"What's in a Name?": Vocatives in Casual Conversations and Radio Phone-in Calls

Michael J. McCarthy and *Anne O'Keeffe*

University of Nottingham, UK and University of Limerick, Ireland

Abstract

This paper looks at the use of vocatives across two corpora: the 5-million word Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE) and a 55,000-word corpus of radio phone-in calls. 100 vocatives are sampled from the CANCODE corpus, using only informal, casual conversations among intimates, friends and close associates. All vocatives (n=232) were extracted from the radio data. The vocatives in both datasets were classified according to the contexts in which they occurred. The contexts were categorised under headings connected with topic and turn management, face concerns, general relational concerns, humour/badinage and summons. The distribution over the two datasets was compared, as well as the position of the vocative in the speaker turn. Overall, the CANCODE data revealed a preference for vocatives in relational, topic management, badinage and face-concerns, while the radio data revealed a tendency for vocatives to be used more in the management of phone calls, turn-taking, topic management and face concerns. The radio data showed a greater frequency for initial position, then final, while the casual conversation data was the reverse. Medial position was seen to be problematic in both datasets and an alternative analysis is proposed. In neither dataset did vocatives seem to be necessary except in a small number of cases. Overwhelmingly, the vocative serves pragmatic functions. Comparing linguistic features such as the vocative across datasets enhances the descriptive framework for spoken genres.

1.   Introduction

This paper is concerned with the use of vocatives between family, friends and close associates in naturally occurring casual conversation compared with their use in radio phone-in programmes, where strangers (presenters and callers) talk as if they know each other. Since radio phone-in talk seeks to simulate the intimacy of casual conversation, it is revealing to focus on pervasive linguistic features that occur in both genres. By using casual conversation as a baseline, we may compare and contrast the degree to which the pseudo-intimate conversations on the radio resemble or differ from real conversation between friends. The use of prototypical features of casual conversation as a benchmark for the description of more specialised genres has an established history in conversation analysis, for example the analysis of political interviews, where turn-taking has been compared with turn-taking in everyday talk (Greatbatch 1988), and it is this position that we shall adopt here.

A striking feature of the conversations between the radio presenter and the callers in our live radio corpus is that presenter and caller(s) are instantly on first name terms, though they normally have never met before, and intimate topics can

be discussed before a nationwide (or even wider with web access) audience. The use of first-name vocatives in the pseudo-conversational context, which the radio discourse creates, not only projects an intimate level of relationship, but appears to play a role in creating and sustaining such relations in the interaction. Vocatives are of course not the only linguistic feature to create and sustain such relationships among participants, but their presence, often apparently superfluous, may be shown to make an important contribution to the interpersonal stratum of the unfolding discourse. This paper therefore seeks to audit the range of functions of vocatives in a sample of casual conversation and compare this with vocative use in a corpus of radio phone-in calls so as to gain insights into the nature of this recently established broadcast genre, and, in tandem, to find out more about vocative use in general in English casual conversation.

Vocatives are closely related to 'address terms' (Jefferson 1973) or 'forms of address' (Brown and Gilman 1960, Brown and Ford 1961, Wood and Kroger 1991), but as Leech (1999) points out, a term of address is any device used to refer to the addressee of an utterance, while a vocative is just one particular type of address term. Biber et al. (1999)[1] show that vocatives can take many forms: endearments *(honey),* kinship terms *(Daddy),* familiarisers *(dude),* first name familiarised *(Johnny),* first name full form *(John),* title and surname *(Mr. Smith),* honorific *(Sir),* nickname *(Speedy),* and even elaborated nominal structures such as: *those of you who want to bring your pets along.* Additionally, impersonal vocatives may occur in utterances such as *Someone get that phone, will you!*. An addressee can potentially be referred to using any of these forms (gender and age being the only restriction in the case of titles). Choice of vocative form therefore provides an index of (projected or assumed) relationship between speaker and addressee.

2.   Previous Research

Though Leech (1999) notes that vocatives are a 'surprisingly neglected' aspect of English grammar (p.107), the broader research into terms of address spans a number of sub-disciplines and includes numerous studies. Apart from a long and robust tradition of studying the vocative *qua* grammatical case in inflecting languages such as Latin and other Indo-European languages (e.g., Winter 1969, Haverkate 1978, Schooneveld 1986), lexico-grammatical features such as pronominal reference, proper nouns, forms of address and person-referring expressions are just some of the concerns which have led to examination of the vocative, while the actual forms of names themselves have long been studied within the general sub-discipline of onomastics. Terms of address and the vocative in particular have found a home in fields ranging from language disorder (see Conti-Ramsden 1989) and first language acquisition, to Indo-European morphology (Winter 1969), conversation analysis, sociolinguistics, and pragmatics. General grammars also treat the vocative within their purview, even though it is typically

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[1] The chapter on vocatives in Biber et al. (1999) is written by Geoffrey Leech, and Leech (1999) is based substantially on earlier drafts of that chapter.

seen as outside of the clause or sentence structure and recognised as having a social function of expressing participant relationships along with that of summoning or attention-getting (e.g., Quirk et al. 1985: 773-775*).*

In the study of child language acquisition, Durkin et al. (1982) undertook a longitudinal study of proper name usage in maternal speech and noted that the most common contexts of vocatives from caregiver to child were instructions to act and attention-getting. Emihovich (1981), studying four-year-olds role-playing in games, noted how the children's real names and fictitious names within the game alternated: real names as vocatives reappeared at discourse boundaries where activity gave way to discussion, and were most common in the preparatory phase, during interruptions and during closure of the game. Relative to our conclusions in this paper, it is clear that children learn the discoursal functions of vocatives at an early age (for further studies within child language acquisition, see Chiat 1981, Oshima-Takane and Darat 1996; see also Wootton 1981).

