others where there is no reason why the initial consonant of the subsequent syllable should not be used : where it is in fact so used in alternative, more common, truncated forms. For example *Viv* and *Ol*, as well as *Viz* and *Oz*, exist for *Vivienne* and *Oliver*. The simplest explanation is in terms of analogy where the short vowel in the initial syllable, but without the following /r/, suggests the possibility of closing the

syllable with /z/. *Kez* and *Az* for *Kevin* and *Andrew* are similar except one does not usually hear \**An* or \**And* for the latter, presumably for reasons of homophony (in the former case with a girl's name - though I do have one attested user), a possible motivation in itself for the creation of a truncated form. In the case of *Raz* for *Rachel*, the process of analogising seems to be going further in that the vowel is shortened in order to produce a truncated form of appropriate shape. The three instances involving non-short vowels are probably best explained in terms of analogy with full forms containing /r/ in the case of *Maurz* for *Maureen* and *Mairz* for *Mary* (note that in writing the /r/ is explicitly present), combined with analogy with -s suffixed forms, since alternative truncated forms *Maur* and *Mare* are possible and do occur. In the case of *Dares* for *David*, I suspect that we are dealing with a case of truncation of an elaborated form, i.e. *David* to *Davie* to *Daisy* to *Dares* (cf. the process of forming nicknames on the basis of phonetic similarities).

The third issue involves a small set of now hardly heard monosyllabic hypocoristic forms of names whose first syllable contains a short vowel and whose second begins with /r/, but where /s/ not /z/ is used in syllable-final position. Examples include *Doss* from *Dorothy*, *Floss* from *Florence* and *Hoss* from *Horace*. In the latter two, presumably the existence of the unvoiced sibilant in the full form has influenced the unvoiced form of the syllable-closing consonant. These are interesting in that a number of other truncated forms have existed, not all in current usage (e.g. *Doll* and *Dot* for *Dorothy*, *Flo* for *Florence*), and -y suffixed forms where the /r/ reappears are also known. *Dorrie* parallels *Dossie*, *Dolly* and *Dotty*, *Florrie* parallels *Flossy* and *Horry* parallels *Hossy*. The forms with /s/ appear to be rather old-fashioned now (though one *Hossy* was called this as a teenager in the early to mid fifties), but it may simply be that the names they are hypocoristic versions of have gone out of fashion. If and when such names are used it would be of interest to see what truncated versions were produced, in particular whether new forms in /z/ would appear given that the basis for analogy with what seems to be the current normative version is strong (short vowel plus /r/ commencing the subsequent syllable).

The importance of analogy in the formation of hypocoristic forms is further underlined by the existence of a number of sets of phonologically similar forms used within solidary groups. I have already cited two examples above (Morgan et al.'s schoolgirl peer group and the Bananarama pop group). Further examples involving more 'play' with the original phonetic material include siblings *Warren* and *Louise* known as *Wozza* and *Weezy*, sisters *Pam* and *Judy* known as *Pamble*



and *Joozle*, and adolescent friendship group members *Darren*, *Sharon* and *Gillian* known to one another as *Dazza*, *Shazza* and *Gillezza*. What is happening in such cases is that the principle of reciprocity which governs relationships between equals is being invoked with phonological consequences involving greater or less distortion away from the original phonetic material, producing greater and greater similarity between the shape of the address forms actually used. The final stage in the operation of this reciprocal principle is reached when intimates, particularly lovers, address each other by the same name. This will usually be a pet-name of some kind, however, rather than any kind of hypocoristic version of either individual's name, e.g. one couple use a reciprocal *Womz* (from *wombat*).

Finally there is another set of hypocoristic forms, in status somewhere in between truncated and expanded forms, like the /z/ forms, and in some cases alternating with those forms. These include *Ekka* from *Eric*, *Mokka* from *Maurice*, *Wokka* or *Wakka* from *Warwick*, *Chicka* from *Charles* (cf. *Chilla*, and *Chuck* in American English), *Okka* from *Oscar* and *Wakka* from *Wally*. (Orthography of these items varies: the newspaper spelling of this version of newspaper proprietor Warwick Fairfax' name is usually *Wokka*, but a similar version of financier Robert Holmes a'Court's middle and last name is spelt *Hacca*).

These do seem to be characteristically Australian. I have found no hint of these or similar forms either in written sources or in questioning informants who are native speakers of other varieties of English. I do not know how to account for them. Two things can be said, however. Firstly, however the first of them originated, the pattern must have been repeated partly on the basis of analogy rather than phonological rule and secondly the neutral-vowel second syllable (frequently realised as a more emphatic sound rather than simply schwa) seems to be characteristic of these atypical hypocoristic forms and likewise seems to be restricted to Australia. It poses another classification problem which will be dealt with in the subsequent section on suffixes.

### 5.2.5 Suffixation

Suffixed forms, particularly those with *-y*, are, together with truncated forms, by far the most ubiquitous hypocorisms. They can be formed from the bulk of personal names, including many names which have no truncated form, and hence provide a more reliable contrast with [full form] than is provided by [truncation].

For many names, of course, a three-way contrast is made: [full name] contrasts with both [truncation] and [suffixation], and the latter two contrast with each other.

English has often been regarded as a language with few diminutive resources (Jespersen 1905/1982: 9; Marchand 1969: 326; Quirk et al. 1972: 994; Wierzbicka 1980: 55), Wierzbicka even going so far as to state categorically that 'English ... does not have the morphological category of diminutives'. It is undoubtedly the case that English has fewer resources in terms of suffixation than, say, Spanish (v. Gooch 1967 for a comprehensive account of expressive suffixation processes in modern Spanish). It may well be true that English-speakers deploy what resources they have for forming diminutives more narrowly than do speakers of languages with morphologically distinct diminutive forms, confining such usage to certain domains (e.g. intimate talk, talk to small children) and to certain word classes (especially proper names when used as vocatives). But the category undoubtedly exists.

The only English suffix virtually universally identified as diminutive is *-y* (orthographically *-y* or *-ie*), though conflicting claims are made about its productivity. Mention is made variously of *-let* (Jespersen 1942, Marchand 1969, Quirk et al 1972), *-ling* (Jespersen, Marchand), *-ette* (Marchand, Quirk et al), *-kin* (Jespersen, Marchand) and formatives more restricted in use such as *-een*, *-erel/-rel*, *-et* (Marchand). Jespersen seems to be the only authority who identifies truncation as a diminutive forming process (see above). A range of other diminutive suffix resources seem to have been rarely, if at all, identified - and not by those who have specialised in derivational processes. *-s* is such a suffix that seems to have been dealt with seldom in the literature (v. Sunden 1904; Thielke 1938/9 - in German; Langenfelt 1941/42; Mühlhäusler 1983). At least one other suffix that certainly occurs in vocatives, *-le*, does not seem to have been identified at all as a productive diminutive suffix in contemporary use. (It seems a likely candidate, in fact, for what Wescott (1976) refers to as 'de-fossilisation' with respect to slang. Jespersen (1942: 395) deals with it as a diminutive formative element derived from Old English suffixes and Marchand 1969: 324, giving essentially the same information, says that productivity ceased around 1400). A further formative element, *-poo*, in morphological status right on the boundary between suffixes and bound morphemes used only for forming compounds, does not seem to have been identified at all. Just over such a boundary would seem to be items like *-pops* and *-pie*.

In what follows, a set of seven morphological elements which are used with varying degrees of productivity to form hypocoristic forms of personal names and which will be referred to as hypocoristic suffixes will be identified and discussed. This set of suffixes is presented as the most delicate system in the PERSONAL NAME network. The seven suffixes, with sample realisations, are displayed in Figure 5.13.

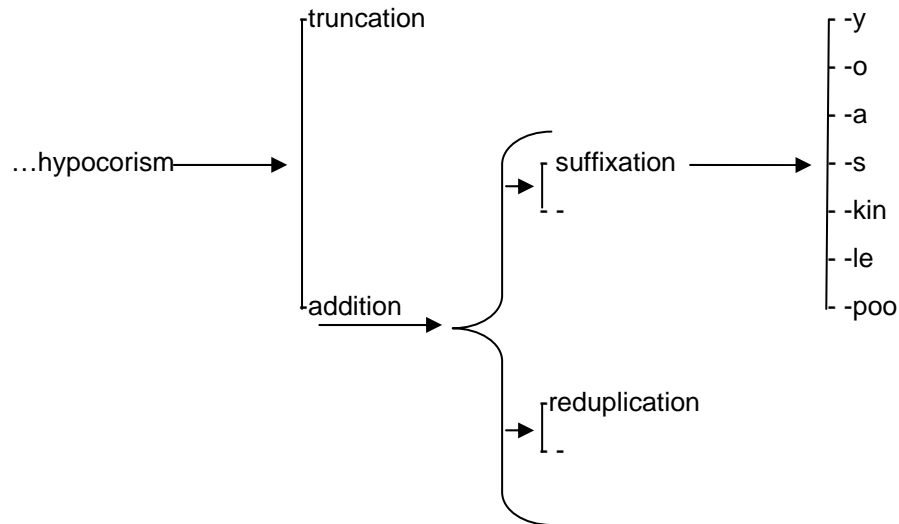


Figure 5.13 PERSONAL NAME: hypocorism

Suffix	Examples
-y	<i>Annie , Johnny , Susie , Ronnie</i>
-o	<i>Anno , Johnno , Nello , Danno</i>
-a	<i>Bazza , Kezza , Ekka</i>
-s	<i>Babs (Barbara), Jules (Julie/Julian), Neils (Neil )</i>
-kin	<i>Samkin , Foxkin (LN), Pusskin (to cat)). This more commonly occurs in combination with -s suffix (Tomkins (Tom )</i>
-le	<i>Pamble (from Pam ))). This more commonly occurs in combination with -s suffix (Meggles (Megan), Wimbles (Wimsey)</i>
-poo	<i>Inipoo (from Ian ). Always with -s if in final position (Braddipoos (from Bradley ), but may occur independently or with -y suffix as a kind of</i>

	<p>endearment, in which case it also has -s suffix (<i>Pooze</i> , <i>Poozy-Pots</i> ). It does occur independently in compounds/chains - see below.</p>
-pops	<p><i>Jupops</i> (?<i>Julie</i> or <i>Judith</i> - Mühlhäusler's data), <i>Rosypops</i> (for <i>Roselands</i>, a suburban shopping centre in Sydney). These are the only examples I have, other than compounds/chains - discussed below). This may, when further data is available, be analysable as -pop + -s, as has been the case with -le(s), -kin(s), -poo(s).</p>

**Figure 5.14 Productive hypocoristic suffixes in contemporary English**

### 5.2.5.1 The base

Suffixed forms are produced by attaching a suffix to a monosyllabic base, which is either:

- i. Full name, if monosyllabic: *Anne, John, Ruth, Wayne* ...
- ii. A truncated version of the full name: *Kate* or *Kath* (*Catherine/ Kathleen*), *Rob* or *Bob* (*Robert*) ...
- iii. An appropriate monosyllabic segment from a full form, which is either rare or does not exist as an independent truncated form, e.g.:  
*Lainie* (*Elaine*), but ?*Lain*  
*Andy* (*Andrew*) but \**And* (though Sunden 1904 cites *Dand*, particularly in Scotland, and *An* is attested, though rare).

or which may be slightly different from the normal truncated form:

- Susie* (*Susan*), where *Sue* is the usual truncated form. (*Suse* can be treated either as truncation or -s suffixation).  
*Paddy* (*Patrick*), where *Pat* is the only truncated form.

A variety of consonant insertion processes seem to occur. In some cases, such insertion is necessary for the attachment of suffixes:

- Dizie* or *Didie* (*Diana/Dianne*), where the attachment of -y to the base form *Di* would be homophonous.  
*Lindles* (*Lynn(ette)*), where the -le suffix requires a preceding stop. (*Lyndall*, of course exists as an independent name).

In other cases, such insertion seems purely arbitrary:

*Sairdy (Sarah)*. (where *Sairy* is possible and attested).

*Jonty (John or Jonathan)* (inserted /t/).

*Timbo (Timothy), Jimbo (James)* (inserted homorganic stop).

More detailed accounts of restrictions on the occurrence of particular suffixes will be found below in the sections devoted to individual suffixes. There are phonological constraints (e.g. *-le* requires a preceding stop), distributional constraints (especially for *-a*) and less well defined types of restriction limiting either the formation or the frequency of occurrence of individual suffixes with individual names. The overall effect of these restrictions is that many possible derived forms seem to occur rarely or not at all, or to be somehow marked even when the suffix involved is the everyday *-y* suffix. *Petey* from *Peter* is a good example: there is no phonological oddity about this form, (unless the repeated vowel sound is an oddity), it is not homophonous with any lexical item in ordinary use (v. Dermody 1980 on the question of homophony as a constraint on the formation of certain derived forms in Australian English) and yet native speakers tend to agree that it is marked in comparison with other *-y* forms, and that this is not simply a matter of the kinds of gender or generational constraints on usage discussed in Part III. There seems to be a certain amount of arbitrariness, in other words, about suffixed forms.

### 5.2.5.2 *-y*

This is the suffix generally acknowledged as a diminutive suffix in English. It generally appears added to a truncated or clipped base (see below for details) of either proper or common nouns. It has been a productive suffix in English for some 500 years, first used apparently as a hypocoristic ending in Scottish proper names, spreading from there both linguistically (to common nouns) and geographically (Jespersen 1942: 216-7). It is consistently identified as a hypocoristic suffix, particularly in talk by and to children. Some commentators suggest that it is largely confined to child-language and baby talk (Jespersen 1982: 9; Marchand 1964: 299), and that its use may be decreasing, along with that of other diminutive suffixes (Quirk et al 1972: 994).

Whatever its status may be in British or American English, however, these claims are demonstrably untrue for Australian English, where the use of this suffix attached to both proper and common nouns is widespread (Baker 1945, 1966; Turner 1966; Gunn 1970; Dabke 1976; McAndrew 1977; Dermody 1980; Wierzbicka 1986 & 1989). It seems unlikely that any single interpretation of *-y* forms in Australian English will prove adequate. Compare familiar everyday words

such as *ciggie*, *mossie*, *bicky*, *footie*, *pokies* (cigarette, mosquito, biscuit, football, pokermachines) with 'nursery' forms such as *tooties*, *doggie*, *googie* (feet, dog, egg), with nominalisations of adjectives such as *sickie*, *littlies* (unauthorised day on sickleave, little ones), with forms specifying an occupation such as *wharfie*, *bookie*, *postie* (wharf labourer, bookmaker, person delivering mail), none of which are pejorative but which contrast yet again with pejorative items such as *commie*, *greenie*, *trendy*, *leftie*. But perhaps Baker's apt observation on the 'relentless familiarity' of Australian slang (Baker 1966: 366) identifies not merely a formal characteristic of much Australian English colloquial usage (i.e. its preference for forms which assume a certain closeness or familiarity between speaker and addressee) but also, implicitly, the source of such preference in Australian egalitarian ideology. Wierzbicka's account of Australian English -y forms is more explicit in its recognition of the relationship between the Australian ethos, which she interprets as valuing 'toughness, informality, jocular cynicism and knocking things down to size', and 'an interesting morphological category which while akin to the diminutive differs from it ... in a revealing way'. This category is labelled 'depreciative', but Wierzbicka's detailed characterisation of its force is worth quoting in full, to ensure that the term is not simply interpreted as pejorative:

We sent you a prezzie (we are having a barbie).

I don't think of it as a big thing

I assume you think of it in the same way

talking about it I am in a good mood (as people are when talking about small things towards which they have good feelings) (Wierzbicka: 1989)

It might be more accurate to refer to the -y suffix as a familiarity marker, rather than using the somewhat misleading term depreciative, which would certainly account for the majority of the items cited above. But not for all, and certainly not for all -y forms of proper names: there do seem to be genuine diminutives in -y (e.g. hypocoristic forms of personal names used to small children) as well as pseudo-diminutives/depreciatives/familiaritives, e.g. one can hardly interpret as diminutives the following instances, addressed by the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, to Alan Bond, chairman of the syndicate that financed the winning America's Cup yacht, Australia 2, in 1983:

I just want to say to Bondy, to Jones, to Bertrand, the crew, ... that there's not many occasions when a Prime Minister knows he can speak for every Australian,

but on this occasion Bondy and all of you there, we say well done, congratulations  
 ... (*The National Times*, September 30-Oct 6, 1983: 7)

This non-diminutive -y suffix seems to have become a marker of Australianness (and how ironically fortunate for Prime Minister Bob Hawke, who plays the role of populist politico to the hilt, that his last name readily becomes the 'ocker' *Hawkie*, a form which is regularly used, of him at least, in conversation and in print).

### 5.2.5.3 -o

-o is well-attested as a diminutive/familiar suffix in Australian English (Baker 1947, 1966; Gunn 1970; Dabke 1976; McAndrew 1977; Dermody 1980; Wierzbicka 1989) but is hardly mentioned outside this literature, though it does seem to exist both in British English (Jespersen 1942; Partridge 1961) and in American English (Berger 1963; Wescott 1976). Both Jespersen (p.223) and Partridge (p.576) suggest the metre-tag found in verse as a possible source, at least for some examples; but Jespersen's principle suggestion of an origin in 'Keltic' 'where the interjection o is often used enclitically' could make more sense of the frequency of use of this suffix by Australians, given the extent of Irish immigration from the earliest days of European settlement while Australian English was in the process of formation. Trudgill (1986: 139-141) indicates a range of features (grammatical, lexical and phonological) indicating the extent of Irish influence on Australian English, though not this particular feature.