One early study of great significance and influence, Brown and Gilman (1960), looked at forms of address and included seminal work on pronouns (particularly the T/V opposition exemplified in languages such as French, where *tu* and *vous* mark social intimacy and distance, respectively). Their study was framed in terms of power semantics, and the power semantic framework has informed a great deal of subsequent work on terms of address in general and the vocative in particular. Zwicky (1974) looked at the range of nouns and noun phrases that can be used vocatively in English. She distinguishes between *calls* (e.g., summoning someone such as *X, come here!*) and *addresses* (e.g., use of a title or name during the interaction); addresses serve to maintain or highlight the continuing interaction between speakers. Zwicky suggests that vocative forms are both idiomatic and sociolinguistically marked and that as a result, English is enormously rich in vocative noun phrases. She asserts that 'there is virtually no affectively neutral vocative' (p.796). Hook (1984) goes over the same territory and refers to the 'solidarity semantic of first-name calling' (p.186); he observes a move in American society towards first name (FN) use. Hook provides a scale of solidarity and power in which various alternative formulations of vocatives, ranging from title alone, through variations of the title plus last name, last name alone, first name alone, to terms of endearment, represent greater solidarity going from title alone to term of endearment, and, vice-versa, greater power going from term of endearment to title alone. Oyetade (1995) observes vocative use in Yoruba, and also refers to the power semantic, whereby a powerful status may enable a speaker to use a name to a less powerful interlocutor, but not vice-versa. Although in Yoruba, a wife does not normally call her husband by name, she may do so when expressing a range of emotions such as disgust, surprise, admiration, etc. Holmes (1994) uses the Wellington New Zealand Corpus (WNZC) to examine changes in sexist language over a twenty-five year period, including the use and relative frequency of *Miss., Mrs.* and *Ms.* in written data. Her research illustrates some of the ambiguities and methodological difficulties involved in searching and comparing such items using a corpus. She finds, for example, that *Ms.* is used more than three times as often as *Miss.* in newspapers, while *Mrs.* remains the most frequently used form overall in the press section of the WNZC, but that such

a result would not have emerged 'without a consideration of the forms in context in order to identify genuine alternatives within the relevant universe of discourse' (p.34).

In the field of pragmatics, Wood and Kroger (1991) argue that though previous research looked at forms of address in terms of status and solidarity, power, and distance, it was not integrated with a more general theory of language use, such as Brown and Levinson's politeness theory (1987). In an attempt to redress this, Wood and Kroger (1991) put Brown and Levinson's theory to the test, particularly to consider some forms of address and their relationship to politeness. They conclude that negative politeness in Brown and Levinson's terms (i.e., the need to protect the recipient from coercive threats to face) outweighs positive politeness (the need to avoid threats to face that suggest lack of esteem), and that status commonly takes precedence over solidarity, all of which is reflected in choice of address terms. Positive politeness, on the other hand, which requires the achievement of closeness and common identity, can be attended to by 'personalisation' and by the use of so-called identity markers. The mutual use of first name (FN), signals that the speaker and hearer 'belong' (p.147). In addition, Wood and Kroger note that forms of address have specific pragmatic functions: they open communicative acts and set the tone of the interchanges that follow and they establish the relative power and distance of speaker and hearer. They use raters to judge status and solidarity in the use of first name (FN), kinship terms (KT), last name (LN) and title-plus-last name (TLN) between sender and recipient, and how they are reciprocated. While they argue that forms of address need to be looked at in real situations in quantifying politeness strategies, it is noteworthy that they offer no examples of actual use.

Jaworski (1992) starts from a syntactic preoccupation in his study of Polish vocatives. He considers the problem of the vocative-case address-form versus the equally well-formed nominative-case address-form, and brings to bear features of register and participant relationship, which reflect 'degree of respect and social distance' (p.97). For example, the Polish address form *title+FN(voc)*, Jaworski argues, may project solidarity without intimacy. This form may be used by a superior to an inferior in the workplace, and the superior may also use straight first name to the inferior. The inferior, on the other hand, may use the *title+FN(voc)* to the superior, but not straight FN. Jaworski concludes with a cross-cultural look at vocative use, and notes that FN in English carries less risk of being heard as disrespectful than in Polish, underlining the view that societies and cultures may have differing senses of hierarchy and respect, and different conventions relating to the projection of intimacy and distance, reflected in their preferred terms of address in various contexts.

Jaworski and Galasiński (2000) examine TV political debate and make some interesting broad observations on how socio-political changes in societies can alter the range of acceptable forms of address (they quote research showing how the address-forms *brother* and *comrade* emerged after the Iranian and Chi-

nese revolutions, respectively).[2] The data in Jaworski and Galasi★ski's study involved Poland's internationally famous, former trade union leader Lech Wałęsa, and they show how marked choice of working-class-style vocatives by one of his debating opponents is used to claim political membership and intimacy with the recipient, Wałęsa. On the other hand, the use of a distancing form of the vocative in return by Wałęsa 'contributes to positive self-image building' (p.80), projecting himself as a strong national leader. Jaworski and Galasiński conclude, with regard to the use of vocatives, that 'the speaker does not use the vocative to attract the attention of his addressee, but to define the interpersonal space between them' (p.79). This observation will be seen as central in the present study with regard to both everyday conversation and to the creation of pseudo-intimacy in the radio phone-in data.

Research within conversation analysis (CA) has also been directed towards terms of address. As in the general CA tradition, sequence and placement are the key issues. Jefferson (1973) notes that 'address terms (and overlapping address terms) massively occur in Closing Sequences' (p.48). Address terms are 'loci for formulating, maintaining and reformulating the status of a relationship' (p.48). They can be 'designedly placed' (p.71) in that they may occur in a variety of positions in the turn. These positions include 'preface position' (turn-initial) and 'tag-position' (turn final); tag-positioned terms of address are prone to overlap and reciprocation in the listener's next turn. Jefferson includes in her data titles such as *Ma'am*, endearments such as *dear*, and first names. Based within the child language acquisition context, but very much partaking of CA methodology in its focus on sequence and placement, Wootton (1981) criticises over-emphasis on the attention-getting function of vocatives and sees position as indicative of function. Three main vocative types are identified: stand-alone vocatives (occupying the whole turn), utterance initial, and utterance final. The stand-alone vocatives are a distinct class, functioning to open the interaction between child and care giver, exemplified in such sequences as *Mummy – Yes darling – I want a drink*. Utterance initial vocatives often occur when the child gets no answer to an utterance directed at the carer, and final ones frequently function as soliciting mechanisms rather in the way grammatical tags do, inviting agreement and convergence.