Jespersen merely refers to this suffix as 'an independent suffix of a slangy, often also a hypocoristic character which does not really change the sense of the root word itself' (1942: 224) and Dabke suggests that 'with few exceptions - /ou/ fulfills the same functions in Australian English as does the formative - /i/ ' (1976: 44). Other commentators contrast it with -y from a number of points of view. McAndrew (1977: 272) sees Australian English forms in -o not as diminutives (as he sees -y forms) but as 'augmentatives and pejoratives denoting clumsiness, ugliness and roughness'. Dermody (1980: 14-15) contrasts -o with -y in terms of sound symbolism, suggesting that the former 'symbolises something bigger, stronger, more mature' than the latter which he notes 'is accorded by most writers ... the symbolic qualities of smallness, and/or lightness, and/or fragility'. (He cites Jakobson & Waugh 1978 and Ullan 1970; see also Jespersen's seminal paper, 'Symbolic value of the vowel I', originally published in 1922). Wierzbicka contrasts 'depreciative' -y forms, used when a speaker 'is trying to minimise the

thing he is talking about', with *-o* forms which simply show the speaker's familiarity with them: thus *anthro*, *journo*, *demo* rather than *anthropologist*, *journalist*, *demonstration*.

Few commentators, however, include *-o* forms of proper names among their examples and only two comment on these. McAndrew (1977: 174) and Dermody (1980: 16) restrict *-o* forms largely to family name, Dermody noting 'the pronounced tendency of Australian males to use surnames as the basic form of address' and concluding (p.24) from the paucity of *-o* forms which his female informants claimed to use that, 'It would therefore seem that [ao] [=o] is simply not a real part of Australian females' speech'. Though Baker (1966: 367) cites *-o* forms of female personal name (*Daiso*, *Maiso*, *Sallo*) and I have further examples (eg. *Janeo*, *Lizzo*, *Anno*), all my informants noted that such forms were used almost exclusively by males, commonly family members (especially brothers), suggesting that Dermody is probably right in his conclusions if not in his suggested reason that the sound symbolism he suggests for the suffix is responsible for this restricted distribution. Westcott (1976: 401) notes more succinctly that the *-o* suffix is 'diagnostic of slang' so that, given the well-attested tendency of women to adhere more to standard forms than do men (v. Kramer et al. 1978), one might expect forms using it to be more frequent among males and perhaps as a consequence the suffix to be used as a marker of maleness in much the same way as swearing has been used. Despite the various claims made about the derogatory or pejorative force of this suffix (e.g. Westcott 1976: 401; McAndrew 1977: 272 and 277), there is no reason to suggest that *-o* forms of family name used among males are anything other than an alternative to the *-y* suffix in its familiar but not in its diminutive use. Though pejorative *-o* forms do occur, the pejorative effect is likely to have already been present in the base, the suffix merely intensifying this effect (v. Westcott *ibid.*, who says that the suffix 'has a generally intensive force with strongly derogatory undertones').

In addressing someone as *Thingo* one is compounding the insult of referring to them as an object by a suffix which says 'we're all familiar with you in this role and think nothing of it' but in using *Singo* (for John Singleton, entertainment entrepreneur), *Thommo* (for Jack Thompson, top cricketer) or *Campo* (for David Campese, top Sydney footballer) one is saying to them, 'I am familiar with you and your achievements and I think you're a great guy'. Like the familiar *-y*, *-o* seems to have become a marker of Australianness, currently in a phase of assertiveness about the validity of things Australian (including the so long-derided Australian accent - see Poynton 1979) after close on two centuries of what A.A. Phillips so



aptly called 'the cultural cringe' (Phillips 1958: 89-95). A sharp increase in the use of such forms by various authors in the weekend magazine of 'quality' newspaper *The Sydney Morning Herald* appearing in the week that Australia won the America's Cup is but one indication of this function.

#### 5.2.5.4 -a

-a as a vocative suffix is much more restricted than the two suffixes already dealt with. It occurs:

i. after FN or LN monosyllabic forms ending in /z/ where this sound is not in the full name:

*Cheryl* can become *Chez* and ultimately *Chezza*.

*Barry* can become *Baz* and ultimately *Bazza*.

*Desmond* can become *Des* /dez/, but not \**Dezza* .

(But *Jesaulenko*, star Victorian football player, does become *Jezza*, a bisyllabic clipped form presumably modelled on -za forms, and an interesting example of the 'naturalisation' of non-Anglo names in Australia).

ii In the second syllable -ka of a small set of rather old-fashioned personal names, including *Ekka* for *Eric*, *Mokka* for *Maurice*, *Okka* for *Oscar*, *Chicka* for *Charles* (cf. also *Chilla* for *Charles*, with the final -a, and the American *Chuck*, with -k but no final vowel).

iii. After the truncated form *Mack* of family names beginning with *Mc* or *Mac*, to produce *Macka* (presumably by analogy with group ii).

iv. After kin terms *Mum*, *Dad*, *Pop*, to produce *Mumma*, *Dadda*. *Unka* appears to occur in American E (at least on the evidence of Walt Disney films and cartoons of Donald Duck), but I am not aware of it in Australian English. *Bubba* occurs as a term of both address and reference for a baby and sometimes as a continuing nickname (v. *Bubba Ryan*, a character in Ray Lawler's *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* ).

Many of these forms are written with final -a, but final -er also occurs for some, suggesting that for some speakers a connection is perceived between these forms and the very large class of English nominals ending in -er. Such a connection is by

no means fanciful, relying on the apparent accident of phonetic identity. Both Jespersen (1942: 232) and Marchand (1969: 275, 280) refer to the profusion of slang words in *-er*. Marchand gives an extremely general characterisation of the suffix in terms of 'he who or that which is connected with or characterised by his or its appurtenance to \_' and pointing out that it can be 'tacked onto almost any basis: a simple or composite substantive or adjective, a numeral, all kinds of phrases' (1969: 279). Slang substantives in *-er* occur frequently as vocatives, not only as items in an available pool for use as required, i.e. when an addressee behaves in a particular way (eg. *whinger*, *smoocher*, *piker*, *bludger*, *crawler*), but also as items which begin as words referring to particular characteristics of individuals but which stick as nicknames (Davies 1977 and 1978 cite a number of examples, including *Biter* for the man who hangs around for a hand-out; *Boxer* for the man whose father was an undertaker; *Cruncher*, who's been without teeth for years; *Digger* for the plumber who orders his men to 'dig 'er 'ere'; *Mossie Gobbler* who swallowed a live mosquito; and *Plopper*, who plops his glass eye in his beer so no-one will drink it while he goes to the toilet).

There are also a small number of colloquial words in Australian English ending in a neutral vowel which seems more purely a slang marker, e.g. *plakka* (or *placker*) for *plasticine* (Baker), *lakka-band* (*The Macquarie Dictionary* has *lacker*) (for elastic band), *yakka* (work, an Aboriginal borrowing but probably perceived more as a colloquial item like the others). It may be the case that once forms like *Kaz* and *Baz* have been produced, whether by the process suggested above or however, they are perceived as being more like nicknames than real names. Nicknames tend not to take *-y* and *-o* suffixes, as do real names, but are perceived as more slangy than real names, thus making a neutral vowel ending a not unreasonable choice (whether *-er* as characterised by Marchand or not), creating bisyllabic forms parallel to other colloquial address terms, both nicknames and non-names.

Whatever their origin, such forms ending in a neutral vowel are undoubtedly more familiar or intimate than the full names from which they are derived. They are comparable to the familiar *-y* and *-o* suffixed forms dealt with above, insofar as they both express and create a relationship of amicable familiarity between interlocutors, with no diminutive overtones. It is worth pointing out here that though the *-ka* type seems to be exclusively male (with the possible exception of *Macka*), the *-za* type is used for both males and females and, apparently, increasingly: a form that is marked as Australian and that has none of the belittling or pejorative implications of *-y* or *-o* is presumably perceived as useful by very

many people, especially women, and may account for the extension of these forms to names not containing inter-vocalic -r-, e.g. *Viz* from *Vivienne*.

#### 5.2.5.5 -s

-s has been identified and commented on as a hypocoristic suffix, though invariably by non-native speakers of English. Sunden (1904: 221-2) is the earliest commentator I am aware of, pointing out that 'This ending has evidently assumed an incipient hypochoresitic function' and citing examples such as:

personal name	<i>Babs</i> from <i>Barbara</i> , <i>Nobs</i> from <i>Obadiah</i>
family name	<i>Bobs</i> from <i>Roberts</i>
kin-name	<i>Dads</i> from <i>Dad</i> , <i>Nunks</i> from <i>Uncle</i>

Thielke (1938/39) notes the suffix in colloquial name-forms, generally (though not exclusively) in address. He cites further types of example, e.g.

nickname	<i>Clumps</i> , <i>Boots</i> , <i>Bugs</i>
endearment	<i>ducks</i>
family name	<i>Wedders</i> (from <i>Wedderburn</i> ), <i>Bodders</i> (from <i>Bodsham</i> ), <i>Wimbles</i> (from <i>Wimsey</i> ).

(The *-er* in the first two family name examples is undoubtedly what Jespersen (1942: 233) and Partridge (1961: 596) call the 'Oxford *-er*'. This does occur in Australian English in address forms and other colloquial word choices, e.g. *champers* for *champagne*, and may be related to the AE *-a* suffix. See below on *-le* as a hypocoristic suffix and on multiple suffixation).

Thielke characterises the meaning of the suffix as expressing a certain warmth of feeling ('gewisse befuhlswarme'), familiarity or positive affect ('Vertraulichkeit'), intimacy or frequency ('Familiaritat'). Langenfelt (1942/42:210-11) refers to it as 'The English slangy, endearing and derisive suffix -s ...' and dates its origin to the seventeenth century when the *-s* occurring in many slangy words such as *Carrots*, *lazy -bones* and *mulligrums* (low spirits, 1599; stomach ache, 1619) 'developed into an independent suffix and could be added to pet-names ... but this development was intensified only in the 19th century.' He also refers (p.202) to forms ending in *-sy*, *-sie*, *-sey* (like *Mopsy* and *Betsy*), which are also dealt with by both Jespersen

(1942: 220) and Marchand (1969: 299), as 'by-forms' of hypocoristic *-y*. This account conflates two distinct suffixes, *-s* and *-y*, however.

Mühlhäusler (1983) refers to this suffix as 'The nursery "-s"'. In an empirical investigation, however, he had suggested the interpretation 'diminutive' and points out the parallels between this ending and the German diminutive ending *-chen*, e.g.

<b>English</b>	<b>German (-chen varieties)</b>
beddie-byes	(ins) Bettchen
Cuddles (term of address)	Kuschelchen
Goldilocks	Goldlockchen

Mühlhäusler's data includes many contemporary examples of intimate personal names, real and nickname, in many cases involving the choice of more than one hypocoristic suffix (pp. 78-79):

**Nickname** *Wooz Poozie Pots, Floopy loops, Flossy Chops*

**Real name** *Franglekins, Mikeypoodles, Janepoons*

He also includes non-name examples, principally from adult baby-talk to children (e.g. *stinkie-poos, beddie-byes, dindins, weewees, milkies*), thus demonstrating that the suffix is by no means restricted to names but is a more generally productive morphological process in English. Much of Mühlhäusler's data consists of items used by adults to children or between adult intimates, making his observation that 'The use of the nursery *-s* would seem to create, rather than depend on, a situation of intimacy and emotional security' (p. 87), on the face of it a not unreasonable interpretation. The nickname examples he cites from Davies 1977 (see also Davies 1978), together with personal real name examples from my own data such as

*Mads* from *Madeleine*

*Nicks* from *Nicholas*

*Wens* from *Wendy*

*Roles* from *Roland*

and family name forms (used especially between males) such as

*Loges* from *Logan*

*Turps* from *Turpie*

*Wheels* from *Wheeler*

suggest, however, that *-s* is by no means always a marker of intimacy but rather that it too (like *-y*) can mark any number of points on a relational cline that ranges from friendly familiarity to the intimacy of lovers (dealing only with congruent uses), i.e. that it realises the tenor dimension DISTANCE. As to whether such items create or depend on situations characterised by a particular configuration of DISTANCE and AFFECT values, it seems that they do both rather than one or the other: the language used will reinforce non-linguistic aspects of the situation which characterise it in a certain way (as well as pre-suppositions based on prior experience which interactants will bring to that situation), as well as signalling independently messages like 'Come home. All is forgiven', i.e. creating the interpersonal dynamics of the situation.

#### 5.2.5.6 *-kin*

The three other suffixes to be dealt with differ from the first four in a number of respects. Where the suffixes discussed so far are readily identifiable as suffixes and/or function as markers of national identity and/ or are highly productive, the others tend to be less readily identifiable as suffixes and/or are less productive. The whole set of suffixes can be arranged along a cline (or possibly overlapping clines), the relevant aspects being

**morphological status:** affix ... clitic/bound lexeme ... free lexeme, compounded;

**productivity:** more ... less;

**perceptibility:** greater... lesser, and related to this

**acceptability:** acceptance as a linguistic phenomenon ... disbelief and/or laughter at the very idea of such forms, even when familiar with them. (One of the minor irritants of working with such data is that many linguists seem indistinguishable from the general population in terms of their attitudes).

The suffixes dealt with so far could not be restricted to the left hand end of all these scales but do tend to be at that end, whereas the ones to be dealt with next tend to be at the right hand end: i.e. to be less readily perceptible (by trained or untrained ears), less productive, taken less seriously as linguistic phenomena, with a morphological status that is frequently unclear.

*-kin* is the most recognisable of this group, with a history as a diminutive suffix going back to around 1300 for personal names and around 1400 for common nouns. Many personal names, e.g. *Dawkin* (from David), *Perkin* (from (Peter)), *Wilekin* (from William) have only survived as surnames either with the addition of *-son* or in elliptical genitive forms (e.g. *Wilkinson*, *Perkins*, *Dickins(on)*) (Jespersen 1942: 426; Marchand 1969: 321-2). Jespersen, supporting the NED view, which he cites, sees the suffix as only marginally productive in English (his comment 'on the whole the suffix has not been very much used in England' implies that its Flemish and Dutch cognate forms, from which it derives, are more widely used), where Marchand sees it as somewhat more productive, citing not only a range of lexical items from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century and a number of idiosyncratic uses (e.g. Thackeray's *essaykin*, *grudgekin*) but also noting the use of the suffix in slang, principally in vocatives (e.g. *babykins*, *boykins*, *Janeykins*, *sonnikins*). Jespersen's account is disappointingly thin, though he does quote from Henry Bradley's *The Making of English* to the effect that 'we can, at least in jocular speech, add *-kin* to almost any noun to form a diminutive', which seems to potentially extend the scope of Marchand's account (but no examples are given). Marchand characterises the suffix as one with 'diminutive or endearing force, today used only as a jocular formative with a depreciative tinge' (p.321), which I suspect is conflating the basic diminutive meaning of the suffix with a quasi-inverted use of it, i.e. using it to say to someone not 'I use this form because I feel affectionate towards you, as one does towards a child or someone little' but rather 'I use a form appropriate for a child in order to point out to you that you are not acting like an adult'. I have too few examples involving this suffix to be absolutely clear about its force but it does seem to be an intimacy marker, rather than a familiarity marker, in its congruent (or non-inverted) uses which, like the other three suffixes of this second group, is particularly susceptible to being used to mock, put down, tease but also to ingratiate oneself with an addressee. Presumably Anglo-Saxon cultural discomfort at publicly expressing emotion or affection has something to do with this particular constellation of uses, as with the fact that such forms of names will almost inevitably give rise to teasing and mocking if they become known to persons other than those for whom they function as intimacy markers.

Two further points need to be raised concerning Marchand's account of the suffix. Firstly, on form, he heads the relevant section *-kin*, *-ikin* and includes examples in *-kins*, not distinguishing between the three separate suffixes involved in such forms as *Janeykins*, viz *-y*, *-kin*, *-s*. The *-kin* suffix can occur alone (e.g. *Samkin*, *Foxkin*, *catkin*, *pusskin*) but it most commonly does occur in combination with other hypocoristic suffixes, especially *-y* and *-s*. These need to be distinguished as

separate suffixes. Secondly, Marchand characterises address terms in *-kins* as slang (suggesting that this may be on the analogy of surnames in *-kins*, which I think is incorrect since the surname *-s* is a genitive, while the personal name *-s* makes more sense analysed as the hypocoristic *-s*, analogous with personal name forms such as *Meggles*, *Braddipoos* etc.). The term 'slang' is a little odd here because it implies grouping together, in opposition to non-slang (=standard?), a range of forms functioning as markers of a range of relations and though familiarity markers might be acceptably seen as slang, it does not seem entirely appropriate to locate intimacy markers in the same category.

### 5.2.5.7 *-le*

*-le*, is probably the least perceptible of all the suffixes dealt with: it took quite some time to collect enough examples to make clear that it was indeed a hypocoristic suffix. It is not highly productive (partly for phonological reasons, in that it is generally attached to a preceding stop, though I have several instances of homorganic plosive release of a preceding nasal with subsequent attachment of this suffix). Items incorporating it tend to be taken less seriously by third parties compared with any other suffix dealt with so far, and though it has historical analogs as a diminutive suffix, it is not at all transparent to contemporary speakers.

The suffix most commonly appears in combination with the *-s* suffix in the order *-le + -s*, in hypocoristic forms of personal name (real name and nickname), and of surname. Several of the nicknames may be used as endearments (presumably have become nicknames from that source):

real name	<i>Meggles</i> (from <i>Megan</i> ), <i>Bobbles</i> (from <i>Bob</i> ), <i>Lyndles</i> (from <i>Lynne</i> - there is also <i>Lyndall</i> as an independent FN), <i>Kimbles</i> from <i>Kimberley</i> (note that the truncated form is <i>Kim</i> , but the initial b of the subsequent syllable is retained when suffixing
with	<i>-le</i> ).
endearment/nickname	<i>Nibbles</i> , <i>Cuddles</i> , <i>Bubbles</i>
surname	<i>Braddles</i> (from <i>Bradley</i> ), <i>Wiggles</i> (from <i>Wigg</i> ). (Davies 1977).

There is also the commonly used (in Australian English at least) name for a pet cat, *Tiddles*, which is clearly the same suffix combination. The suffix does appear on its

own, however, both as a single suffix (e.g. *Pamble* from *Pam* and *Greggle* from *Greg*) and in compound suffixation such as *Franglekins* (Mühlhäusler 1983).

Both Jespersen (1942: 395) and Marchand (1969: 324) mention an earlier English diminutive suffix *-le* or *-el* found in such words as *bramble*, *speckle*, *nozzle*. Jespersen says that it 'has been little used as an independent formative in English' and Marchand that it ceased to be productive around 1400. As all my name examples are twentieth century, there are three possible explanations for the use of *-le* as a contemporary hypocoristic suffix. One is simply that the suffix has been reinvented: I regard this as the least likely hypothesis. A second explanation is in terms of what Wescott (1980: 400), dealing with the morphological processes characteristic of American slang, calls 'productive use of affixes which . . . are functionally fossilised in standard speech' or 'defossilisation' (p.401). This, given the set of 'slangy' verbs cited by Marchand (p.323), whose ending in *-le* is characterised as 'probably a playful element', e.g. *wheelde*, *argle*, *bamboozle*, *footle*, *foozle*, is probably the most reasonable explanation. (The third alternative is that there is in fact a continuous history of such forms but no-one has collected the data or commented: nothing can be said about this suggestion without an exhaustive culling of historical sources).

#### 5.2.5.8 *-poo* etc.

The final suffix *-poo* is not mentioned by any commentators I am aware of. There is no entry for it in Partridge, the *Shorter Oxford* or the *Macquarie Dictionary*, though one does find examples of it in use, both attached to personal names and apparently functioning as an independent nickname base, such as *Pooze*, *Poozie Pots* (cited Muhlhauser 1983). The fact that it can appear independently in this way does raise questions about its precise morphological status.

Two similar items, with questionable status, are *-pops* (which may yet turn out to consist of a suffix sequence *-pop* + *-s*), and *-pie*. Partridge (1961: 650) has an entry for *popsy* (an endearment for a girl: nursery colloquial) and *popsy-wopsy* ('A foolish endearment: (mostly nursery) coll.), both from the archaic *pop*, darling, short for *poppet*. Presumably this is its origin. *-pie* does not seem to appear with names, but only in endearments such as *sweetie-pie*, *cutie-pie*, *petty-pie* (also *pussy-pie* to cats). One family uses *pie* independently as a clipped form of *sweetie-pie*: I have no idea how widespread this practice may be.



These last three items seem to form an intermediate category between true suffixes, on the one hand, and on the other, lexical items found either in appositional or nominal complex forms (e.g. *John dear*) or in compounds such as those in *-wit*, *-head*, *-features* etc. which appear as the second element of pejorative vocative compounds such as *dim-wit*, *dick-head*, *cunt-features* (see Chapter 6 for an account of such compounds). The occurrence of items such as *Lubaby* (to a child called *Lucy*) and *E-baby* and *R-baby* (used by siblings whose names begin with the initials E and R), indicates that one is dealing with a cline here, rather than with discrete types of phenomena.

Neither *-poo* nor *-pops* seems to be highly productive, both are highly visible (and risible) and they tend to appear as part of suffix sequences (particularly in final position, where *-poo* is always followed by *-s*). *-poo* can appear elsewhere, however, whereas my only examples of *-pops* are all in final position (a pair of fascinating possible exceptions will be dealt with below). Both suffixes seem to occur only with personal names, not with surnames (though the Sydney suburban shopping centre *Roselands* is affectionately known to devotees as *Rosypops*). Attested examples are listed below (M = Mühlhäusler 1983).

<i>-poo</i>	
real name	<i>Janepoons</i> , <i>Mikeypoodles</i> (M); <i>Braddipoos</i> , <i>Inipoo</i> (from <i>Ian</i> ), <i>Albertipoo</i>
nickname/endearment	<i>Pooze</i> , <i>Poozie Pots</i> , <i>Corks Poos</i> (all M)
<i>-pops</i>	
real name	<i>Jupops</i> (M); <i>Greglipops</i>

#### 5.2.5.9 Iteration of suffixes

Though all of the suffixes dealt with in the preceding sections are capable of appearing independently, attached directly to a base, many of them can and do occur in combination with other suffixes, up to a maximum of five choices being possible, e.g. *Gregsiekindles* (*-s*, *-y*, *-kin*, *-le*, *-s*).

For purposes of this iteration, the suffixes seem to fall into three groups. The first group consists of the only two suffixes which can occur twice in a suffix sequence: *-le* and *-s*. These can occur either immediately attached to the base and/or at the

very end of a suffix sequence. Either or both suffixes may be chosen in either position, but not both in both positions (only one initially if more than two choices), though in final position the choice of both is only available when preceded by *-kin* or *-poo*. When both occur the order is always *-le* followed by *-s*. The available combinations involving *-le* and *-s* seem to be :

### Choosing twice

	-s	<i>Meggles</i> (Megan )
-le +		
	-y	<i>Greggly</i> (Gregory )
-o		<i>Mellows</i> (Melanie )
-kin		<i>Tomkins</i> (Thomas )
	+ -s	
-poo		<i>Janepoons</i>
-pop		<i>Jupops</i>
-s + -y		<i>Mumsie</i>

### Choosing three times

-le + -kin + -s	<i>Franglekins</i>
-kin	<i>Johnikins</i>
-y + -poo + -s	<i>Annipoos</i>
-pop	<i>Rosypops</i>

### Choosing four times

-le	-kin	<i>Greglykins</i>
+ -y	+ -poo (+ (C) -le) + -s	<i>Gregsyoops</i>
-s	-pop	<i>Greglypops</i>
		<i>Mikeypoodles</i> etc.

### Choosing five times

-le		-kin		<i>Greglykindles</i>
	+ -y	+	+ (C) le + -s	
-s		-poo		<i>Gregsypoodles</i> etc.

These choices represent most of the iterative sequences available, principally because of the very high frequency of occurrence of *-s* (mainly in final position). The only suffixes to which it cannot be attached are *-a* (which has highly restricted distribution) and *-y* (where it seems to retain an inflectional plural or possessive rather than a hypocoristic meaning. Compare *Melzy* and *Mellies* as hypocoristic forms of *Melanie* ).

The second group of suffixes consists simply of *-y*. This suffix normally appears first in a sequence: it can only be preceded by *-le* or *-s*, the latter because of the inflectional effect of final *-s* as explained above, the former because *-le* requires a preceding consonant (preferably a stop). Suffix sequences involving *-y* but excluding *-le* or *-s* are as follows:

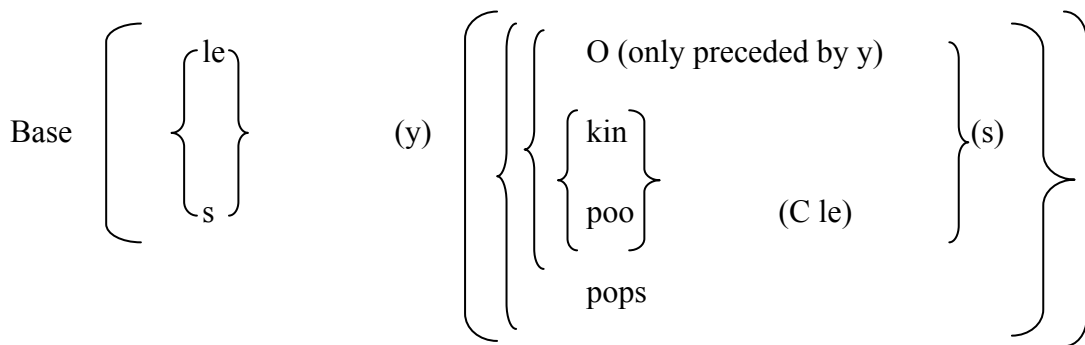
### Choosing twice

		-o		<i>Cathio</i>
-y		+ -kin		<i>Suzykin</i>
		-poo		<i>Albertipoo</i>

This exhausts the total range of combinatory possibilities identified so far, but there does not seem to be any reason why certain other combinations should not occur, e.g. [*-le* or *-s*] + *-o*.

The third group of suffixes consists of all suffixes other than *-y*, but there are internal constraints on possible sequences: *-pops* only seems to occur in final position, with no other suffix between it and preceding (optional) *-y*; *-o* likewise occurs directly attached to *-y*, or to the base, in which case it may be followed by *-s*; *-poo* or *-kin* may be followed by either or both *-le* and *-s*, in that order (the *-le* in both cases being preceded by an inserted stop, homorganic /d/ in the case of *-kin* + *-le* and /d/ again (possibly by analogy) in the one instance so far of *-poo* + *-le*, represented in the notation below as an archiphoneme D); *-poo* may also be followed by either or both *-kin* and *-s*, in that order.

Devising some notation to represent this set of facts in a way that is relatively transparent has been a problem. The neatest strategy, which is less redundant than the consolidated network suggested by Robin Fawcett but which needs more glossing in order to make clear the circumstances under which elements are optional or obligatory, is represented as Figure 5.15:



(only two of these three)

( ) = optional; { } = a or b; { [ ] } = a or b, OR a and b

**Figure 5.15 Iterated suffixation in personal names**

Not all choices which are not yet attested are blocked using this notation (e.g. *-s + -y + -o*), but no totally implausible sequences seem to be produced and the format could be readily amended to include plausible but as-yet-unattested sequences such as *-kin + -le + -s*.

### 5.2.6 Reduplication

Jespersen 1942:174) notes three types of reduplicated compounds in English:

- (1) The kernel repeated unchanged; sometimes with an extension of one of the kernels.
- (2) The kernel repeated with change of vowel.
- (3) The kernel repeated with change of consonant.

as well as reduplicative words deriving from babies' production of 'long strings of identical syllables', e.g. *papa*, *mama*, *geegee*(horse), *tata* (goodbye).

Reduplicated forms of names of Jespersen's second type do not seem to occur but straight repetition of a base with or without change of consonant is not uncommon.

The base form is generally the same base as is used for suffixation: i.e. many bases will be identical with a truncated form of the full name, but others will have no independent truncated form, e.g.

*Bet-bet* from *Elizabeth*, where *Bet* is (one possible) truncated form;

*Lulu* from *Louise*, where *Lou* is truncated form;

*Mimi* from *Naomi*, where *\*Mi* is not truncated form.

Some monosyllabic full names can also be reduplicated, e.g. *John-John* .

Jespersen comments on his third type of reduplication that

the second part ... is felt as a playful appendix to the first. These formations have as a rule a less serious character [than the second type]' (Jespersen 1942:180).

He notes the nursery associations of these forms with, as a consequence 'the universal tendency to have an initial consonant in the repeated syllable'. He goes on to list numerous examples, including many reduplicated forms of names, whose second element begins with p, w (thus always if the first word begins with p, p.181), b, m, f:

p: *Georgy-Porgy*, *Charlie-Parlie* (to which can be added *Henny-Penny*, a character in a well known children's story, and *Annie-Pannie*)

w: *Andy-Wandy* (to which can be added *Pammy-Wammy* and *Stevie-Weave*). *Andy-Pandy* is more common now, however.

m: *Clydie-Mydie*, *Hogen-Mogen* ('a Dutchman, from Hoogmogendheiden', p182).

(The only reduplicated example I have which does not involve one of these sounds is *Becka-Decka* for *Rebecca*, which is also interesting because it has a bisyllabic base).

Most of these forms involve -y suffixation as well as reduplication, i.e. one can choose both, but apparently only in the order suffixation followed by reduplication. (*Stevie-Weave* could possibly be analysed as choosing reduplication first, followed by -y suffixation of the first element, but it is probably best analysed as an instance of incomplete reduplication. A second similar example is *Loobyloo*, used to the character Louisa in Christina Stead's, *The Man Who Loved Children*.)

Choosing suffixation second would seem likely to produce suffixed forms of the whole reduplicated form, e.g. *\*Steve-Weavie*, *\*Loolooby*, which seem decidedly unacceptable).

### 5.3 Family name

The terms family name and surname are used synonymously in everyday language. I have preferred the former as a technical term here because it makes a more transparent contrast with the term personal name. Given the fact that individuals may change this element of their name, however, for reasons other than indicating membership of a new family group (as in the case of adoption and women choosing or being obliged to adopt their husband's family name upon marriage), one could argue for retention of the more traditional term.

Identification of family name is principally in terms of distribution. For English speakers, and for those of many other languages, it is that element of the entire name that follows personal name(s). English speakers tend to have difficulty with entire name sequences where family name precedes personal name(s), e.g. Hungarian, Chinese. Such problems are common for teachers and academics dealing with Asian students in Australia: a combination of Australian unsureness about which element of a full name is in fact the personal name (partly due to the lack of recognisable phonological/morphological clues), together with Asian deferential behaviour towards teachers, and university teachers in particular, means that one is never sure on what basis a name has come to be used as the regular form of address for a particular individual, nor what element it really is: personal name or family name. Has the first element (a common choice) been used because it conforms with Australian English patterns of address (which the individual has conformed with out of politeness), or because this would be the element used in comparable situations in the individual's home country, i.e. in situations assessed as friendly but non-intimate and requiring some deference?

Apart from distribution, there are phonological and/or morphological clues to the identification of many family names. Family names originating as patronymics are readily identifiable from affixes, e.g. Celtic prefixes *Mc* - or *Mac* - and *O'* , Germanic suffixes *-sen* (Scandinavian) and *-son* (English), also the English genitive *-s* found in such names as *Roberts*, *Collins*, *Wilkins* etc. Many other formative elements are also recognised as being characteristic of family names, e.g. English *-on* , *-field* , German *-mann* , *-berg* , Slavic *-ski* , Greek *-os* , *-polis*. A

third factor in identification is that the lexical set of family names is much larger than that of personal names (presumably because of the diverse sources of such names) so family names will tend to be the lower frequency element in a full name. A fourth factor is that family names will often mark ethnic ancestry, even though the actual membership of that ethnic group may be many generations ago, to a much greater extent than is the case for personal names. Hence one finds names such as

**Italian** *Barassi, Santamaria, Campese, Toppano*

**French** *de Mestre, Le Mesurier*

**German** *Kramer, Hinze, Wiese*

**Celtic** *McManus, Ryan, Walsh*

combined with Anglo personal names such as *Ron, Bob, David, Peta, Leonie, Susan, Frank, Russell, Barbara, Peter* among well-known contemporary Australians in a variety of walks of life. It should be noted that the range of such family names in Australian public life is still small, despite the massive post-World War Two immigration program. The children and grandchildren of immigrants are increasingly making their names known in sport and popular entertainment and one can expect the number of non-Anglo names in the public domain to increase as the children of the immigrants increasingly move into the professions, the arts, business and politics.

### 5.3.1 Hypocorism and full form (family name)

Basically the same set of paradigmatic contrasts operates with family name as does for personal name. The two differences are that there do not seem to be reduplicated forms of family name as there are for personal name (presumably reflecting the origin of such forms in vocatives addressed to small children) and that the set of suffixes available for use with family names differs somewhat from that detailed above for personal names: some personal name options do not occur with family name, but some further suffixes or formative elements are available, particularly in children's address.

At this stage a separate system network for family name is presented in Figure 5.16 below, but this network does need to be amalgamated with the system network already presented for personal names.

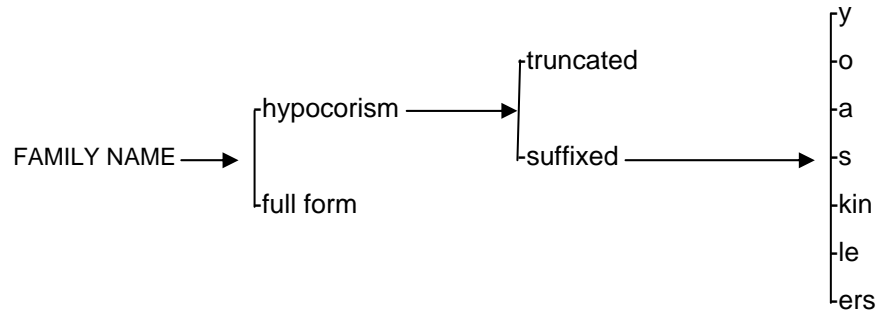


Figure 5.16 Family name

### 5.3.2 Truncation (family name)

The account given in 5.2.4. above of truncation with respect to personal name holds true also for family name. Examples of truncated family name forms include:

**Initial syllable:** *Fish* (*Fischer*); *Fitz* (*Fitzgerald*); *Hutch* (*Hutchinson*); *Nick* (*Nixon*); *Pete* (*Peterson*); *Simp* (*Simpson*); *Wil* (*Wilson*).

**Initial syllable + immediately following consonant:** *Newk* (*Newcombe*); *Deek* (*Di Castella*). (These spellings often used in sporting journalism).

**Non-initial syllable:** *Gong* (*Goolagong*).

The characteristically Australian forms ending in *-z* (discussed in 5.2.4 above) are also found with family names, e.g. *Faz* (*Farrer*), *Pez* (*Perrin*). There are also bisyllabic truncated forms, e.g. *Jezza* from *Jesaulenko*. In this case one suspects that the pure chance of the first two syllables of the name of this well known Melbourne footballer happening to have the shape of the Australian English familiaritive led to its adoption as a hypocoristic form. Sydney footballer *Tom Raudonikis*, with no such segment in his name that could be readily assimilated to Australian English hypocoristic patterns, is known to team-mates as *Ridiculous*, not merely an excellent example of a nickname based on phonetic similarity to the actual name but possibly to be interpreted as a comment by linguistically intolerant speakers of Australian English on difficult names. More than one speaker of



Australian English, particularly among older people, consistently uses the word *Wheelbarrow* as a pronounceable alternative to the real name of non-English immigrants and intends this use as a comment on such names (perhaps along the lines: 'Fancy having to lug around that load of noise').

Although some family names do have truncated forms, as has been indicated, the vast majority appear not to form them: the most favoured hypocoristic form of family name is suffixed rather than truncated.

### 5.3.3 Suffixation (family name)

Much of the account given above in 5.2.5. of suffixation with respect to personal names also holds for family names. Of the seven suffixes dealt with in that section, all but *-poo* is also found with family names, built upon a monosyllabic base of the same kind. One further suffix commonly found with family name forms is *-ers*, e.g. *Blunders* from *Blundell*, *Throbbbers* from *Throsby*. (Cf. Oxford *-er* in 5.2.5).