Within corpus linguistics, only two notable studies have come to our attention. Wilson and Zeitlyn (1995) investigate a wide range of person-referring expressions, including vocatives. Their analysis is based on a broadly conversation-analytical approach and includes a concern with politeness. They draw their data from a family dinner table, small-scale corpus of conversations (consisting of 1,242 utterances which yielded 1,100 person-referring expressions). The vocatives in their corpus are realised as just simple names (no titles) or kinship terms, while a range of complex person-referring expressions are used to refer to non-present referents. Relevant to the present study, they note that vocatives are common at topic boundaries, with some 27.5% of topic-changing utterances be-

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[2] See also Minaeva (1998) on how similar changes happened in the post-Soviet period in Russian.

ing accompanied by vocatives. Leech (1999) carried out a corpus-based study of vocative use as part of the research that led to the publication of the *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English* (Biber et al. 1999). He used a combined British and American spoken English corpus totalling 100,000 words, with 50,000 words from each variety. Leech's study considers vocatives formally, functionally and semantically/pragmatically. He identifies semantic categories based on degree of familiarity (e.g., Familiarised FN -- *Jackie*; Honorifics; Others, such as *silly, lazy*, and so on). Notably, he identifies three discrete functions of the vocative: 1. Summoning Attention, 2. Addressee Identification, 3. Establishing and Maintaining Social Relationships.

Position of the vocative, whether initial, medial, final, or stand-alone, cuts across these functions: initial vocative is more likely to serve the summoning function and/or addressee identification, while final vocatives may function to identify the addressee and/or be concerned with the social relationship. Leech also notes that in mutually assured relationships (e.g., a mother and daughter), vocatives may not occur at all for long stretches of conversation; thus, the absence of vocatives is viewed as potentially as significant as their presence in indicating participant relationships. Leech's three broad categories, it will be seen, serve to underscore the categories used in the present study, and form a helpful basis from which to arrive at a more delicate framework, which the present study attempts to elaborate. However, we shall argue that assigning categories of placement (e.g., initial, medial, final) is far from being a straightforward matter.

In general, the previous research may be seen to point consistently in the direction of contextual function of the vocative, both in terms of immediate context (its discoursal functions vis-à-vis its placement in sequence) and the broader social and cultural context. Even within traditional grammatical approaches to the vocative, it is recognized that the vocative is not a 'case' in the conventional sense of the relationship between a verb and its arguments (such as *nominative* or *dative*). The vocative uniquely refers only to the speech situation and is syntactically outside of the sentence (see Haverkate 1978, Panhuis 1986, and Schooneveld 1986). The present paper takes this line and is concerned with establishing the functional range in the two corpora under investigation.

3.   Data

The casual conversation data for the present paper comes from the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE), which comprises five million words of informal English conversation. The corpus was developed at the University of Nottingham, UK, and funded by Cambridge University Press, with whom sole copyright resides. Ronald Carter and Michael McCarthy jointly direct the corpus project. The corpus conversations were recorded in a wide variety of mostly informal settings across the islands of Britain and Ireland, then transcribed and stored in computer-readable form. Details of the corpus and its design may be found in McCarthy (1998). The radio phone-in data comes from a corpus of 55,000 words of the Irish radio programme *Liveline,* broadcast live on the Radio Telefís Éireann (RTE) network every weekday with an audience of almost

10% of the Irish population. The corpus contains forty-two[3] phone calls taken randomly from programmes broadcast in 1998.

4.   Method

In the case of the CANCODE corpus, a word frequency list was generated to find the most commonly used vocatives in the corpus, and the kinship terms *Mum(my)* and *Dad(dy)* were also included since a good deal of our casual data was family-based.[4] Concordances were then generated for those high frequency names/address forms. A maximum of five uses of any one name/address form as vocative was set as a restriction on the corpus search. Only casual conversations among family and friends and acquaintances, or between close associates talking very informally, were used; service encounters, business meetings and other such institutionalised genres were excluded. A total of 100 extracts involving vocatives were then examined in expanded contexts and categorised according to contextual function. That is to say, if a vocative occurs in the environment of, for example, a topic change, it is not claimed that the vocative itself functions to change the topic, simply that it occurs in that context and may be seen to be fulfilling some sort of signalling or supportive function in relation to the perceived discoursal event.[5] We also noted whether the vocative was critical (e.g., to identify the addressee in multi-party talk) or whether it could have been, on the face of things, dispensed with. Additionally, where the vocative was placed in the turn was noted; however, the notion of turn is often complicated by significant events such as mid-turn shifts in footing and the prefacing of the main body of utterances by means of discourse markers (see section 5.9 below).

In the case of the *Liveline* radio data, the data was read manually and every vocative in the whole corpus was classified. There were 232 vocatives used in approximately 55,000 words. These were also categorised according to function. Once again we noted the context of use and whether the vocative was critical to understanding in the context, as well as its position in the turn. Results were normalised to occurrences per 100 for the purposes of comparison with the CANCODE data.

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[3] There are forty-two main calls; however, in some cases, new callers come on line during a call.

[4] Note that all CANCODE names presented in this paper have been anonymised.

[5] Wilson and Zeitlyn (1995) also draw attention to the point that vocative in itself may not perform the speech act in question but may 'serve as a signal of that utterance's intent' (p.85).

5.   Analysis 1 -- The CANCODE data

5.1   Overall distribution of types

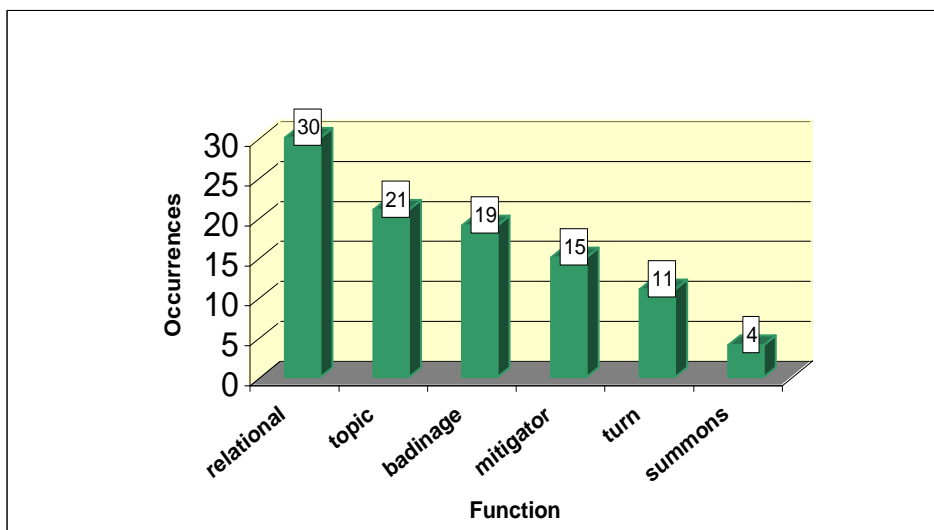The 100 samples of vocatives from the CANCODE casual conversational corpus were classified as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: CANCODE vocatives and their functions (n = 100)