Where many of these suffixes are available as alternative suffixes to the same personal name stem and, further, can combine with one another in a quasi-iterative fashion, the choice of suffix seems to be much more restricted for any given family name and suffix combinations are extremely limited. Choosing twice seems to be the maximum number of choices, *-s* always being the second choice). *-y* seems the favoured suffix with monosyllabic names, e.g.

<i>Brown</i> to <i>Brownie</i>	<i>King</i> to <i>Kingie</i>
<i>Crooks</i> to <i>Crooksie</i>	<i>Loone</i> to <i>Loonie</i> (irresistible!)
<i>Deex</i> to <i>Deexie</i>	<i>Potts</i> to <i>Pottsie</i>
<i>Jones</i> to <i>Jonesy</i>	<i>Smith</i> to <i>Smithy</i> (also <i>Smitty</i> )

though the use of this suffix is not restricted to monosyllabic family names, e.g.

<i>Edwards</i> to <i>Eddie</i>	<i>Poulton</i> to <i>Polly</i>
<i>Fitzsimmons</i> to <i>Fitzy</i>	<i>Sullivan</i> to <i>Sully</i>
<i>Freudenberg</i> to <i>Freudy</i>	

In none of these cases does an alternative suffix seem possible. Some names which can take an *-y* suffix can also take *-o*, e.g. *Robby* or *Robbo* from *Robinson* or *Roberts(on)*, and *Ryan* to either *Ryany* or *Ryano* (both forms used to a heavily-built footballing informant, so one suspects that the *-o* form may be deliberately homophonous with *rhino*, maybe simply in relation to size, but possibly also

because of football-playing style). Most family name forms in *-o*, however, seem to take only that suffix, e.g. *Timperley* to *Timpo*, *Devlin* to *Devo*, *Pilkington* to *Pilko*, *Scheding* to *Schedo*, *Singleton* to *Singo*, *Campese* to *Campo*, *Dermott* or *Dermody* to *Dermo*.

In at least one instance, *-o* alternates with *-a*, e.g. *Absalom* to *Abo* /*Abso* or *Abba*, but it is the *-a* form which is apparently most regularly used to this informant (who is not in the age group where this form is likely to be connected to the Swedish pop-group Abba).

As was the case with personal names, *-a* seems highly restricted: the only regular occurrence of it with family names seems to be in the form *Macka* or *Macker*, derived from any name beginning with *Mc* or *Mac*.

*-s* seems to occur mainly attached to monosyllabic truncated forms of bisyllabic family names, e.g. *Hoges* from *Hogan*, *Rolls* from *Rowling*, *Shooms* from *Schumack*, *Turps* from *Turpie*, *Wheels* from *Wheeler*. Again, no other suffix seems possible.

My only example of *-kin* is mystery-writer Ngaio Marsh's detective character, Roderick Alleyn, addressing his offsider affectionately as *Foxkin*. Since this suffix does not seem to be common with personal names, one might expect it to be even rarer in family name form.

Family name forms suffixed with *-le* always seem to have a final *-s* suffix as well, e.g. *Begley* to *Beegles* (?vowel change or orthographic error? From written questionnaire data); *Bradley* to *Braddles*; *Wigg* to *Wiggles* (Davies 1977); *Wimsey* to *Wimbles* (Dorothy Sayers' detective character. Note again the inserted homorganic stop commented on above). *Wigg* could also presumably become *Wiggy*, but there seems no obvious alternative suffix for any of the other names listed here.

The suffix not included in the list of suffixes available for personal name forms, *-ers* as in *Throsby* to *Throbbers*, *Blundell* to *Blunders*, seems to be used in these two instances to produce forms which, while being clearly deriveable from their respective full forms by a process of truncation followed by suffixation, nevertheless have something of the flavour of nicknames in that the derived form has a meaning not present in the original name. In other cases, this flavour is absent. Thielke (1938/39: 316) cites *Wedders* from *Wedderburn* and *Bodders* from *Bodsham* (examples from British novels)

Morgan et al. (1979), in their study of nicknames among British school children, note a variety of forms which I would treat as suffixed forms of family name rather than as nicknames. They cite as suffixes most of a set of 'standard endings' noted by the Opies as 'a distinctive feature of juvenile parlance' (Opie & Opie 1959: 155), viz *-ass*, *-bug*, *-cat*, *-dick*, *-gog*, *-sy*, *-ey*, (the last two seen as variants of the same suffix) and add to these *-oh* and *-rat* (Morgan et al., p. 39). Their work suggests then that a further set of suffixes, characteristic of children's language, exists and further that one can choose iteratively from both sets. For example, one of the derived forms of the family name *Smith* they cite is *Smithkinsbug*, with the suffix sequence *-y*, *-kin*, *-s*, *-bug*. (Note that in this kind of sequence a 'child' suffix can occur after *-s*, which is normally in final position in a suffix sequence).

The morphological status of many of these elements seems more like that of free lexeme (used specifically for pejorative compound-formation) than suffix, however. Where Morgan et al. provide very few examples of the use of any of these elements, the Opies provide examples for all the endings they note. They do not, however, as claimed by Morgan et al., treat them as nicknames per se (though many are regularly used as vocatives, in appropriate circumstances, and could perhaps become regular nicknames for individuals). Some examples will give the flavour:

<i>-ass</i>	<i>creep-ass</i>
<i>-bug</i>	<i>newbug</i>
<i>-cat</i>	<i>copy-cat, stare-cat</i>
<i>-dick</i>	<i>clever-dick</i>
<i>-gog</i>	<i>wellygogs (Wellington boots)</i>
<i>-guts*</i>	<i>greedy-guts, grizzle-guts</i>
<i>-pot*</i>	<i>fuss-pot, stink-pot</i>
<i>-puss*</i>	<i>sour-puss</i>
<i>-sides*</i>	<i>sobersides</i>

(\*omitted without explanation from Morgan et al's list of 'suffixes'). The high incidence of the use of hyphens is one indication that most of these are being treated as compounds rather than suffixed forms. (See Chapter 6 for a more comprehensive account of compounding, especially in forms used for pejorative address).

## The grammar of non-name vocatives

This chapter will focus on items other than names used as vocatives, i.e. nominal groups consisting of Head only or of Modifier + Head. The multivariate analysis of types of modification proposed in Halliday (1985) is used as the basis for the account provided. It should be noted that a large proportion of the non-name vocatives commonly used in address consist of Head only, e.g. *lass, son, dear, mate, boys and girls, ladies and gentlemen, kids, sweetheart, twit, slowcoach*. Some of these will accept modification, but not all of the same kind or to the same extent. The chapter distinguishes between Heads usually used as vocatives either unmodified or minimally modified and those which are capable of considerable modification. Organisation of the set of nominals occurring as Head into semantic fields turns out to be culturally revealing. This is particularly the case for Heads which accept modification. Many of these are strongly attitudinal, identifying those to whom such items are addressed as insiders or as outsiders: as the people we love and care for (in which case, interestingly, words to some extent fail us) or as transgressors of some putative social norm (in which case we keep on reinventing new words, relexicalising to keep the attitudinal force from lessening). The considerable imbalance in size of the list of items with negative compared to positive attitudinal orientation, there being many fewer positive than negative items, raises important questions about the use of such items, particularly as terms of address, as a mechanism for enforcing social conformity.

Modified attitudinal nominal groups as vocatives have structural peculiarities which call for an extension of the basic nominal group structure potential assumed in Halliday 1985: Deictic ^ Numerator ^ Epithet ^ Classifier ^ Thing ^ Qualifier. (Note that Qualifier seems to occur less commonly in attitudinal vocatives than in other attitudinal nominal groups). In order to adequately account for some of the kinds of nominal groups found as vocatives, this description needs to be supplemented, particularly with respect to sub-classification of the functional element Epithet. The key feature of the description to be presented below is the potential for iterative selection of sub-categories of Epithet (and to a limited extent Classifier), more selections from more categories realising stronger attitude. This form of amplification (see 3.3.3), 'selecting again' being the grammatical equivalent of the phonological 'saying it louder', can be supplemented by a range of grammatical and lexical forms of intensification and by various phonological

choices, including alliteration, assonance, and exaggerations of normal phonetic and intonational features, e.g. vowel lengthening, speeding up or slowing down of speech rate. I will also comment more briefly on special realisations of the categories Deictic and Numerative in nominal groups used as vocatives.

The primary focus of the chapter is descriptive, with major sections devoted to Heads and to Modifiers. Before focussing on wordlists and the specification of structure potentials, however, some recapitulation of the way in which the term attitude is being used and some preliminary comment on the realisation of attitude within the nominal group are called for.

The previous discussion of attitude (3.2.3 above) distinguished between attitude viewed as 'emotion' and as 'evaluation', the former focusing more on the personal, on internal affective states, and the latter on questions of judgement and of assessment. The evaluative dimension was seen as 'less personal than social, deriving ultimately from attachment to particular ideologies.' Lexis was seen as the critical meeting point of the two perspectives, insofar as lexis looks two ways: 'down' to the personal and 'up' to the social. It is now time to explore a little of that territory.

The two obvious realisations of attitude in the nominal group involve the deployment of attitudinal lexis and of intensifiers of various kinds. Attitudinally-marked choices realising the functional categories Epithet and Thing are particularly significant, e.g. *a wonderful holiday, an awful mess, you stupid twit*. The first indication of structural as well as lexical realisation is the observation that attitudinal Epithets, e.g. *splendid, silly, fantastic, horrible ...* tend to precede non-attitudinal (experiential) ones within nominal groups. (Halliday 1985: 163. Cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 1339). Halliday's observation to this effect is in fact the only structurally specific reference he makes to this interpersonal feature of the nominal group and the phenomenon is initially somewhat problematic, in terms of his functional grammar, since sequence can be seen as structurally more relevant to experiential or even textual rather than to interpersonal systems. There is a substantial parallel, however, between the sequence of types of modifiers within the nominal group (Deictic preceding attitudinal Epithet preceding non-attitudinal Epithet) and the sequencing of textual, interpersonal and experiential thematic elements within Theme at clause rank. This parallel indicates that the location of interpersonal phenomena after the textual and prior to the experiential is a more generalisable phenomenon and has implications for understanding one of the

mechanisms by which subject/reading positions are constructed by the use of language in discourse.

Initial Epithet position is only one of a series of positions within nominal group structure in which attitude can be realised, however, and realisation through the Epithet function itself is only one of its manifestations. Attitude in the nominal group thus functions prosodically, as Halliday proposes for interpersonal systems (Halliday 1979, 1985), but because it is realised through the lexico-grammatical stratum rather than through the phonological stratum, its realisations are located discontinuously, however cumulative its effects. In investigating the realisation of attitude, one needs to take into account the location of potential realisation points, the forms of such realisations and the cumulative effect of the iterative potential available.

The first realisation of attitude within the nominal group, as initial Epithet, does have particular significance: it is commonly, after all, the first content word of the structure. Like a key signature announcing the tonality of the music it precedes, an initial attitudinal Epithet announces the relevant attitudinal 'tone' whose scope or domain is, initially, the whole nominal group, but ultimately the entire utterance. The effect is to foreground attitudinally and/or ideologically-salient information and 'background' other experiential content. I have previously commented on this phenomenon in relation to gender, in terms of the particular example of a film review's characterisation of the two central characters in the film *Cal* as *the unemployed 19-year-old Cal* and *a pretty Catholic librarian*:

... there is a curious effect in the second group whereby the very presence of the word *pretty* leaches out some of the experiential force of *Catholic* (important in that the film in which these two are characters is set in contemporary Northern Ireland) and *librarian* (a job for which a relatively high level of education is required and which consequently has a certain amount of prestige attached to it). It is hard to take seriously *a Catholic librarian* who is *pretty* - a *19-year-old Catholic librarian* would be someone a little more substantial. Age is a significant diminisher of potency but gender is more powerful, it would seem.

The linguistic status of *pretty* in the example cited would seem to be the key to understanding what is going on: it is attitudinal as well as referential but probably more strongly the former, i.e. it is interpersonal. Interpersonal meanings habitually spread themselves through linguistic structures, and what seems to be happening here is that the interpersonal force of the word, bolstered by ideological considerations, is spreading into the more experientially oriented part of the group.

Further, the word *pretty* itself invokes those genres where all that is required of a woman is that she be young and attractive (and unattached), everything else being irrelevant background information, but where a man is expected to be someone of substance, both personally and in the public world of affairs. Women are always liable to be represented as if they're characters from a Mills and Boon romance, but one does have a choice with men. (Poynton 1985/90: 61-2)

Part of my purpose in quoting this is to make the point that in talking about attitude, one is not simply talking about the transient and purely personal, as Halliday's term 'speaker's subjective attitude', with respect to attitudinal Epithets (1985: 163), and Quirk et al's reference to 'emotive, evaluative, or subjective adjectives' (1985: 1339) both imply. Except when one is talking about verbal responses to events like hitting your thumb instead of the nail, or missing the bus when it's raining and you haven't got an umbrella, attitude or evaluation is fundamentally ideological, i.e. it is cultural rather than purely personal. The 'emotion' or 'feelings' that are associated with attitudinal language are undoubtedly experienced by the individual as personal - this is central to the mechanism of the transmission and sustaining of ideologies, committing the individual to the ideological by means of what is felt to be right and proper. This is part of why attitudinal meanings are so powerful, constituting force fields which run over the top of experiential meanings.

Paradoxically, then, in one sense it is of no particular significance where the attitudinals come, either in the nominal group or in the entire utterance, since their effect, wherever they occur, is to treat the whole utterance as their domain. In another sense, however, it is indeed significant that attitudinal precede experiential Epithets, that the presence of attitude is established either prior to or simultaneously with the establishment of the exact nature of the experiential domain it is most immediately relevant to.

Where insults or endearments are exchanged, by means of strongly attitudinal vocatives, it is understandable that the attitudinal loading is the focus of attention. To read this attitudinal loading purely in terms of personal emotion, however, is to fail to attend to the cultural significance of the semantic domains from which the specific lexis is drawn. Very few lexical items are purely attitudinal; even those which are closest to being such, e.g. in groups with iterated (attitudinal) Epithet such as *you dirty filthy rotten so-and-so* (see 6.2.3 below), retain some remnant of contact with the experiential meaning of such items elsewhere. An examination of the semantic domains of such attitudinal usage reveals that the regularly used vocative items draw extensively from domains which specify what is socially

un/acceptable in appearance, behaviour and identity. The use of such items constitutes, then, a mechanism for enforcing social conformity.

The basic grammatical resources for attitudinal amplification within the nominal group are:

1. **The use of swearwords** as intensifiers either of Epithet or of Thing. Swearwords are of varying taboo weighting (Taylor 1976), e.g. *damn*, *bloody*, *fucking*. As intensifiers of Epithet, all these can be used with positive as well as negative Heads: *damn nice/awful*, *bloody good/horrible*, *fucking marvellous/disgusting*. As intensifiers of Thing, swearwords seem to be more widely used with negative than with positive Heads, though *bloody* is used with some positive Heads (*bloody bitch*, *bloody beauty*, but *\*bloody darling*). Other swearwords contributing to amplification, either by intensification (*shitting*) or as Pre-Classifier (*bastard/shit ... of a ...*), seem to always accompany negative Heads. One should not assume, however, that the use of negatively-oriented lexis always means negative attitude. Among males, especially, apparently negative forms are used to convey positive attitude: *you bloody mongrel* can be a term of affection, in the right context and said in the right way. Note also *flaming* and *blithering*, which for some speakers are virtual swearwords and function in similar ways. They too can intensify either Epithet or Thing: *flaming stupid woman driver*, *flaming drongo*, *blithering idiot*.
2. **The use of overt intensifiers** such as *very*, *really*, *total(ly)*, *utter(ly)*, *absolute(ly)*, *complete(ly)*. These can be attached (in appropriate form) to either Epithet or Thing (*really nice*, *utterly charming*, *complete idiot*), and can occur iteratively (*really really great*, *absolutely utterly devastating*, *completely utterly totally magnificent*).
3. **Iterative selection of attitudinal Epithet**, involving either simple repetition of the same item (e.g. *you silly silly thing*, *a wonderful wonderful day*) or iteration of the category but not the item (e.g. *you sweet darling wonderful child*). Halliday (1985: 164) refers to this phenomenon of iterated sequences of formally distinct but functionally equivalent items in terms of synonymy, but while some such sequences certainly involve experiential synonymy (e.g. *great big*; *dirty filthy*), others do not, e.g. *dirty lousy rotten so-and-so*. This last issue will receive more detailed attention in 6.2.3 below.



## 6.1 Heads

A certain proportion of regularly used non-name vocatives seem not to be modifiable, or capable only of restricted modification. Most, however, can be modified. The modifiable nominals include a substantial array of 'attitudinal' nominals. The set of nominals that can be used as vocatives effectively constitutes an open set since, as well as productive compounding processes regularly used in attitudinal vocatives, a vast array of lexical items can be used as 'nonce' vocatives, i.e. coined for a particular occasion. Regularly used attitudinal vocatives draw particularly heavily from certain semantic domains. There is substantial overlexicalisation or proliferation in many of these domains, related both to the taboo status of many of the meanings involved and to their status as slang or colloquial speech (v. Halliday 1976b; Wescott 1976/80, on proliferation of slang terms. See also Stanley 1977 on proliferation of pejorative lexis referring to women).

Because of the essentially evanescent nature of slang, any attempt to make a complete inventory of vocative items in current use, even within a single social group, is doomed to failure. What is possible is to indicate the dimensions of the semantic space occupied by the set of widely-used vocatives, particularly those involving criticism or insult. This semantic space would appear to remain relatively stable over longer periods of time, and to be of considerable significance in identifying key values of a culture (mention has already been made 4.2 above of the significance of insult with respect to understanding the basic values of a culture). Attitudinal vocatives do not only display such values, of course, but use them as ways of indicating perceived problems in the social order and/or as means of enforcing social conformity.