5.2   Relational

A number of general, non-transactional contexts are included in this, the largest category. Relational talk refers to talk whose primary function is the establishment and/or maintenance of social relations, rather than the transmission of goods, information or services. In the present categorisation, it includes compliments and other positive face boosters (utterances that enhance the feeling of personal esteem for the recipient); general evaluations (personal comments on people, things, ideas and situations, as well as evaluative marking of 'newsworthiness' in narratives; see Labov 1972); phatic exchanges (e.g., greetings, small talk) and ritual offers and thanks (e.g., offering food at the table). Because it includes so many sub-types it is not surprising that the category is big, with relational contexts accounting for 30% of all vocative occurrences. In extract 1, the recipient's positive face is boosted by being told she is not overweight, and the vocative occurs turn-finally (<$#> indicates individual speakers as coded in each conversational file):

1) [Group of female young friends discussing eating and weight problems]
   <$3> You're not fat **Jane.**
   <$1> I will be if I'm not careful.

Extract 2 is a typical ritual offer of food by a hostess at the dinner table, which is often realised by stand-alone vocatives, as here:

2) <$1> Bits of everything here. **Richard**?
   <$4> No thank you.
   <$1> No? **Pauline?**
   <$2> Fine thank you.
   <$1> **Kevin**.
   <$5> No. I'm full.
   <$6> No. That's wonderful mate. That's lovely.
   <$1> I'll have the last spud then.
   <$3> The last potato.
   <$1> Right. The last potato.

Ritual offers may overlap with the notion of conversational asides, since, conventionally, an offer at table may occur as an aside to the current conversational flow, as in extract 3, where <$2> self-interrupts to make an offer then continues the conversational topic:

3) <$2> It's just we've been through all that you see.
   <$3> Yeah.
   <$2> And we decided the o= the only way+
   <$1> Told me.
   <$2> +the only way to survive= **Mary** what would you like? Orange juice and water? Or?
   <$1> Mm.
   <$2> Yeah.
   <$1> Yes.
   <$2> +the only way to survive is for you to have your own personal space in which you can escape and do what you want.

Here we have classified such vocatives according to the primary conversational function in which they occur, which in this case we deem to be the social imperative of offering a guest food or drink. A phatic exchange is illustrated in extract 4 where the vocative typically occurs after a greeting or leave-taking:

4) [Two colleagues talking informally about vocational courses they may be allowed to go on; <$3> enters in the middle of the conversation]
   <$1> I mean it's obviously been passed okay by Pat Cromwell and ultimately that's the person who's making the decisions+
   <$2> Mm.
   <$1> +as to who goes on it as far as I'm concerned. And=

<$3> Hiya **Val**.
<$2> Hey up **Kate**.
<$1> Hiya **Kate**. Erm+
<$2> So that's=
<$1> +that's the+
<$2> Yeah.
<$1> +decision out of my hands.

5.3   Topic management

Another frequent function of the vocative is connected with topic management (cf. Wilson and Zeitlyn's 1995 results), which accounts for 21% of occurrences. Topic management here refers to any utterance or set of utterances that launch, expand, shift, change or close the topic (see Gardner 1987). We also include side sequences (utterances spoken as asides or in parenthesis; see Jefferson 1972) and formulations. Formulations are paraphrases of previous talk or summaries of positions reached in the ongoing talk, by which speakers indicate their assessment of the directions and goals of the discourse in progress (Heritage and Watson 1979). Finally we include a category we have termed *topic validation*, whereby the speaker calls on another conversational participant by name to validate or confirm an assertion. Some examples follow:

5)   [The speakers are discussing <$1>'s deceased mother]
        <$2> And she said when she came down here to Bristol she er she had a
        Geordie accent and all the kids used to+
        <$1> Well she would have.
        <$2> +make fun of her.
        <$1> She would have.
        <$2> Yeah.
        <$1> Of course.
        <$2> Where were you born then **Mary**?
        <$1> In Bristol.
        <$2> You're a Bristol girl.
        <$1> Yes.

Here the vocative does more than identify Mary as addressee; eye contact would have been sufficient in this round-the table group of three speakers, and Mary is in fact immediate previous speaker. The vocative coincides with a shift of conversational topic from the biography of <$2>'s mother to that of Mary herself.

6)   <$1> It was the right place was it?
        <$5> Yes. The right place. Yeah. Yeah.
        <$2> They were horrible.
        <$4> Do you know the people **Dad**?
        <$2> Yeah.

Although a larger group of speakers here might encourage the use of the vocative for addressee identification, *Dad* is again immediate previous speaker, which would suggest that <$4> need not have used the vocative for identification. In this case, there is an expansion of the topic to focus on the people who have just been referred to, as opposed to the place referred to, and an acknowledgement of the kinship relation. Extract 7 exemplifies topic validation, where <$1> calls on his wife, <$5>, to confirm certain topical information:

7)   [Speakers are discussing a well-known family of traditional Irish musicians]
      <$1> Er we we were in er Cork weren't we **Clare** and we heard his brother. Which brother was it we heard?
      <$5> Sean I think.
      <$1> Was it?
      <$2> Erm.
      <$1> In the pub near the Cathedral.

In extracts 5 and 6, the vocative occupies utterance final position, and in extract 7 it occurs close to the topical information that needs ratification.

5.4   Badinage

Badinage refers to instances of humour, irony and general banter among participants. The vocative frequently co-occurs with light-hearted joking talk and seems to act in a supportive role for the camaraderie and intimacy desired of such occasions. 19% of occurrences are in humorous and/or ironic contexts. Extracts 8, 9, and 10 illustrate these contexts:

8)   [Context: group of female students who share a house. One of them has just acquired a whisk for the kitchen]
      <$1> Seen my new whisk?
      <$2> Oo.
      <$3> Oo.
      <$1> Nice isn't it?
      <$2> Is that to make your omelettes with?
      <$3> Very domesticated **Tracy.**

9)   <$4> Got a light anyone?
      <$6> Only my eyes, **Gillian**.
      <$4> You always say that [laughs].

10)   <$3> Are you not studying today or whatever?
      <$2> I don't know.
      <$1> No. I mean we study Yeah. We study ghost stories.
      <$4> Yeah [laughs] We study how to frighten ourselves.
      <$3> Social hi= Social history is it?

<$4> I'll tell you something **Mum**. Social scary. Social scary.
<$2> Social mystery. Not social history. Social mystery.

Extracts 8 and 9 have utterance-final vocatives, while extract 10 has the vocative in apparent medial position (prefacing the word-play), but, as we shall see below, 'medial' as a label is problematic here since what precedes it is a discourse-marking 'preface' *(I'll tell you something).*

5.5   Mitigators

The class of mitigators includes vocatives occurring in any context where there is a potential threat to positive or negative face (Brown and Levinson 1987); i.e., any challenge or adversative utterance, or any potentially sensitive or offending context, or any attempt to direct or coerce the recipient via imperatives or requests that might restrict the recipient in terms of action or behaviour. 15% of vocatives occur in these types of contexts. Extract 11 is a typical adversative context:

11)   <$2> So she's gonna try and going into school. But she's got an arrangement that she'll come for er er if she can't manage next week.
       <$1> But **Sally** she's old to be teaching.

Extract 11 once again raises the question of labelling placement in any meaningful sense: although not 'first item', the vocative is only preceded by the adversative marker *but*. As with other discourse-marking prefaces, this leads us to propose a separate sub-category of initial vocatives (the 'prefaced' category; see below) to distinguish from the more properly 'medial' vocatives which occur within the main content of the turn. In extract 12, <$1> challenges <$2>'s use of a particular word:

12)   <$1> A mechanism. What do you mean mechanism?
        <$2> A way of surviving.
       <$1> No. Mechanism.
       <$2> Jim=
       <$1> I don't like mechanism **Sarah** that sounds like clockwork to me. That sounds like electric motors it sounds like sort of nasty things.

Extract 13 shows a request for action that could potentially be heard as an imposition:

13)   <$3> Will you put on the fish **Nancy** so that it'll heat, the fish now.
        <$2> Oh yeah.

5.6 Turn management

Turn management is notably a relatively infrequent category, accounting for only 11% of the CANCODE examples. Turn management includes addressee identification and vocatives occurring at interruptions. Addressee identification is labelled thus when the vocative seems to be mainly serving the purpose of selecting next speaker or disambiguating possible recipients in multi-party talk. Although the vocative in this case seems more utilitarian in its function, it still encodes a projected relationship with the recipient by its choice of form for the term of address used.

14)   <$1> I should have some change.
        <$2> I owe you too don't I, **Jodie**.
        <$3> Yes you do.

Here <$2>'s utterance is topically linked to <$1>'s (discussing money), but it is not a response to <$2>, and is directed at another participant, <$3>. The vocative, here in final position, signals the shift of turn alignment. In extract 15, <$2> is interrupted by <$3> and a vocative occurs:

15)   [Speakers are looking at a document about the rules of credit unions]
        <$2> Whereas the the bank= Er the credit union made provision with disclosure may be able to enter into contracts with= In other words if the bank want to see the= to find out where money+
        <$3> Hang on **Geoff**. I've not got a seventy six two now.
        <$1> Yeah.
        <$3> Is that what you're up against?
        <$2> Yeah. It says that any member= any person can any erm any er er member+
        <$3> Any member or any persons having an interest in the funds.

In a sense, the use of vocative at points of interruption is understandable since an interruption is a potential threat to face, and, as we saw in section 5.5, mitigation of face-threats is an occasion for vocative use in a range of contexts. However, since interruptions are normally dealt with as features of turn organisation, we classify them here under the category of turn management.

5.7 Summons

Direct summonses to the recipient; i.e., calling him/her to come or give attention, only account for four occurrences of the vocative. Extract 16 is typical with the vocative placed initially in the utterance:

16)   <$1> **Sue**! Your cup of tea is poured.

5.8 Summary of CANCODE vocative functions

The distribution of vocatives used from the CANCODE sample shows the importance of relational contexts such as phatic exchanges, ritual offers, positive face-work, and evaluation. But topic management is also important, as are the interpersonal contexts relating to face-threats and affective elements such as humour, irony, etc. Vocatives primarily identifying the addressee in multi-party talk, account for only ten occasions, and direct summonses only four. In short, in the great majority of cases, the vocative is not necessary to identify the addressee.

5.9 Positions of the vocative in CANCODE

As outlined in section 2, several placement options are available for the vocative. It may occupy its own turn without any other matter, which we shall term 'stand-alone' vocative, it may occur turn-initially, or in the course of the turn (medial), or at its end (turn-finally). Final position (60%) is more than five times more frequent in our sample than initial position (12%), while vocatives which are not the first item in the turn (apparently medial) account for 22%. Stand-alone vocatives account for 6% (two being summonses and four being ritual offers of food). However, the picture concerning so-called 'medial' placement is far from simple. Nine of the twenty-two medial vocatives are preceded by some sort of discourse-marking item prefacing the main utterance, for example:

17)   <$1> **Tell me** Margaret. Er you more or less did= got where you are today more or less off your own bat.

18)   <$1> **Just, just on that** Lilian I don't= you= may have occurred to you already, but North West Tonight are doing some filming at Old Trafford.