In many cases, such values are realised in both Modifier and Head. However, a large proportion of those items used as Heads where little or no modification occurs are general words which are non-gradable, i.e. which will not accept grading words such as *absolute*, *utter*, *complete* as modifiers. The categories of non-name vocatives which are either not modified at all or are only minimally modified include:

- i. **Pronouns**, definite and indefinite: *you*, *everyone*, *everybody*, *somebody*. These do not seem to accept pre-modification but do occur with Qualifier(s), e.g. *you over there with the silly look on your face*.

ii. **Ordinary titles** without a name attached: *miss, mister, missus*. These cannot be modified, other than by the diminutive *little* in the case of *miss* addressed to a child.

iii. **Kin terms:** *Mother/Mum(my), Father/Dad(dy), Aunt(y), Uncle, Grandmother/Grandma/Gran(ny), Grandfather, sis(ter), bro(th(er))* (also *brer*), *son, daughter* (much less commonly), etc. Some of these can be used by those with no actual kin relationship to the addressee, e.g. *son* is widely used in Australia to young males (if the speaker is sufficiently older than the addressee, it can also be used to older males); the 'immediate' kin terms, *Mother, Father, sister, brother, son, daughter* are used in religious settings, with *my (dear)* possible as pre-modifiers of *son, daughter*. *Sister* and *brother* are also used in political contexts, e.g. trade unions, feminist groups. (Some of these items reappear in other categories below).

Many kin terms function as proper names, as the initial capital letters would suggest. These, as is the case with personal and family proper names, are in general not modified, but can occur with restricted modification: Deictic *my*, Epithet *dear, sweet* (and other endearments) and the diminutive *little* or the augmentative *big*, e.g. *dear little Mummy, my big son, my darling daughter, little brother*. Kin terms for aunts and uncles are commonly combined with (personal) proper names, e.g. *Auntie Rose, Uncle Stan*, forming nominal group complexes. Kin terms for grandparents also occur in nominal group complexes, more usually combined with family than personal name. e.g. *Grandma Thompson*. Such complexes are more likely, however, to be used as reference items than as terms of address. Less commonly, kin terms for parents can combine with personal names, especially in families where parents have divorced and remarried, e.g. *Mummy Susan* for a stepmother.

iv. **Solidarity/leadership** nominals: e.g. *mate, comrade(s), pal, partner, friend(s), sister(s), brother(s), boss, chief*. These in general are not modified, other than by Deictic *my* and Epithet diminutive *little* or augmentative *big*, e.g. *little mate, my pal, big boss*.

v. **General nouns** referring to people in terms of gender and/or age: *woman, man, lady/ladies, gentlemen, ladies & gentlemen, boy/s, girl/s, boys & girls/girls & boys, son(ny), kid/s, child/ren, youngster/s, baby*. These are generally not modified, but the singulars (with the exception of *son(ny)*) will accept *my dear/good/little* (the last mostly to children).

vi. **Occupational terms:** *driver, teacher, waiter, officer*. These are not common in Australian English, and always occur without modification.

vii. **Client terms:** *customers, contestants, viewers, listener(s), reader(s)*. These will accept Qualifiers as well as Deictics, e.g. *(all) you customers looking for bargains, (all) you listeners out there*.

viii. **Groups/collections:** collectives *gang, family, team, class* etc. are not generally modified. *You two...*, *you lot*, *(you) guys*, *(you) people* will accept Qualifier, as well as Deictic *you*, e.g. *you two over there in the corner, you people with your heads in the sand*. Some Epithet modification is also possible with some of these items, e.g. *you lovely people, you lazy lot*.

Gradable (attitudinal) nouns, on the other hand, can be modified. These are much more numerous as vocative types (though not necessarily as tokens) than non-gradable nouns and fall into a number of semantic categories. Gradable nouns used as or in vocatives deal with a broad range of mostly negative meanings. These are used to criticise, insult, deride though the experiential meaning of the item used may or may not be relevant to the context in which it is used. Thus people can be insulted by being referred to in terms of their actual race/ethnicity, their known or assumed sexual preference, their sexual activity (only negative when referring to women), or a specific moral failing on a particular occasion; but some at least of such relevant items can also be used as general terms of abuse, e.g. *poofster, bludger, moll*. There are far fewer positive than negative attitudinals. The major positive category is that of

(i) **Endearments:** *dear, darling, sweetheart, pet, love(y) ...*

Some positively-oriented gradable nouns are included among the following categories, but for the most part they are negatively-oriented:

(ii) **General abusive terms:** *bastard, bitch, so-and-so, wretch, stinker, mug, pain (in the arse/bum), nuisance ...*

(iii) **Specific morally undesirable attribute:** *bludger, wowser, liar, whinger, bully, smart-arse, blabbermouth, nerd, wimp ...* This set is constantly being extended. A sub-set of such terms applies to children: *sook, cry-baby, teacher's pet, brat, sissy*.

(iv) **Homosexuality, male & female:** *poof(ter), pansy, faggot, dyke, lezzo ...*

(v) **Sexual activity/promiscuity** (negative if female, positive if male): *whore, tart, slut, moll* ... (V. Stanley 1977); *stud, spunk* ...

(vi) **Intellectual deficit**: *dill, fuckwit, idiot, moron, lame-brain* ...

(vii) **Race/ethnicity**: *wog, Chink, Pom, boong, Pom(my), kiwi, eye-tye, kike, dago, nip* ...

(viii) **Physical characteristics**:

**height**: *squirt, titch, pipsqueak, shorty, lofty* ...

**size**: *fatso, skinny* ...

**physical disability**: *gimpy* (=lame; ?still in use), *spazzo* (=spastic), *four-eyes* (wears glasses) ...

**hair type/colour**: *red, blue* (for redheads), *blondie, curly*.

Note that many of these become permanent nicknames. Some of them also involve the phenomenon of inversion, whereby a word with the opposite meaning from what one would expect is used, e.g. a red-headed person is called *blue(y)* and a tall person *shorty*. The use of such nominalised adjectival forms is common in vocatives.

(ix) **Animal**:

**positive or negative**: *creature* .

**positive**: *lamb, possum, duck/y, kitten* ...

**negative**: *animal, beast, galah, pig, donkey, dingo, crow* ...

(x) **Supernatural/monstrous being**

**positive**: *angel, cherub* ...

**negative**: *devil, imp, fiend, monster*...

(xi) **Inanimate object** (food and non-food):

**positive**: *honey, sugar, sausage, pumpkin, pie, dumpling* ... ; *button, doll, poppet, petal, blossom* ...

**negative**: *peanut, fruitcake* ... ; *clod, log, lump; bag* ...

(xii) **Body products/genitalia**: *turd, (dead)shit, fart, prick, cunt, arsehole* ...

As well as this extensive repertoire of nominals, there is also a productive system for forming abusive compounds. Many such compounds are formed by combining body-part words such as

*-head* ,  
*-face*  
*-features*

as the second element of the compound with words for human sexual parts or body-products, producing compounds such as *dickhead*, *shitface*, *cuntfeatures*. These and other body-part words such as

*-mouth* ,  
*-guts*  
*-beak/nose*

can also combine with less taboo items to produce compounds such as *pie-face*, *nuisance-face*, *smartarse*, *butterfingers*, *faceache*, *blabbermouth*, *stickybeak/nose*, *sleepyhead*, *loudmouth*, *grizzleguts*, *gobbleguts*. These vocatives are in regular use in Australian English, but the compounding process can also be used to create new and nonce forms, e.g. *slobberchops* (to a baby eating messily), *miseryguts*, *spunkybum*, and *fish-face*, *fur-face*, *whiskers-face* (to a cat). This process is also used to produce new items referring to people in terms of ethnic/racial identity, e.g. *pizza-face* (Italian) and *plate-face* (Korean).

As indicated above, the use of nominalised adjectival forms such as *shorty* and *bluey* is common. The Head in a vocative can also consist of an adjective, usually positive e.g. *sexy*, *spunky*, *handsome*, *gorgeous*, *beautiful* ... (As explained in Chapter 4, these items are analysed as nominal groups, with the Head realised by Epithet rather than Thing). Epithet as Head is unusual: Halliday (1985: 173) notes that 'Epithets and Classifiers do not normally function as Head, the exception being the superlative...' Halliday goes on to note that the superlative 'resembles a Numerative of the ordering kind rather than an Epithet' and that 'With other Epithets ... if Thing is not made explicit it is realized as a substitute *one/ones* ... The substitute is then both Head and Thing.' *O beautiful one* may have once been a possible English vocative, but is no longer so: the use of the substitution item *one* would now be regarded as archaic. One possible reason for this uncommon choice of Epithet as Head in vocatives may be by analogy with the superlative, itself used to convey attitude.

## 6.2 Modifiers

The overall structure potential of non-name vocatives can be characterised as:

$$D \wedge N \wedge Ea \wedge E \wedge C \wedge T \wedge Q$$

where Ea = attitudinal Epithet, preceding non-attitudinal Epithet.

There are differences not only in terms of the actual lexical realisations, but also structurally, between those vocatives involving positive and those involving negative attitude. Epithet is the functional category most elaborated in relation to attitudinal loading. A double description of Epithet is needed, the structure potential differing substantially for negatively-oriented compared with positively-oriented attitude. This parallels the more extensive range of negative compared with positive items realising Head. In what follows, special features of each functional category in relation to their use in vocatives will be discussed.

### 6.2.1 Deictic

Many nominal vocatives are used without any modification, some or all of the time. Vocatives are inherently second person, so it is hardly surprising that the second-person pronoun form *you* should commonly appear as the initial item in nominal group vocatives. Quirk et al. (1985) see such forms as appositional, but there are good reasons for proposing that the *you* in items such as *you darling* and *you bastard* is Deictic. There are two arguments for such an interpretation, the first on the grounds of the nature of the deixis involved in using *you* in such structures, the second because of the parallelism between such instances and the use of *my*, which is clearly Deictic (e.g. *my dear*, *my friend*). *You* would seem to be the appropriate form for making explicit that the person being spoken to is the one being referred to. If a vocative will accept modification at all, then *you* is always a possible element in that modification, this possibility (as proposed in Chapter 4) constituting a useful grammatical test for deciding whether or not a vocative is present. *You* used in this way is paralleled by *my*, which occupies the same position in structure and is clearly Deictic because it is possessive.

All attitudinal vocatives make reference to the addressee from the point of view of the speaker rather than from the point of view of the addressee, but the choice between *you* and *my* involves a choice between a form which emphasises the otherness of the addressee and one which makes explicit the fact that speaker's

point of view is indeed being expressed by incorporating the first-person pronoun into the structure. (This is the same difference Halliday (1985: 333) refers to as 'subjective' vs 'objective' orientation in relation to modality, i.e. overtly rather than covertly coding speaker's point of view). It is a difference that makes sense in relation to the different distribution of the two forms depending on whether the attitude involved is positive or negative. *My* is restricted in its occurrence to vocatives involving positive attitude, whereas *you* can be used in vocatives involving either positive or negative attitude. Ascribing negatively-valued attributes to an addressee, therefore, produces structures which distance the speaker from the speech act, whereas acts ascribing positively-valued attributes offer the option of distancing or including the speaker.

In address to children, apparently third person possessive forms such as *Mummy's*, *Grandpa's* can appear as Deictic. Such forms derive from the use of names or kin titles rather than the pronoun *I* in talk to young children, presumably in order to decrease the problem potentially posed for small children by the two pronoun forms denoting speaker and hearer depending on who is adopting which speech role at any particular point. Such forms are properly regarded as first person, equivalent to *my*. There is also a small number of fixed vocative forms using the possessive *your* as Deictic (*Your Eminence/Highness/Holiness/Honour/Ladyship/Lordship/Majesty/Grace/Worship*), but this use no longer seems productive.

More noteworthy are uses of *my* in forms which are not obviously or necessarily positive in attitudinal orientation apart from the use of the word *my* itself, e.g. the condescending *my dear/good lady/fellow/man/woman*, *my friend* used sarcastically in debate and the somewhat patronising *my son* used by Christian clergy. In the case of clergy laying claim to non-existent family relationships, there seems to be both a not-too-inaccessible metaphor involved (the church constituting a family) and an assumption of benevolent intent in the relationship of clergy to laity, both together justifying the use of the positively-associated *my*. The other cases seem more ironic. In the case of the aggressive or sarcastic use of *my friend* the phenomenon of inversion would seem to be involved, i.e. the use of terms in ways which reverse their usual attitudinal loading. Inversion involving the use of otherwise negatively-loaded terms such as *bastard* and *mongrel* as 'affectionate' terms of address is frequently commented on in relation to Australian address practices. The negative use of otherwise positively-oriented terms seems less common.

Numeratives are not common in vocatives, but duals (*you two, you pair of ...*) as well as larger numbers (*you three/four ...*) do occur. Larger numbers still are generally dealt with either by means of collectives or plural general nouns. There is also a small set of items (e.g. *bunch of, mob of, pack of*) which function as a similar kind of complex Numerative to the measure words *pack, slice, yard*. Halliday provides a dual analysis of *a pack of cards*, with the measure word as Head and Thing being what is measured (1985: 174). *You pack of drongos* would seem to be precisely parallel, with *pack* as Head in the univariate analysis and *drongos* Thing in the multivariate analysis.

### 6.2.3 Epithet

Halliday's account of the functional element Epithet in nominal group structure sees Epithet as indicating

some quality of the subset, e.g. *old, long, blue, fast*. This may be an objective property of the thing itself; or it may be an expression of the speaker's subjective attitude towards it, e.g. *splendid, silly, fantastic*. There is no hard and fast line between these two; but the former are experiential in function, whereas the latter, expressing the speaker's attitude, represent an interpersonal element in the meaning of the nominal group. (Halliday 1985: 163)

Halliday's discussion treads an interesting path between seeing this as a clear-cut distinction 'reflected in the grammar in various ways' (the principal grammatical distinction being that experiential Epithets are potentially defining whereas interpersonal ones are not), and acknowledging that 'There is no hard and fast line between these two', that 'in general, the same word may act as either experiential or interpersonal Epithet' and that 'there are very few words that serve only an attitudinal function.' (ibid).

Halliday does not, however, deal with the question of possible sub-categories of Epithet. There are various accounts of this issue, in the form of discussions of adjective sequence in nominal groups (e.g. Fries 1970, Sussex 1974, Dixon 1977, Bache 1978), but almost all of them concentrate exclusively on experientially-oriented meanings and, even when potentially attitudinal items are included, their iterative potential and its amplificatory effect are not discussed. Quirk et al. (1985: 1337-41) provide the most satisfactory account: their grammar is eclectic, they are



aware of attitude and take it seriously in relation to modifier sequence, and, perhaps most importantly, their work is corpus-based. Their schema for the sub-classification of modifiers in nominal groups certainly recognises that iteration of the function Epithet occurs, but does not allow for the possibility of iteration of certain sub-categories of Epithet involving particular kinds of lexical choices. Their description will not adequately account for something like *you lousy rotten filthy bastard*.

The Epithet categories identified from the address data require a double description, because the potential differs for negatively-oriented items compared with positively-oriented ones. Paralleling the more extensive range of negative compared with positive lexis which can function as Head, the potential for negative structures is considerably more extensive than that for positive structures.

The specific structure potentials for positively and negatively attitudinal nominal groups can then be characterised as follows:

+ve	D N E evaluative^size^age^participial	C T Q
-ve	D N E eval^experiential(a)^size^age^colour^part'cpl	C T Q prov(a)^eval

**Figure 6.1 Structure potential: attitudinal nominal group**

**Key:**

**eval(uative):** inherently attitudinal, e.g. *good, bad, nice, horrible* ...

**experiential (a):** some experiential meaning retained, but strongly attitudinal, e.g. *filthy, miserable* ...

**size** (small or large): implicitly attitudinal - effectively lexicalised diminutive (usually positive) or augmentative (usually negative);

**age** (young or old): implicitly attitudinal (or functions as Classifier - see below);

**colour:** used to people, refers to race, i.e. is attitudinal;

**participial:** commonly combine attitudinal and experiential meanings;

**prov(enance):** ethnic/racial/national origin; usually attitudinal, commonly pejorative.

These structure potentials, and the discussion which follows, are largely derived from my data on address forms. Qualifiers are relatively uncommon in such nominal groups (as indeed are Modifiers of any kind other than Deictic), though seemingly not in other attitudinal nominal groups: see for example the extensive range to be found in such a strongly attitudinally-marked text as Christina Stead's *The Man Who Loved Children* (1940). They will not be discussed further.

### 6.2.3.1 Iterated Epithet: positive attitude

Figure 6.2 sets out sample realisations from the address data, for positively-oriented Epithet (items are arranged in semantic sets where appropriate). Specific observations on the categories and examples follow.

evaluative	size	age	participial (attitudinal/experiential)
dear darling sweet cute	little tiny weeny itty-bitty teensy- (weensy)	young  old	smiling laughing  bouncing  smooching
pretty lovely handsome beautiful gorgeous			<u>NB</u> the use in this position of items such as:
precious wonderful scrumptious	big great		blue-eyed curly-headed
good			(items analogous in form to past participles)

Figure 6.2 Epithet sequence: positive attitude

#### Evaluative Epithet:

1. Many of the items listed here clearly have some experiential content as well as the overt attitudinal meaning: compare *beautiful* with *sweet* or *good*. Iteration within this category decreases the experiential and increases the interpersonal focus.
2. Selection within this category is iterative, two or three choices constituting a moderate degree of amplification and four or five a high degree. There are three kinds of iteration:

- (i) repetition of the same item, e.g. *you dear dear* (Thing);
- (ii) iteration within a semantic field, e.g. *you dear darling* (Thing), *you handsome gorgeous* (Thing);
- (iii) iteration across semantic fields, e.g. *you gorgeous darling good little* (Thing).