If such markers are taken as turn-prefaces rather than part of the turn proper, then those nine turns could be seen to be more akin to initial vocatives, and this seems analytically more satisfying. This is particularly so for items such as turn-initial conjunctions which compulsorily occupy first position (e.g., *but)* where use following the vocative would sound odd. With the addition of 'prefaced' vocatives to the 'initial' category, and their removal from the 'medial' count, the overall distribution is as shown in Figure 2.
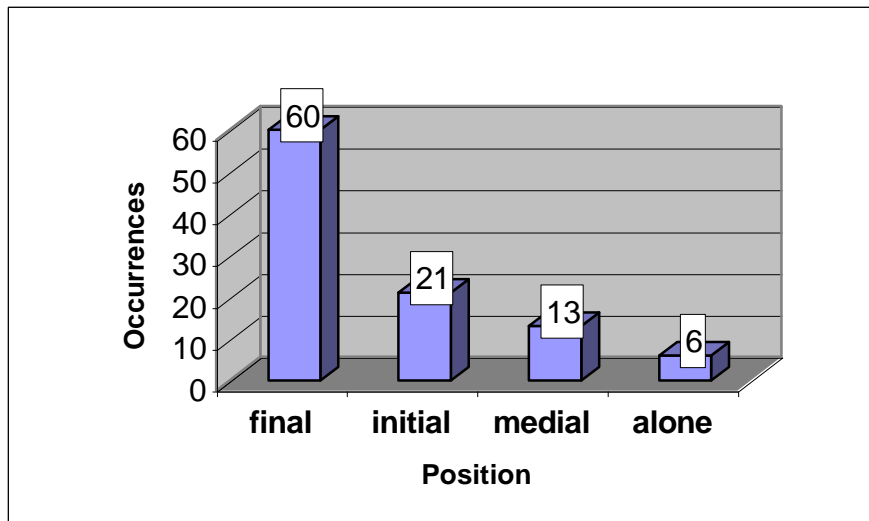
Figure 2: Distribution of positions of vocatives in CANCODE

The high total for final position would suggest a closer look at it in terms of the various contextual functions. Figure 3 shows the distribution of final-position vocatives relative to their contexts.
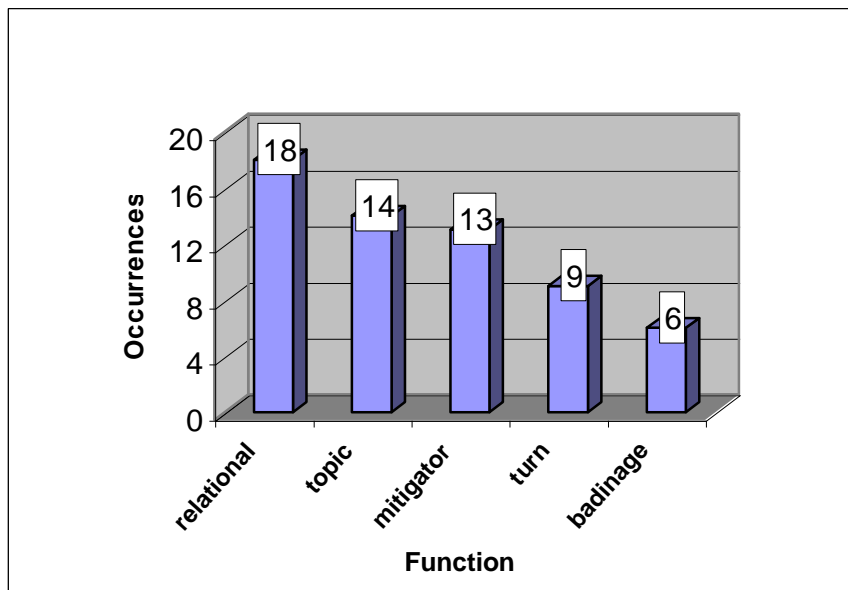
Figure 3: Distribution of final-position vocatives in CANCODE

The general relational category is the highest (eighteen occurrences), with topic management (14) and face mitigation (13) following. But badinage, itself the third largest category of vocatives overall, comes out relatively low with regard to final position (6). Badinage is, on the other hand, the largest category in both initial (7) and medial (6) positions, giving a total of thirteen non-final occurrences out of its overall total of nineteen. But taken over the three main positions, badinage seems to show no particular preference. It seems then, that final position for the vocative is the most common, in which position it has a tendency to be associated with relational, topical and face concerns. Initial, and prefaced-initial vocatives are the next most preferred category, with medial being the least preferred, and concerned mostly with relational contexts and badinage.

6.   Analysis 2: The *Liveline* Data

6.1   Overall distribution of types

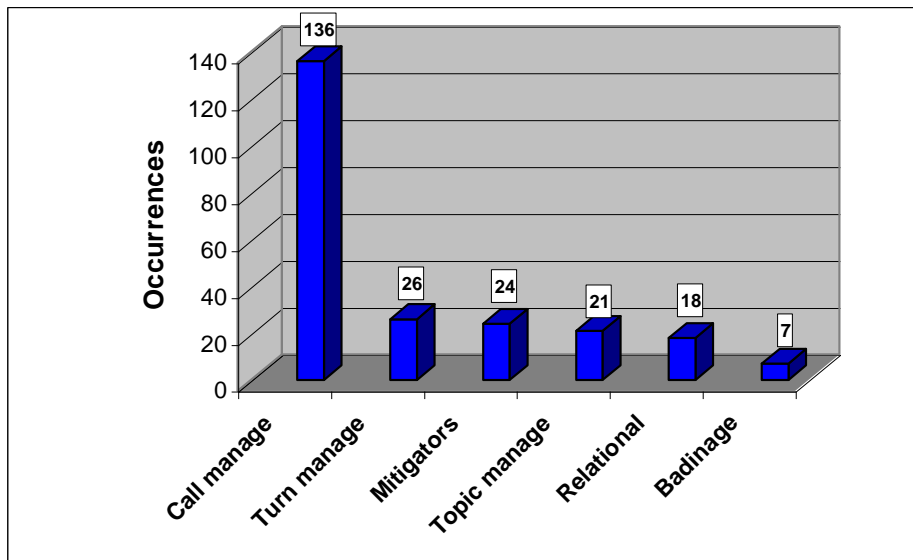The 232 vocatives in the radio phone-in corpus were categorised to yield the following results (see Figure 4):

Figure 4: *Liveline* vocatives and their functions (n = 232)

6.2   Call management

By far the most frequent contexts for vocatives in the *Liveline* data is call management; i.e., dealing with the exigencies of the channel, bringing callers in, controlling their talk, and dismissing them when their contribution is deemed to be

sufficient. This is clearly mainly related to channel, but it is also attributable to the role of vocatives in establishing the pseudo-relationship within the call. 33% of all vocatives used in the radio data are found in call openings, as seen in extract 19 (<\$1> throughout the *Liveline* extracts refers to Marian Finucane the presenter; all other speakers are callers):

19) [Introducing a caller whose son narrowly escaped death from meningitis]
     <\$1> Now to a couple that had very very difficult Christmas this year however all's well that ends well ah **Austin** good afternoon to you.
     <\$2> Good afternoon **Marian**.
     <\$1> Your little boy went back to playschool yesterday?
     <\$2> Yesterday that's right.