### **Size Epithet:**

1. Items within either sub-set are likewise iterative, e.g. *you little tiny itty-bitty* (Thing), *you great big* (Thing), but there is no iteration across sub-sets.
2. The items *little*, *tiny*, *big*, *great* clearly do have experiential meaning in appropriate contexts, and probably never entirely lose this when used as Epithets. It is hard to imagine circumstances in which one would include the Epithet *little* in a vocative addressed to a hulking 6-foot-plus male, though he might well be referred to in appropriate circumstances as *nothing but a little boy* and even given the nickname *Tiny* by his mates. A baby, especially a male baby, can certainly be addressed as *you great big beautiful* (Thing), so largeness may be seen as more relative than smallness. Such items do seem to function much more interpersonally than experientially, however. The *little* set seem to be effectively lexicalised diminutives, with an inherently positive orientation, and the *big* set lexicalised augmentatives, usually with a negative orientation (e.g. *great lump*, *big boofhead*). 'Big' words, despite their overt meaning of largeness, do not necessarily amplify to a greater extent than other attitudinal items, however. They can have a mitigating effect: compare *big boofhead* or *great idiot* with *stupid fool*, where the selection of Epithet and Thing from the same semantic field has a stronger amplifying effect than the use of *big* words.

### **Age Epithet:**

1. The two items in this category seem to function rather differently. *Young* seems in fact to occur far more frequently as sole Epithet (e.g. *you young scamp*, *young lady*) than as part of an Epithet sequence (e.g. *you dear sweet young thing*). And while *old* certainly appears regularly in Epithet sequences, there is some doubt about its status as Epithet. *Old* will not accept intensification with *very* (one of the grammatical tests for distinguishing Classifier from Epithet) in a sequence such as *you horrible nasty little old man*, which suggests that it is a Classifier rather than an Epithet. The fact that *young* is commonly used to children or young people, and likewise will not accept *very*, suggests that it too functions as a Classifier within attitudinal nominal groups.

2. There is also the use of both words in such forms as *you old bastard* and *you young dog* in friendly address between males, where neither may have literal application in terms of the addressee's actual age. *Old* in such usage functions more as a marker of solidarity (= 'Our friendship is old, which is part of what gives me the licence to call you *bastard*'), while *young* may identify the addressee as belonging in terms of behaviour to a category that s/he does not belong to chronologically, especially in relation to sexual activity.

### Participial Epithet:

1. Realisations are clearly experiential but the meanings involved are those that have positive value in English-speaking cultures, i.e. are also attitudinal. The items included in the list above would mostly be used in address to babies or small children, and a large range of participials can be used that refer to actions initiated even involuntarily by the child, but not seen as negative by the speaker, e.g. Henny Pollitt addresses one of her children as *you kissing bug* in Stead's *The Man Who Loved Children* (1940).

### 6.2.3.2 Iterated Epithet: negative attitude

Figure 6.3 sets out sample realisations from the address data, for negatively-oriented Epithet (items are arranged in semantic sets where appropriate):

evaluative	experiential/eval	size	age	colour	participial
dirty filthy rotten lousy stinking	fat  ugly  lazy	little  big great	old  young	black brown yellow	bludging whinging whining moaning loafing crawling sticky- beaking ...
horrible nasty awful revolting	selfish  stuckup  messy				
silly dumb stupid	<u>NB</u> participial forms such as <i>whinging</i> , <i>snivelling</i> etc. can also be used in this position				
naughty bad wicked					

Figure 6.3 Epithet sequence: negative attitude

**Evaluative Epithet:**

Both observations made above for positive evaluative Epithets apply also to negative ones:

1. Most items listed here potentially have some experiential as well as attitudinal meaning, with the attitudinal predominating, especially when iterative selections are made from this category.
2. Iteration is possible both within a single semantic domain and across domains, e.g. *you filthy rotten lousy* (Thing), *you bad wicked* (Thing), *you nasty horrible wicked* (Thing). There do seem to be some limits on iterative combinations across domains, but I do not have sufficient data to be able to specify these precisely.

**Experiential/Evaluative Epithet:**

1. Items realising this sub-category clearly have attitudinal force but are much more overtly experiential in meaning than items in the first category.
2. Particular choices made would generally have some relation to features of the appearance or behaviour of the addressee: *skinny* to the slim or even average-sized; *fat* to anyone not slim; *messy* to someone who doesn't maintain the speaker's standards of tidiness; *selfish* to someone who won't do what the speaker wants them to do. *Ugly* can be used to virtually anyone, however, suggesting that it is more like a purely evaluative Epithet.

**Size Epithet:**

1. The word *little* itself is available but not any of the more overtly diminutive alternatives that are available in positively-oriented attitudinal vocatives. This seems consistent with a reading of *little* forms as diminutives, i.e. inherently positively-oriented.
2. *Great* and *big* are both available and can be used iteratively, which is what one would expect from their basically augmentative function.

**Age Epithet:**

Much the same observations apply as for positive vocatives, but *old* may occur with items intervening between it and the Head, e.g. *you lousy old bludging Pommy bastard*. The solution may be to include *old* in the experiential/evaluative category as well as in the age category.

**Colour Epithet:**

The examples I am aware of from address to people all have racial connotations (*black, brown, yellow*) so could be regarded as Classifiers, along with the age Epithets, except that further Epithets can follow them, e.g. *you black bludging bastard* (*bludging black bastard* is also possible). Dabke (1977: 82) notes the use of *white* in pejorative address to a football umpire (*you white mongrel*), the reference here being not to skin colour but to identifying clothing.

**Participial Epithet:**

The same kind of observations apply as for positive vocatives, except that the orientation is now negative rather than positive.

**6.2.4 Classifier**

As for Epithet, the potential differs somewhat for positive and negative attitude, with negative structures having a slightly larger set of categories. For positive vocatives, there seem to be a small set of items realising this function, including *darling, angel, baby*, and selection is iterative. Thus a form like *Mummy's precious little darling angel baby boy* is possible. There are two categories of Classifier in negative vocatives: a provenance category, which includes usually derogatory terms referring to an addressee's race or place of origin, e.g. *wog, abo, Pommy*; and a small more general abusive set, selection within which is iterative, including such items as *mug, mongrel, dingo*. *Mug copper* is attested and forms like *mongrel dingo abo bastard* are possible.

## Coda

One further aspect of vocative structure, the question of compounds or complexes has not yet been addressed. These are certainly used in address, and include combinations such as:

personal name + family name,  
 iterated personal name,  
 title + family name,  
 iterated personal name + family name,  
 personal name + other nominal (especially endearment)

The nature of the relation between the elements comprising the complex does vary, basically involving the question of whether the relation between the elements is one of equal status (parataxis) or dependence (hypotaxis). Not a great deal depends on this issue in terms of address practice, however, but it is of considerable interest as far as the operation of the logical metafunction with respect to interpersonal systems is concerned.

Of special interest are several interconnected issues arising from the material presented in both Chapters 5 & 6, involving the slang/colloquial status of much of the data and the question of overlexicalisation or proliferation, where lexical proliferation can be interpreted as a cultural form of amplification. A further issue, possibly related, is the fact that negatively compared with positively oriented attitudinal vocatives display a greater number of lexical types and more extensive scope for amplification. The question of the distribution of such items in actual use in relation to age, gender, class etc. will be the focus of attention in Part III.

The question of proliferation will be taken a little further in this coda than simply its obvious relevance to multiply-suffixed personal names and attitudinal nominal groups with iterated Epithets. Dealing first with hypocoristic name forms, the progressive piling-up of suffixes has not merely a cumulative or intensifying function but correlates in a very specific way with situation. There would seem to be an inverse relationship between the degree of recursion and the range of situations within which such forms may be used appropriately, such that maximally recursive forms are only used to an extremely small number of addressees with whom one has an ongoing intimate relationship (probably only spouse/lover,

children and possibly siblings and a few extremely close friends) and even then only in interactions not accessible to outsiders.

Parallel to this use of recursive name-forms is the use of endearments, the use of pet-names and the creation of nicknames. In all of these the same phenomenon recurs: the use of a number of parallel means of expressing the same meaning. And the existence of four methods of doing this is the same phenomenon at a higher level, where the expressive techniques range from lexicalisation of affect (seen in endearments such as *dear*, *sweetheart*, *darling*, etc.), through the formation of diminutive forms of names, to an implicit metaphorical technique in the case of pet-names, i.e. calling someone *angel*, *baby*, *possum*, even *wombat*, is saying something like 'I think of you as one thinks of something that is little and human/little and furry' etc (v. Wierzbicka 1980). All of these techniques make use of the general linguistic code that is available to all speakers of English, while the fourth technique for expressing intimacy by means of vocatives does something a little different: it involves the creation of elements of a new code, unique to a particular relationship, by means of which familiar terms are given new semantic values and new terms will be invented - most characteristically, new names for the people involved in that special relationship.

At this point, two notions seem potentially relevant. Halliday noted the phenomenon of over-lexicalisation, the proliferation of synonymous expressions, in what he referred to as anti-languages (Halliday 1976: 571) and Wescott coined the terms hyperpolysemy and hypersynonymy to refer to two kinds of one-to-many form/meaning relationships characteristic of slang (Wescott 1976/1980). The question of the relationship of name forms and other intimate forms of address to situation needs to be formalised, however, before such notions can be profitably employed as explanatory tools.

By the term hyperpolymorphy Wescott refers to the occurrence of a plurality of alternants for most slang items and he sees this as one of the salient grammatical characteristics of slang. (Wescott 1976/1980: 402). Though he attempts no explanation of the phenomenon he describes, Wescott's paper is important because it focusses attention clearly on a set of linguistic characteristics which are describable, and which are presented as characteristics of slang which is treated seriously as a type or variety of language rather than as an arbitrary set of lexical items invented willy-nilly in the 'never-ending search for originality' which is the kind of explanation often provided by students of slang. Halliday refers to such



explanations and proceeds to offer his own explanations of what is essentially the same phenomenon, with respect to anti-languages, in the following terms:

If we consider underworld languages in terms of a general comparison with the languages of the overworld, we find in them a characteristic functional orientation, away from the experiential mode of meaning toward the interpersonal and the textual modes. Both the textual orientation (the "set" toward the message, in Jakobsen's terms) and the interpersonal (the "set" toward addresser/addressee ...) tend to produce this overlexicalization: the former because it takes the form of verbal competition and display, in which kennings of all kinds are at a premium; the latter because sets of words which are denotatively synonymous are clearly distinguished by their attitudinal components . . .

Both of these are normal features of everyday language, in which textual and interpersonal meanings are interwoven with experiential meanings into a single fabric of discourse. What characterizes what we are calling anti-languages is their *relatively greater* orientation in this direction. (Halliday 1976: 571-2, emphasis in original).

To the extent that slang, the language of any in-group, and intimate language, characteristic of an in-group that is perhaps most typically a dyad, can be said to be anti-languages insofar as each 'creates an alternative reality' and 'is to be defined ... as a systematic pattern of tendencies in the selection of meanings to be exchanged', then Halliday's account holds for them too. As distance decreases towards intimacy then a new balance needs to be established between metafunctions, establishing priority for interpersonal meanings, and a variety of linguistic techniques will be used which serve both to create and maintain the strong affective bonds which characterise the relationship, to constantly reinforce its reality by saying in as many ways as possible that things are indeed so in this tiny world.

**PART III: TOWARDS AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF ADDRESS IN  
AUSTRALIA**

## Introduction

Part III is where the model developed in Part I and the descriptions of the resources for vocation presented in Part II are intended to come together, in an account of address practice in a late twentieth-century, technologically-advanced, multicultural, democratic, capitalist, patriarchal Australian society. Needless to say, to essay such a task demands another thesis to itself. What is presented here merely suggests the kind of ethnography originally envisaged, an ethnography informed by a model of language as social semiotic and by contemporary social theory, especially feminist theory and what one might broadly call the politics of difference.

One problem with attempting to provide the kind of description presented in Part II, one bit of the system of the English language as a resource for people to make a particular kind of meaning, is that it is too easy to assume that everyone has the same access to that system. And 'same access' means not merely knowing that that resource exists, but having a reason for wanting to use it. Ironically, it is experiential meaning that can be seen as constituting more of a shared resource, in some ways, than interpersonal meaning. Field is about knowledge and about experience, and in theory societies such as contemporary Australia have institutionalised access to knowledge through education. (Practice, of course, is considerably more problematic). Tenor, however, is not about knowledge as such but about people, who they are. In a society which relentlessly individualises people, so as to make inaccessible an understanding of the dialectic of person and culture in the production of both, 'the way people are' is all too often taken as a given, seen as 'personality' in the most meagre sense of that word. (Firth used it altogether differently, but that is another story).

The last thing I want to do is to imply the autonomy of either field or tenor, of knowledge or person, however. They are profoundly interconnected, politically. Who people come to be involves their experience of all the kinds of meanings made by the language(s) they speak, but that experience is always mediated by social practices concerned with the formation of people as gendered, classed, aged, raced social beings. The linguistic system is always accessed partially, differentially, then. But that does not render meaningless the task of attempting to map the system as system, even though no person draws on the whole resource. In

order to understand the possibility of difference, we need to understand the existence of different meanings.

Part III, then, is two things. It suggests the thesis I would like to have written if all the work that needed to be done for Parts I and II had already been done. And it is a demonstration of good faith - a kind of 'renewal of connection'. Ideally, it would have consisted of substantial chapters on address practice with respect to gender, generation, class, and ethnicity/race (this last a revealingly blurred category in multiracial/multicultural/multi-ethnic Australia). In fact, it consists of three short chapters, with some degree of overlap between them.

The first chapter is the more general, and comments on address practice in relation to a range of dimensions of social life. The second chapter focuses specifically on address in relation to gender. It should be noted that feminist critiques of disciplinary epistemology and methodology have indirectly, but very clearly, informed this whole work, not merely those sections dealing explicitly with gender identities and gender relations. The third chapter takes up an aspect of the grammar of vocation that has been a significant factor in seeing it as a relatively insignificant part of the linguistic system. Vocation may be grammatically optional, from a particular perspective on grammaticality, but its social optionality is another matter.

Ideally, Part III would have been called 'An Ethnography of Address in Australia'. It gradually became 'Towards an Ethnography of Address in Australia'. In its final form, it can only be referred to as 'Notes Towards an Ethnography of Address in Australia'. It offers only glimpses of what it might be possible to do. I hope that some other brave soul will venture further into this territory, to explore both the minutiae of everyday address practice in the negotiation of everyday interpersonal relations and the relation between this micro level of analysis of language in social life and the grander questions of language as social semiotic with respect to the institutional organisation of society.

Bernstein has been much misrepresented, and much maligned, but understands something about the relationship between the micro and macro dimensions of human social life that others, in thrall to liberal individualism, have not wanted to know about. Contemporary feminism has done a little better in putting together the micro and the macro, understanding (in what has now unfortunately become a somewhat hackneyed phrase) that the personal is political. But much contemporary feminist thought of any rigour has been waylaid by inadequate or incomplete models of language, which put too much emphasis on the representational in the

formation of feminine subjectivity and not enough on the constitutive role of the cumulative experience of gendered interaction in a patriarchal society (i.e. one in which men have more power than women). Ideally, one wants both. I see my work as a contribution to such an endeavour.

## Seven

### Address practices and the conduct of social relations

Turning now to a consideration of how available grammatical resources for vocation are actually employed in negotiating social relations, two sorts of factors need to be taken into account. On the one hand, one needs to take into account aspects of social identity such as gender, class, age, ethnicity. Simultaneously one needs to consider the dynamics of the particular interaction in which speakers are engaged, specifically in terms of power and social distance. The relationships between these two kinds of factor are to a considerable extent predictable: interaction between females and males, between children and adults, and probably between those of lower and higher status/class, are culturally defined as interaction between non-equals.

In the case of gender- and age-based inequality, the superior party may manifest that superiority in part by acting as if social distance was minimal, even when interacting with total strangers: women and children are approachable, even touchable, in ways that men are not. They are certainly addressable in ways that men are not, in public contexts. Hence, the widespread use of diminutive forms of names to women (by men) and children (by adults), virtually institutionalised with respect to gender so that the most commonly used type of name used by and to females and males differs. The most common male name-form is monosyllabic, either full form or truncated, where the most common female name-form is bisyllabic, consisting of either the full name or a -y suffixed form. -y suffixes do occur with male names but, with a few exceptions (e.g. *Terry* from *Terence* and *Tony* from *Anthony*), such forms are seen as appropriate only for children and/or in intimate contexts. A *Judy* can be so addressed all her life, under all circumstances where personal name address is appropriate, but a *Johnny* will only be addressed thus when he is pre-adolescent or, when older, by his mother or girl-friend (and then probably only in private) or by friends kidding or trying to get a rise out of him. A middle-class *Johnny*, that is: the situation may be different for a working class *Johnny*. (See 7.2 below).

In families and social groups where the full form is the preferred form of personal name, such gender differentiation merely takes a different form, since English

personal names are multiply gender-marked, identifying them, and hence the bearers of those names, as having not merely different relationships with the language that both speak and the society both live in, but differently evaluated relationships.

While it may be the case that the most delicate choices in the name network are 'different but equal' (grammatically distinct but functionally equivalent), constraints on speakers in interaction which result in non-reciprocal choices of the kind detailed above can only be seen as manifestations of unequal power: equals can always make reciprocal choices. In the case of children, it is easy to see that non-reciprocity means inequality: nobody troubles to mask the phenomenon because it is culturally acceptable for adults to be seen to be exercising authority over children. In adult interaction, where it is no longer as socially acceptable to be seen exercising power as it once was (the shift from the 'power semantic' to the 'solidarity semantic', in Brown & Gilman's terms), the markers will be less evident and the significance of the reciprocity/non-reciprocity of grammatical and discourse choices will sometimes be blurred. In the case of gendered address, the power issue is somewhat obscured because the forms addressed to the (subordinate) female are also the forms used to indicate minimal social distance and positive affect. Males using these forms can (and do) defend themselves by saying that they were 'only being friendly' and the question of whether it was appropriate to be that friendly - to say nothing of how a female responding with equivalent 'friendly' forms would be likely to be interpreted - is somehow seldom asked.