Here we notice that there is reciprocation in the use of FN vocatives between speakers who have never met before. From the very beginning of the call, pseudo-familiarity is simulated. Across the 42 calls in the corpus, 75% of vocatives were reciprocated in call openings in this way, and all but one call did not contain a vocative in the opening. It is also of note that all but five calls opened on first name terms and four of the five exceptions were the only solicited calls in the data. The four solicited callers were all public personae: a bishop, a politician, a reporter, and a nurse who is widely known in Ireland since a high-profile case where she was wrongly charged with the murder of a colleague in Saudi Arabia some years previously. In this group of calls, the presenter used the following address terms: TL+FN+SN for the bishop, and FN+SN for the politician, the reporter, and the nurse. In all four cases, the 'caller' reciprocated with only the first name of the presenter (Marian). The fifth call (extract 20), which did not involve FN use by the presenter, was in relation to an ordinary caller, where we find the use of TL+FN+SN.

20) [The topic under discussion is tattoos. Dr. Nora Donnelly calls the show to express her opinion as an ordinary caller. Before she gets on air she has informed the producers that she is an academic doctor]
     <\$1> Welcome back to the programme. **Dr. Nora Donnelly** is that a medical doctor it is?
     <\$2> No indeed it's not no an academic doctor.
     <\$1> I see right cos I was wondering from which perspective you were coming at tattoos.
     <\$2> Well I can tell you **Marian** straight off it's the aesthetic perspective because tattoos are really a form of body decoration body painting and as such they can be very very beautiful.

It would appear that the presenter is drawing attention to the title by asking a referential question *(Is that a medical doctor it is?)*. By using TL+FN +SN, she is both attending to politeness, and through deference, she is elevating the ordinary caller to pseudo-expert status (Dr. Donnelly's doctorate was in the area of aesthet-

ics[6]). In so doing, the presenter chooses not to establish her usual pseudo-intimate relationship with the caller. Apart from the instances mentioned above, all other callers to the show are referred to on FN terms and all callers, including these exceptions, refer to the presenter on FN terms only.

Within this category we also find vocatives in the context of greetings and phatic exchanges within opening sequences. Greetings, phatic exchanges, and 'How are yous?' (HAYs) are part of the canonical sequence of telephone openings between people who are familiar with each other, and they are typically absent in calls between strangers (see Schlegloff 1979, and Hopper and Drummond 1992). In the context of radio call openings, Cameron and Hills (1990) and Liddicoats et al. (1992) assert that greetings and phatic exchanges are seen by the presenter as redundant, and Liddicoats et al. (1992) state that in the presenter's need to expedite the proceedings, there is a tendency for non-reciprocation of greetings, phatic utterances or HAYs. However, in *Liveline* calls, we find that 82% of all calls involve greetings. Below are examples of vocative use in this context.

21)   <$1> **Rita** hello there.
         <$2> Hello **Marian** how are you?

22)   <$1> Welcome back to the programme. **Aidan** good afternoon to you. Hello there.
         <$2> Hello.
         <$1> Hi how are you?

In line with Jefferson's (1973) findings, vocatives also cluster around call closings, and again there is reciprocation of use, indicating that the pseudo-symmetry has been sustained throughout the call. As we see in extract 23, vocatives also help to bring about or signal the closing, and here the vocative co-occurs with typical discourse markers of closure, *right* and *okay*:

23)   <$1> *Right*. *Okay* **James** thank you very much indeed for talking to us about that.
         <$2> Thank you **Marian**.

Interestingly, in the five calls where the presenter opened with (TL)+FN+SN, we find that at the end of each call she also maintains that deferential, non-intimate relationship through vocative choice. In extract 24, she is closing the call to a politician, and here, as in the other non-FN openings, the caller reciprocates with the presenter's FN. Note here also the clustering with the discourse markers *right* and *okay*:

24)   <$1> *Right okay* **Micheál McDowell** thank you very much indeed for talking to us.

---

[6] Personal communication, November 2000.

<$2> Thank you **Marian.**

Also in the category of call management, we find call-related requests by the presenter where vocatives co-occur. The vocatives are not necessary here in that the caller is still the presenter's sole addressee at this point in the call:

25) <$1> Eh stay with me if you will **Rita**.

26) [Talking about tattoos]
<$1> Right. Will you stay with me for a second **Nora** 'cos I want to go to somebody else who's who's a a recent ah person to receive one.

6.3   Turn management

Vocatives occurred in the context of turn management in activities such as *turn claiming* and *turn granting*. Both these types are exemplified below in extract 27; they only occur when there is more than one caller on the line.

27) [<$3>, another caller has the floor at this point]
<$2> **Marian**.
<$1> Yes **John**.

Vocatives also cluster at managerial moments within exchanges such as addressee identification and *response directives* (selecting a caller to be next responding speaker). In extract 28, a caller makes a point and indirectly invokes the agreement of the other caller on the line. The presenter uses a vocative as a response directive to the other caller:

28) [A caller (<$3>), a nurse, is talking about the special vocation of nurses and doctors. Monica Hall (<$2>), a nurse wrongly accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia, is already on the line]
<$3> … I'm sure Monica would agree with me on this it's a sort of kind of spiritual relationship. You're all fighting for the one thing and that one thing is to preserve and improve life for people.
<$1> **Monica**?
<$2> Yes I I would agree there M= Mari is it?

The functions mentioned here in relation to turn management are revealing in terms of the role specificity of vocative use in turn management, indicating that control resides with the presenter. This is explored quantitatively in section 6.8 below.

6.4   Mitigators

As seen in the CANCODE casual conversation extracts, vocatives occur frequently in the context of mitigation. Here also they are neither syntactically nor semantically necessary and they function solely as pragmatic downtoners of challenges, adversative comments, and disagreements. They clearly attend to negative face concerns in extracts 29 and 30.