The same 'friendly' forms are of course used to children, equally non-reciprocally (though one could argue that *Mummy* and *Daddy* are just as much diminutive forms of names, when used by a child, as are a parent's *Susie* and *Johnny*). But adults make use of a strategy in interacting with children that is not generally available in adult interaction: they can deliberately increase the social distance, i.e. withdrawing intimacy and affection, by progressively retreating from everyday address usage in a totally predictable sequence of choices from diminutive form, to full form, to first name plus other given names, to full name. Four-year-old Robert, who explained that '*Wobert means cwoss*' understood this strategy very well. Not only choice of name-form but changes in stress, voice quality and the steepness of the tone contours are used to convey the precise degree of authority (or 'crossness') intended, and it is these latter features that tend to be retained in adult usage but more as markers of negative affect than of authority or power.

Gender differences in address usage are also found, hardly surprisingly, within gender groups, particularly with choices used to realise varying degrees of closeness or intimacy. This is the realm of what Brown and Gilman (1960), and many subsequent investigators of address practices, have called solidarity. In what follows I shall make use of this term but, as explained in Chapter 3, solidarity is not a unitary dimension of social relations but a cover term for two dimensions that need to be distinguished. In close or intimate relationships it is not always apparent that a social distance dimension can be distinguished from an affective dimension, since culturally the former presupposes the latter, and the realisations for address in particular blur the distinctive realisational patterns that occur elsewhere. Where social distance is greater, distinguishing the two dimensions is more straightforward.

In address where social distance between interactants is small and feelings are positive, males seem to draw on a richer array of resources for realising solidarity than do females. Males make almost exclusive use of the *o*-suffix, both for personal names and particularly for family names. They make extensive use of family name, in both full and diminutive forms, of nicknames, and of a range of nominal group types of address ranging from heads that are explicitly solidary (such as *mate* or *sport*) to a phenomenon that Baker (1966: 365) refers to as inversion, whereby you address your best mate as *you old mongrel* or even *cunt-features* precisely because he **is** your best mate - a ritual testing of the strength of the solidary bond. By contrast, there do not seem to be any forms which are largely or exclusively used by females to realise solidarity. Truncated forms (especially when not the most usual diminutive form, e.g. *Paul* from *Pauline*, *Suse* from *Susan*, *Bet* from *Betty*) can certainly be used in this way, but are not exclusively female in usage. Females tend to use nicknames less frequently than males, though they make greater use of endearments. Non-name (nominal group) vocatives with reversed attitudinal orientation also occur, involving lexis that explicitly denigrates women, e.g. *you stupid slack bitch*, but such items are restricted in occurrence and not only do not have the currency of the comparable male items but can provoke a somewhat different reaction. As American Blacks found when proclaiming that 'Black is beautiful', an important step towards altering not only the perceptions of a denigrated group about themselves but those of the society at large, is to confront the denigration head on, thereby realising a solidarity that the denigrators had always denied was possible. Women have commonly been regarded (by men, and by women themselves) as incapable of forming solidary relationships and to the extent that the conditions of their lives have made this a self-fulfilling prophecy there has been little need to elaborate specific linguistic resources for realising this



kind of relationship. A permanent change in the status of women in Australian society, assuming such a change were to take place, could have interesting linguistic consequences.

With respect to class and ethnicity, mentioned above as also relevant for address practices, not much investigation has yet taken place. There do seem to be class differences, for example in name form choices available for males (-y suffixed diminutives seem more common to adult speakers than is the case for middle class speakers) and in the use of what middle class speakers call endearments (*love*, *dear*, *sweetheart* etc.). The contrast between address styles involving such features can be readily observed in the major cities, in inner-urban areas in the process of gentrification, where the address practices of the new middle-class arrivals contrast markedly with those of the remnants of the non-ethnic working-class population who have not yet been displaced. Geographically more widespread are differences in address practices in service encounters involving 'endearments'. While by no means all middle class customers react negatively to being addressed with *dear* or *lovie*, regarding them as unduly familiar (i.e. inappropriately decreasing social distance), such a reaction is not uncommon and service-providers one might guess to be middle class seem to make less frequent use of such forms themselves in addressing customers. The kind of notion of class that seems relevant here is one based primarily on patterns of social organisation, with education and socio-economic status as consequences of those patterns (cf. Bernstein 1971, 1973, 1975). Much interesting ethnographic work clearly remains to be done with respect to class, not merely in relation to address practices per se but seeing these and other interpersonal linguistic practices as together realising possible different semiotic choices regarding social distance and perhaps even power in social relations.

In terms of ethnicity, my impression is that many Australians of non-Anglo-Celtic origin, whose names reflect that origin, are excluded from the set of possibilities for address practices otherwise available. Such exclusion in the case of names with radically different phonotactic patterns from those of English names can seem perfectly reasonable but can also be seen as functioning symbolically as a sign of the marginalisation of such people in Australian society. In this light, it makes sense for immigrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds to give their children 'English' personal names, while retaining the family names of their ethnic origin. Where it is desired to claim those of non-Anglo origin as true-blue Aussies, however, appropriate name-forms will be found. Sporting heroes such as rugby player David Campese, marathon runner Robert Di Castella and Victorian Football

League player Alex Jesaulenko readily became *Campo*, *Deek* and *Jezza* - not merely on the lips of fans but in newspaper headlines.

Sport and popular entertainment do seem to be domains where it is appropriate to make regular use of diminutive forms, forms which realise higher level semiotic choices decreasing social distance. Thus *y* -forms of male personal names are common, e.g. *Tommy* Smith (top racehorse trainer), *Tommy* Tycho (band leader), *Billy* Field (song writer and singer), *Richie* Benaud (former top cricketer), *Molly* Meldrum (compere of popular TV rock music show). Such forms are used regularly in both the quality press and on ABC radio and television.

The adulation accorded sporting heroes and popular entertainers seems to indicate that part of the social motivation for diminutive name choices in these fields is to realise strong positive affect. Such fields are seen as entertainment, leisure, relaxation - part of the good things of life that you can feel good about, rather than having to worry about, and hence you can feel well-disposed to those professionally involved in such fields. Thus social distance is semiotically decreased: it is quite beside the point that speakers might very well not use such forms to directly address any of their heroes, on actually meeting them.

Finally, despite all that has been said about the functionality of variant name-form choices, many people insist on the use of full forms of personal names and regard diminutive or hypocoristic forms as socially unacceptable. One would certainly need to know in more detail who such people were and what their expressed motivations were. (Not that this will necessarily be very revealing, since reasons are often couched largely in attitudinal terms, such as 'I can't stand my name being shortened'). My impression is that full-form-only users are middle class rather than working class and the social function would seem to be to maintain social distance in a world where first name is the norm for address in all but the most formal circumstances. Maintaining social distance would seem to be a perfectly appropriate goal for the individualist middle class. The upwardly mobile presumably identify this particular address practice initially simply as middle class, and hence desirable (for their children, at least, if it is too late to change their own practices). In the process of opting out of a network of linguistic choices, however, they may find themselves co-opted into a new way of relating to people, of being social beings. Address practices in and of themselves cannot achieve this transformation of personal and social identity, but they certainly play an important role.

Where names are used to address people as individuals and titles for occupants of statuses, nominal group terms of address are a somewhat mixed bag as far as any general kind of relational function is concerned. Many head-words refer to attributes objectively 'possessed' by addressees as occupants of social roles, e.g. *fellow-workers, girls and boys*. Others combine such reference with an attitudinal dimension, e.g. *dyke, Pommy* = you are lesbian/English and that upsets/offends me. Others again are largely or entirely attitudinal, e.g. *no-hoper, slut, pig, idiot*. Many apparently attitudinally neutral terms, however, especially those referring to human beings in terms of gender, do reveal an attitudinal dimension when patterns of usage are investigated. Where parallel terms exist, e.g. *girls* and *boys*, which are used in parallel ways, i.e. addressing children of the appropriate gender under identical circumstances, no problem arises. But these particular terms are also used to address adults in ways which are anything but parallel: women are addressed as *girls* very much more frequently than men are addressed as *boys*, and when men are so addressed it is usually in contexts where they are relaxing, not playing serious adult roles. Women, on the other hand, can be addressed as *girls* not only under similar circumstances but when they are actually playing a variety of real adult roles: women as wives, playing the multiple role of food preparer/child minder/household organiser are commonly *girls* to their husbands; women as potential consumers and actual shoppers are *girls*; women choristers are frequently *girls*; even professional women at professional meetings can be *girls*, though nowadays hardly without comment.

Examples like this, like the marked skewing towards largely exclusive male usage of such explicitly solidary terms of address as *mate* and *sport*, and like the selection of domains from which are drawn the lexical sets of items used for derogatory and approbatory address, make it clear that what is being realised in the address system about patterns of social relations in Australia is multi-layered. Most immediately, address choices can be seen as realisations of an underlying set of options representing social relations conceived of as a semiotic system, involving the three dimensions of power, social distance, and affect discussed in Chapter 3.

But underlying this level is a further set of ideological positions available in Australia which determine attitudes towards female and male, child and adult, insider and outsider (whether classified as such on the basis of ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion etc.) by coding some things in the language and not others and by giving some terms positive value and others negative. What counts as a serious insult in a society is often particularly revealing of such underlying values or

ideological positions (v. Douglas 1975a) and their relative importance. Among the potentially most seriously insulting terms of address in Australian English are those impugning the heterosexual identity of males (*poofter*, *fag* etc.), those attributing promiscuous sexual behaviour to women (*moll*, *tart* etc.), and identifying males or females (but particularly insulting when directed at males) in terms of female genitalia (*cunt*). Sexuality and gender seem to be particularly ideologically loaded issues in Australian society, not only on the basis of linguistic evidence. It is hardly surprising, then, that Horvath (1985) found gender to be such a crucial variable in her study of variation in Australian English.

## **Eight**

### **En-gendering social relations through address**

Gender relations, like all social relations, are negotiated through interaction, through the manipulation of key interpersonal linguistic features such as speech function choices (and their realisations in terms of mood), vocative choices, modality and modulation. Such negotiation involves three kinds of patterning of linguistic choice, where each pattern primarily affects a different stratum of the linguistic system and can be seen as realising one dimension of an underlying semiotic system concerned with social relations. Whether (primarily discourse) choices are made reciprocally or non-reciprocally is a function of power: reciprocal choices can be made by those who regard themselves as equals, non-reciprocal choices by those who do not so consider themselves - with the choices themselves functioning not only to realise a power relationship already established and understood but also to create it anew on each occasion of interaction, to construct it in terms of power in the first instance and to render each occasion of interaction open to renegotiation. Whether the range of (primarily lexico-grammatical) choices is small or large is a function of social distance.

The interpersonal function of language is concerned with the negotiation of social relations in ways such that culturally available choices from an underlying semiotic system of available positions in a particular society are both realised (i.e. the choices exist semiotically, though they are only accessible through the forms, including the linguistic forms, which realise them) but also ongoingly constructed by the linguistic choices that are made in particular contexts. In a society such as Australia, my relations with any particular other are not in any simple way predetermined (as relations of equality or dominance/subordination, as relations of intimacy or social distance), though there are undoubtedly strong pressures to conform to social expectations about appropriate positions to adopt in terms of one's age, gender, class, ethnic or racial background. It is not the case that identities are so prescribed that we merely speak them: it is possible to take up various positions in relation to the tenor dimensions of power, distance and affect and have these become the starting point of new negotiations of actual present relations. Address matters because the actual choices made by speakers are not mere

expressions of something else but are active and crucial contributors to the interpersonal dynamics of the situation. If I speak as if I am more powerful than you, or in an intimate relationship with you, then to the extent that you take up the appropriate reciprocal speaking position - even if the objective 'facts' are that you are not intimate or less powerful - you thereby identify yourself in those terms, you become less powerful or more intimate, thereby contributing to the semiotic construction of the relationship as one between intimates or unequals.

Gendered address matters because, far from being merely expressive or symbolic of actual gender relations in a particular society, it constantly enacts the reality of those relations at a particular point in time. It does so in two ways. At a more general level, insofar as males share a cultural assumption that both dominance and intimacy are appropriate positions for them to adopt with respect to females, this complex position will be realised by address choices characterised by the lack of reciprocity indicative of unequal power relations and by the proliferation of choice on the part of the male indicative of intimacy (Poynton 1985/90, Ch 6). At a more specific level, the actual lexical choices will at the very least remind of and reinforce gender differentiation (e.g. by the multiple gender-marking of personal names) but will very frequently invoke that more comprehensive and affectively-loaded 'map' of the terrain of gender in English-speaking societies provided by the lexis of the English language. The lexis of gender is thereby rendered dynamic, not only in the sense that lexis activated via transitivity structures and activity sequences serves the representational function of constructing an ongoing version of reality, but in the further and reciprocal sense that the cultural 'realities' of gender identity and of gendered social relations which such cultural mapping encodes are constantly being recreated and renewed in the very process of being invoked - 'real'-ised in the most literal sense.

Let us turn now to specific questions of address practice, in relation to power, distance and affect. With respect to power, it has often been observed that address between males and females in public contexts is asymmetrical: male bosses may be addressed as *Mr O'Halloran*, *Mr Nguyen*, etc. by their female secretaries or junior staff, but address them by their first name in return, even when the woman is considerably older than the man. Or, given the widespread (and even, in some companies, mandatory) use of first name as the basic unmarked address choice, women may address men who are their superiors or peers by first name, but be addressed in return by some conventional endearment such as *dear*, *sweetheart* or *love*. Wolfson and Manes (1980) found a related asymmetry in service encounters, with endearments used by both male and female shop assistants to women

customers but never to men, who were commonly addressed as *Sir* if any address term was used. In Australia, one finds the considerably less formal *mate* used between males in many kinds of service encounter, especially when the transaction involves a 'male' product such as petrol, auto parts, hardware, paint, and particularly alcohol (either in the bar or the bottle-shop). *Mate* is also used in more neutral contexts such as post offices, milk bars or delis and the local paper shop. Such public male usage is often reciprocal and is best seen as a conventionalised marker of Australian egalitarian ideology, which historically has been constructed as exclusively male (Ward 1958).

Given that the vast majority of women work in lower status jobs and are more likely than not to have male superiors, the fact of non-reciprocal use in work contexts is not surprising. What is interesting is the nature of the asymmetry, particularly when the same choices to women occur in other settings. It would seem that women, like children, can be addressed in public with conventionalised intimate forms to a far greater extent than is permissible for men. (There would seem to be social dialect differences here, which permit some women to use endearments more freely to males at work or in service encounters. Such differences have not been investigated for class/socio-economic status, though Wolfson and Manes (1980) collected data from different geographical areas in the USA).

The choice of endearments to women in public settings can be linked with the fact that even when reciprocal use of first names occurs between men and women (or girls and boys), the form of that choice tends to be different. If the full form of the name is not used (*Robert, Tamara, Jason, Katharine, Christopher, Christine* etc.) then adult males will generally be addressed with a monosyllabic truncated form of the full name (*Rob/Bob, Jase, Chris* etc.) whereas the form usually used to females, adults as well as children, will be one with the diminutive suffix *-y* (sometimes spelt *-ie*): *Tammy, Kathy, Chrissie* etc. These suffixed forms, along with other diminutive suffixes such as *-kin(s)* and *-poo(s)*, are commonly used to children of both sexes, but boys come to see them, sometimes at a very early age, as 'girls' names' and reject them. Thus four-year-old *Robbie* at fourteen insists on *Rob* and six-year-old *Nicholas* has already rejected *Nicky* (saying explicitly that it is a girls' name) in favour of *Nick* or the full form *Nicholas*.

The relevant tenor dimension here is distance: the use of diminutive or hypocoristic forms of names is a matter of increases in intimacy. The process is most clearly seen in the progression of a couple falling in love from the most commonly used

forms of their respective names, when they first meet, through a variety of pet-forms of those names (including quite elaborate constructions involving up to five suffixes, e.g. *Anniekins*, *Mikeypooodles*, plus private nicknames and a good selection of endearments as the relationship develops. The proliferation principle is clearly seen in operation here in opening up a morphological resource for forming diminutives in English that particular individuals may not previously have had much occasion to make use of, leading to the production of a variety of forms all having substantially the same meaning of marking intimacy.

The relationship between name choices and distance can be seen very clearly also in the reverse direction, away from intimacy, in the set of name forms that are addressed to a child depending on how s/he stands in the favour of parents, from *Katiekindlekins* when she's being utterly sweet and adorable, to *Katie K* or just *Katie* for everyday affectionate usage, to *Kate* (for calling her or when doing jobs together) to *Katharine* (when someone isn't too happy with her) to *Katharine Pirona* (when she's done something pretty bad) to *Katharine Luisa Pirona* (for really bad news). (The example is an invented one, but the pattern is one that parents and teachers recognise, once it has been pointed out).

If one now asks why women retain the more intimate forms into adulthood to a greater extent than is the case for men (think of all the women called *Judy*, *Suzie*, *Jenny*, *Margie*, *Libby*, *Rosie*, etc. compared with the number of men called *Johnny*, *Tommy*, *Normie*, *Billy*, etc.), the answer would seem to be that women are culturally defined as more contactable than men: it is assumed that relations between males and females will be on the basis of intimacy. Such an interpretation makes sense of the persistent tendency for English words referring to women to acquire sexual connotations (compare the present range of meaning of *master* and *mistress*, or *madam* and *sir*): contactable comes to mean sexually available. It makes sense of the fact that what resources English has for forming diminutives have come to be substantially gender-marked and in such a way that 'feminine' forms demean, belittle, and trivialise at the same time as they feminise. The process is very apparent with feminine words suffixed in *-ess* or *-ette*. It is less obvious with name forms, for two reasons. One is that, because in Western cultures intimacy is automatically associated with positive affect, the use of suffixed forms of personal names can be claimed to be an indication of friendliness, or affection: a matter of affect and not of distance, much less power. Many males believe this to be the case and are genuinely puzzled and even upset when accused of belittling or trivialising women by using diminutive forms. The only possible response would seem to be that some things, in this case the cultural functions of the linguistic



system, are 'larger than personal benevolence' (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak with respect to history and the well-meaning individual).

The second reason for diminutive name forms not always being seen as belittling is particularly relevant to speakers of Australian English, many of whom, particularly males, use a large number of words with the characteristic 'diminutive' -y ending in everyday casual conversation: *tinny* (can of beer), *barbie* (barbecue), *bookie* (bookmaker), *footy* (football), *carb* (carburettor of a car), *trannie* (transistor radio), *mozzie* (mosquito), *pokies* (poker-machines), *prezzie* (present), *pozzie* (position), *wharfie* ('wharf', i.e. waterside worker), etc. The use of such forms seems clearly related to social distance, occurring in and/or being used to create relatively relaxed informal interaction: the egalitarian mateship theme again, in fact. None of these forms have any hint of a trivialising or demeaning flavour, though other items seen as baby-talk or specifically associated with women may. For males, the -y suffix on everyday lexical items is probably best characterised along with the -o suffix, which is also widely used (*rego* for registration, *compo* for compensation, etc.), as a familiarity marker. In address between males, however, the -y suffix, along with a number of other hypocoristic suffixes used in name forms, commonly occurs with the last name rather than the first (*Hawkie*, *Bondy*, *Lawsie*, etc. alongside forms such as *Thommo*, *Singo*, *Hoges*, etc.). Such forms would seem to achieve a nice balance between friendly camaraderie on the one hand and maintaining a certain distance - standing well back from real intimacy - on the other: asserting at one and the same time mateship and freedom from any conceivable homosexual 'taint'. This is clearly yet another manifestation of the male tendency to interpret intimacy only in sexual terms, commented on earlier with respect to cultural attitudes towards women.

It is not then the choice *per se* of the -y suffix in address to females that is the problem: it is the lack of parallelism with its use to males and the cultural implications of the difference. Women may be addressed more intimately than is appropriate for males, not only with respect to name forms but in a variety of other ways. Endearments are commonly used publicly to women, who may also find themselves addressed by complete strangers in terms of their physical appearance (*gorgeous*, *blondie*, *sexy-legs* ...) and addressed or referred to purely as sexual objects (either as people, albeit of little value: *tart*, *slut*, *whore*, *moll* ...; or merely as their own sexual organs: *pussy*, *cunt*, and the metaphoric *slut-box*).

In investigating the language of derogation in English - one lexical resource for realising affect (negative in this case) - one striking fact is that there is a quite

extensive lexis of derogatory terms for women as women that is not paralleled by a set denigrating men as men. Men can be castigated for their moral failings (*bludger, no-hoper, piss-artist*), their sexual preferences (*faggot, fairy, poofter*), their intellectual shortcomings (*drongo, dope, fuckwit*), their incompetence or uncouthness (*yobbo, oaf, hoon*), and in more generally negative terms by referring to them as animals (*animal, mongrel, swine*), as body products or genitalia (female being more offensive: *shit, fart, prick, cunt*), or simply as an all-purpose *bastard*, which has only recently largely lost its implied denigration of women, as the stigma attached to illegitimacy has lessened. It has taken the women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s to invent terms such as (*male*) *chauvinist (pig)* or *MCP*, in order to be able to refer negatively to males as males, particularly with respect to their attitudes and behaviour towards women.

## Nine

### **On the optionality of vocation, with particular reference to class**

Given the fact that English has only one second-person pronoun and that, as a consequence, any tenor features realised by terms of address will be realised by non-pronominal vocatives, the optionality of vocation would appear to differentiate English markedly from those many languages which force speakers into making a choice between alternate second-person pronouns (or between verbal forms which incorporate such a distinction). In practical terms, however, the optionality of vocation in English may be more illusory than real.

From a purely grammatical perspective, no clause is ungrammatical simply because it does not contain a vocative. In practice, however, many utterances are certainly regarded as impolite (= socially unacceptable) or even insubordinate (= dangerously unacceptable) if they contain no vocative. One suspects that it has been the over-awareness of the grammatical optionality of vocation, with its implications of linguistic marginality for the feature, together with an undervaluing of the characteristics of actual usage, which has led to the neglect by linguists of the whole phenomenon: Roger Brown, whose work, with various colleagues, set off a chain reaction of terms-of-address investigations, was after all a social psychologist, not a linguist.

Three observations need to be made on the optionality of vocation. The first is that from the perspective of treating it as central to the realisation of tenor, optionality of the system is highly functional. One may choose to mark the operative tenor by means of an appropriate address term, or one may choose to be less explicit by either (i) using a vocative that is minimally revealing of tenor without information from other linguistic choices (e.g. least marked form of personal name); or (ii) making no vocative choice at all, allowing other tenor markers to convey either the appropriate information or appropriately ambivalent or even downright misleading information.

The second observation on optionality is that under certain circumstances, most typically in situations involving the exercise of authority, vocation can become virtually an obligatory rather than an optional feature. A rigid formal hierarchy,

where position in the hierarchy is formalised by means of rank (such as in the armed services), is one context where vocation is certainly an obligatory choice for subordinates addressing superiors. The obligation to choose from the vocation system seems to a large extent to be reciprocal but actual usage is never symmetrical, since subordinates address superiors with *Sir* or *Ma'am* and superiors use name (personal name or family name, depending on context) or rank (at certain levels of the hierarchy only).

One might be tempted to regard such behaviour as anachronistic, or as some kind of sociolinguistic aberration peculiar to a formally-constituted hierarchy, obsessed with authority and order and with everyone needing to be consciously aware of the chain of command, particularly when one is aware of the prevalence of reciprocal personal name usage (with no kind of obligation apparently involved) which characterises much day to day adult interaction in other contexts. However, if one looks at another kind of context where the exercise of authority is unmistakable and explicit, namely the control of children by adults, one finds again that there is a strong expectation - even, by some adults, an explicit requirement - that an appropriate address form will be used by the subordinate (child) to the superior (adult). Even in cases where no overt exercise of authority is involved, non-symmetrical address largely characterises the interaction of children with adults: children are addressed by personal name or with endearments but by and large address adults with title + family name or kin title (+ personal name), e.g. *Mum* , *Uncle Jim* , *Mrs Brown* ). Even where children do address adults by their personal name, adults invariably have address options available which are not used by children (e.g. endearments, items such as *son* , *missy* etc.) so that adult-child dyads are invariably asymmetrical as far as address is concerned. The most striking instances of such asymmetry involve adults insisting on multiple marking of their own superior status by children, as in the case of a teacher insisting that a child addresses him as *Mr* \_\_\_\_, *Sir* . Neither the formal title + family name nor the deferential *Sir* are sufficient by themselves, it would seem: only the use of both by the child constitutes an adequate acknowledgement of his/her subordinate status.

Even in situations less explicitly marked by power than this, however, a child may still be required to use a vocative or reprimanded for failing to use one, even when the required vocative may be a personal name to a particular adult. And in schools, where the authority structure is highly visible, insistence on children using address terms to adults as a mark of 'respect' is probably widespread: e.g. only two out of nine practising primary teachers responded to the question 'Do you try to insist on

children addressing you by name or title?' with a straight-out 'No' in a small survey of address and naming practices in schools.

Since adults probably use vocatives to children with considerably greater frequency than they do to other adults, in part simply in order to get and hold the child's attention (a particular problem when children are young and easily distracted - though see note on interaction between mothers and their four-year-old children referred to in Chapter 4), it is a little hard to decide what proportion of such increased frequency is related to a degree of reciprocal obligation to use address terms operating where power relations are concerned and what proportion is due to purely practical considerations. These are of course difficult to separate in practice, since getting/holding attention are exercises of authority, though by no means necessarily involving unpleasant consequences for the child. Attention-getting by means of a vocative is found in adult address to other adults, of course, but there is some indication that the exercise of authority can be perceived as implicated in such usage, insofar as Calls are not infrequently prefaced by some softening element such as *Excuse me* or even just *Hey*, or they are uttered with the rising intonation which, according to Halliday, basically indicates that the Polarity is in doubt - in this case, presumably, that the addressee's response to the Call is not a foregone conclusion. (Halliday, 1970, 1985).

The third relevant observation on the optionality of vocation involves considerations of code, in the sense in which this term is used by Bernstein and by others following him to mean 'the principle of semiotic organization governing the choice of meanings by a speaker and their interpretation by a hearer. The code controls the semantic styles of the culture.' (Halliday 1978:111). There do seem to be differences in the use of vocatives by different social groups which are not to be explained purely in terms of tenor, and such differences encompass not only choice of vocatives but also frequency of use. Females (and theatre people, especially if gay) have the reputation of making frequent use of endearments, especially *darling*; males are supposed to steer clear of endearments to other males but make frequent use of nicknames and 'inverted' address (i.e. otherwise pejorative lexis such as *bastard*, *bugger* and even *cunt* used among friends to indicate friendship/solidarity); children seem to be frequent users of vocatives, especially to other children, and will improvise nicknames or use generic names such as *Joe* or *Fred* in order to avoid the absence of a vocative; there is evidence that people occupying lower positions on the socio-economic scale make more frequent use of items such as *love*, *dear* and *mate* especially in service encounters. Because some addressees in service encounters find such usage offensive (middle-aged middle-

class women, for example, not infrequently regard being called *love* and *sweetheart* by tradesmen and shopkeepers as uncalled-for familiarity), it seems likely that what is involved here is a coding difference with respect to the use of certain vocatives. The following letter to the Editor of a Sydney suburban newspaper illustrates one attitude to frequent use of such items:

Sir - Recently I picked up a shoe from a bargain table and seeing it fitted asked the saleswoman for the other shoe. 'Of course, darling,' she chirped. A few seconds later she was back and handed it to me with the words: 'Here you are, sweetheart.'

As she brought the parcel and the change she threw in the third endearment: 'Thank you, my love.'

The whole transaction lasted about three minutes.

I doubt her husband gets more gushing when he brings home the paypacket.

Maybe just as well as such excessive use of endearments can never be sincere.

(*The Glebe and Western Weekly*, August, 1982)

The writer would seem to have two rules about the use of endearments, both of which were contravened by the speaker in the situation reported. The first rule would appear to be that endearments should be restricted to situations where there is an intimate relationship between speaker and addressee, and the second rule that the use of endearments should be sparing and a reflection of genuine attachment to the addressee. A far more interesting interpretation of the saleswoman's behaviour than the 'gushing' attributed to her (which, given the regularity with which 'endearments' are used in service encounters, must surely be a rather determinedly perverse response on the part of the writer), is to see the speaker as simply operating with a different set of rules from the writer, a set of rules which presumably specifies not only that address terms generally classified as 'endearments' are appropriate in service encounters but also that all stages in the encounter should be marked by the use of such term. (See Ventola 1987 on the structure of service encounters).

The really difficult question is to decide whether a different perception of the nature of the relationship between interlocutors in service encounters underlies the different rules, as well as a different value given to the address terms used. The person who expects to be addressed as *Madam* or *Sir* in a service encounter clearly sees such an encounter as one between unequals, i.e. sees the situation as one involving power; whereas the person who prefers no address term to be used might perceive service encounters more as interactions between equals (or simply be more middle class, and prefer not to use terms of address to people not known

personally). Might the use then of 'endearments' by the provider of goods and services in such contexts to be explained in terms of an assumption of some kind of solidarity or mutuality between participants (meaning something like 'We're doing each other a favour, me by providing you with something you want and you by enabling me to earn a living') or is it that service encounters are seen as calling for overt phatic markers, indications of benevolent attitude, in a context which can otherwise be quite impersonal?

Or is it that it is not so much the perception of the nature of service encounters which is at issue but some factor, such as social class, which is largely shared by those providing certain kinds of goods and services and which by its fostering of a certain kind of coding orientation predisposes to the use of certain address terms in ways that are rather different from the ways these terms are used by social groups with a different coding orientation? If Bernstein is right in maintaining that the language that will be used by any group which "raises the 'we' above 'I' " will be different from the language of the social group which "emphasizes the 'I' over the 'we' ", insofar as it stresses the creation of social solidarity at the expense of 'the verbal elaboration of individual experience' (Bernstein 1971: 146-7), then regular use by members of such a group of terms of address which neither individualise nor acknowledge status differences but rather assume the affective unanimity of both parties in a transaction makes perfect sense, even when such terms of address are used to people who are not in fact members of the solidary group. There seems good evidence that some such factor is operating, not only with respect to the address practices of such minority groups as women, theatre people and gay males ('minority' being defined in terms of either literal numbers or of perceived social marginality), but also in such everyday service transactions as arise in the course of shopping for food, going to the post-office or service station, and using public transport.

The nationalist rhetoric of egalitarianism to the contrary, Australia is not the model of the classless society (though a society where everyone seems to be on first name terms with everyone else fosters the illusion). Socioeconomic status is perhaps more relevant, though if one is noting differences in the utilisation of a part of the linguistic system relevant to employment, something more like the classic Marxist definition of class in terms of relation to the ownership of production does seem appropriate.

In the case of personnel providing goods and services in everyday service encounters, there is a clear range of socio-economic status involved, ranging from

skilled tradespeople (eg. motor mechanics, butchers, plumbers) to totally unskilled and largely inexperienced school-leavers working as juniors in supermarkets, and yet there is a great deal in common in the address patterns used by such personnel.

Some observations. A male bus driver addresses an elderly male passenger with a walking stick and is responded to as follows:

Driver: *You wanna get off now, mate?*

Passenger: *Yes, mate.*

A male bus passenger calls the male driver's attention to the fact that the back door of the bus has not been opened for passengers to get out at a particular stop by calling: *Back door, mate.* (A woman under similar circumstances might use *driver* as the appropriate term of address and expect to get back *love* or *dear*, or nothing, rather than the symmetrical *mate* that would be used to a male). A female hairdresser greets a female client in her Italian-accented English with:

*'Hello darling. What can we do for you today?'*

Her tertiary-educated client does not reciprocate with *darling* or *dear* but does use the woman's first name. A male delivery-van driver for a large department store greets a female customer expecting delivery of a piece of furniture with:

*'Myer here, love. Got your furniture on board'*

and punctuates further exchanges with frequent use of *love*. The system of address options in Australian English provides no appropriate reciprocal term to be used by females to males in such circumstances, at least in the system as used by this particular speaker, so the woman uses no terms of address but does make a range of adjustments to her speech (including shifting to a slightly broader version of Australian English vowels and adopting a tone indicating some degree of camaraderie) indicative of a register shift appropriate for this sort of interaction.

Perhaps the most interesting of these exchanges are those where *mate* is used by both provider and receiver of service (nearly always between males). Since many instances of this symmetrical usage occur in exchanges between individuals who have never met before and who certainly do not know each other as individuals, there is no basis for solidarity other than their common maleness - and while Australian male solidarity is an extremely pervasive phenomenon, it seems a little excessive to invoke it for this kind of transient encounter. An alternative explanation is that vocatives, including *mate*, are used in service encounters as



deliberate ploys to minimise the effect of the status differences that are inherent in the situation. If this interpretation is correct, the phenomenon presumably has its roots in the historical commitment of Australians to egalitarian principles - and the system fails in symmetry, or at least reciprocity, precisely when individuals refuse to pay this tribute to egalitarian ideology.

While there seem to be grounds for treating address practices in service encounters as part of a special register with particular ideological overtones, the question of differences in coding orientation between people with different social characteristics remains. Data from encounters other than service encounters would seem to indicate that there are wide differences among speakers of Australian English in the extent of usage of vocatives. Such data ranges from mother-child interactions which involved rates of vocative usage ranging from less than 3% of clauses containing a vocative to nearly 15%, to overheard interactions such as the one quoted below where every turn by both participants contained a vocative. In the mother-child interactions, on the whole, it was those between mothers and their children classed as working class by the investigators in this study which had the higher incidence of vocatives - but the highest incidence of all was in a middle-class interaction, where the rate was so much higher than that in any other interaction that it is hard to know how to account for it other than in terms of personal style. (Some individuals certainly do use many more vocatives than is regarded as usual in their social group and this can become a commented-upon feature of their idiolect, possibly causing some degree of discomfort to addressees who may feel that they are being condescended to or in some way treated as children).

The overheard interaction referred to above took place between two 60ish males in a suburban supermarket in an inner suburb of Sydney, while they were waiting in line at the cash register:

Speaker 1: *Hello George.*

Speaker 2: *Hello Bill.*

(Pause, while Speaker 2 gets to the head of the queue and puts his purchases on the counter. The conversation resumes, around an intervening person in the queue, while Bill's purchases are being dealt with).

Speaker 1: *Don't think we'll get a game today, George.*

Speaker 2: *Doesn't look like it, Bill.*

Several more largely phatic exchanges follow, all concluding with a vocative, the interaction concluding with:

Speaker 1. *Bye, George.*

Speaker 2. *See you, Billy.*

It is tempting, though tricky, to assign some rough indication of socio-economic status to these speakers. Both were clearly locals and their age alone suggested that were not part of the gentrification process of the inner urban areas of the major Australian cities. Both men were fluent speakers of Australian English, using the General to Broad pronunciation (Mitchell & Delbridge 1965) that is most difficult to associate firmly with any particular class or socio-economic group, but which suggests the non-professional rather than the professional in men of this age group. Their mode of interaction was in no way atypical of observed interaction in a range of settings between people one would class as of lower rather than higher socio-economic status.

I believe that there are grounds for suggesting a real difference in the optionality of vocation as a feature of a coding orientation related to social groups using different modes of social organization, neither 'class' nor 'socio-economic status' accurately characterizing the nature of such groups. Much detailed interactional data would have to be available, however, before the validity of such a hypothesis could be convincingly demonstrated.

## **Coda**

The story does not end here, of course, but goes on. Students continue to find the exploration of address practice an accessible and illuminating way in to understanding something of the ways in which social relations are negotiated by means of the most apparently trivial linguistic items.

In the end, the kind of ethnography that will illuminate the construction of persons in Australia in terms of gender, race, class, nationality etc. needs to go a long way further than address practice. But address remains one of the most sensitive realisations of tenor, relevant to all three dimensions.

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