29)   [Two callers, Colm and Máirtín, are in a heated dispute]
       <$3> Oh **Colm** come on … pull the other one.

In extract 30, below, we see how the caller uses the vocative to mitigate the face threat posed by refusing to answer a very awkward question. This is one of the solicited calls mentioned earlier where an Irish nurse, Monica Hall (<$2>), was wrongly accused of murdering her colleague, Helen Feeney, in Saudi Arabia some years before. Here in the body of the call, having heard the arduous tale of how Monica Hall was forced to confess to the murder (along with her then husband), the presenter focuses on the specifics of the crime. In this extract, the absence of the vocative and its co-occurrence with repeated use of the distancing device *I understand that* would have risked making the caller's response more adversative:

30)   <$1> What did happen to Helen Feeney?
       <$2> Am *I understand that* she was battered to death.
       <$1> How where when why?
       <$2> I have no answers for those for those questions **Marian**. Ah *I understand that* it was in her apartment that's where her body was found.

In extract 31, below, there is a rare moment where the presenter and a caller get into an argument. The caller is claiming that marital breakdown is becoming fashionable and even desirable in Irish society. The presenter contradicts the caller and the caller then interrupts with a challenge. The vocative tagged onto this challenge is crucial in mitigating the face threat at this fraught moment:

31)   <$2> …but as time goes on it's cool these days ah and pardon me for using that word because it's a slang word I don't like. But as they say it's cool to say "I'm separated". It's attractive.
       <$1> Is it?
       <$2> It's attractive to ah men and women.
       <$1> Well now I've interviewed a fair number of separated people down through the years and I don't think anybody ever found it cool or a great experience. I mean there was an awful lot of pain and that kind of+
       <$2> How long+
       <$1> +thing.
       <$2> +ago is that **Marian**?
       <$1> Well on and off over the years.

6.5   Topic management

As in the CANCODE data, vocatives co-occurred with the same topic manage-
ment functions at topic openings, expansions, closures, validations, side sequenc-
es, and formulations. Extract 32 shows the vocative used by the presenter at the
point of topic change co-occurring with the discourse marker *anyway*.

32)   <$1> I see when they didn't know their place. *Anyway* can I ask you Felix
       I don't know have you a family of your own?

In extract 33, we see a vocative at the opening of a topic.

33)   <$2> Ah yes **Marian** I was listening to this young lady and ah the pro-
       gramme really took me totally off my feet yesterday. And on thinking
       about it I gave a drive to a young lady recently and ah she worked in a
       nightclub. [<$1> Umhum] I hadn't seen the young lady for a while and I
       asked her how she was and she said fine and ah she told me where she
       was working in a nightclub…

Extract 34 provides an example of a vocative at point of topic closure. The caller
(<$2>) has gone into detail about her facial hair problem, how she was ridiculed
in school and how it has affected her self-esteem in general. She uses the interac-
tional marker *do you know what I mean* plus the vocative to signal that she is
closing the topic and yielding the turn. The presenter picks up on this and main-
tains the topic by asking a question about the caller's daughter:

34)   <$2> +you know they're looking at it you can see their eyes looking at
       that particular trace so you're thinking of that as you're having a conver-
       sation do you know what I mean **Marian**.
       <$1> Yeah yes I do you've a daughter yourself?
       <$2> I have emm she's fourteen and her brother slags her now he's six-
       teen he would be going ''look you have you have hair unde= you have a
       moustache" and all this so I do have to give out to him.

6.6   Relational

Liveline vocatives occur with agreements, apologies, compliments and evalua-
tions; as in examples 35, 36, and 37. All of these vocatives are superfluous to
transactional meaning and are not necessary for addressee identification.

35)   <$2> Yes indeed **Marian** ah I'd I'd have to agree wholeheartedly with
       him

36)   <$2> That's right **Marian**.

37)   <$2> It is indeed **Marian** because ah you know again I think that people
        are …

6.7   Badinage

In the context of irony, banter, and humour, we find vocatives throughout the data. They are used in equal measure by the callers and the presenter and are frequently reciprocated. In extract 38, below, the caller (Joe) is expressing his mock anxiety in light of a previous caller's panic about the decline of fidelity in Irish society. The previous caller attributes this decline to the 'male menopause', which she says can be identified by middle-aged men wearing jeans and 'flashy ties' and going to nightclubs. The presenter is complicit in the joke and the reciprocity of vocatives plays a heightening role in the banter.

38)   <$1> Welcome back to the programme. **Joe** how are you?
        <$2> Good afternoon **Marian**.
        <$1> Are you worried?
        <$2> Well a= I I I wa= I must say I was a little bit concerned I was listening very intently to your last caller [<$1> Yeah] and ah she then starts to talk about the male menopause a= and at that moment I was stopped at at ah ah at traffic lights and this bright young thing enjoying the sunshine walked in front of me and I have to say my eye wandered and followed her and then I looked down and saw I was wearing this bright tie and I got deeply concerned I thought gosh is this the male menopause? Am I I was it watching her that was the sign of the menopause or was it that ah was it the bright tie?
        <$1> I'd say it's the two of them **Joe**. I'd say you're in serious trouble.
        [A few turns later]
        <$1> How are you on nightclubs **Joe**?
        <$2> Am nightclubs? What are they **Marian**?
        <$1> <chuckle> well now as a menopausal swinger like yourself…

6.8   Summary of *Liveline* vocative functions

The functional contexts of vocatives in *Liveline* predominate in genre-specific areas of call management, accounting for 58.9% of their total occurrences in the data. The categories of turn management, mitigators, topic management, and relational are more or less equally represented. Badinage, however, is substantially lower and accounts for just 3% of all vocative usage. A notable feature throughout the *Liveline* data has been the reciprocity of vocative use, suggesting the complicity of the pseudo-familiarity between strangers. There is also evidence that many of the functional contexts may be role specific (see section 6.9 below).

6.9   Role distributions of vocatives in *Liveline*

While the presenter and the caller might seem to orient towards pseudo-intimate symmetrical conversation, in reality the presenter and caller are not equal in terms of their rights within the discourse. The presenter is the power-role holder in the dyad and so it is of salience to scrutinise the role distribution of vocative use within each of the functions and contexts identified above. Analysis of the distribution of vocatives in terms of role-relatedness yields the following breakdown.
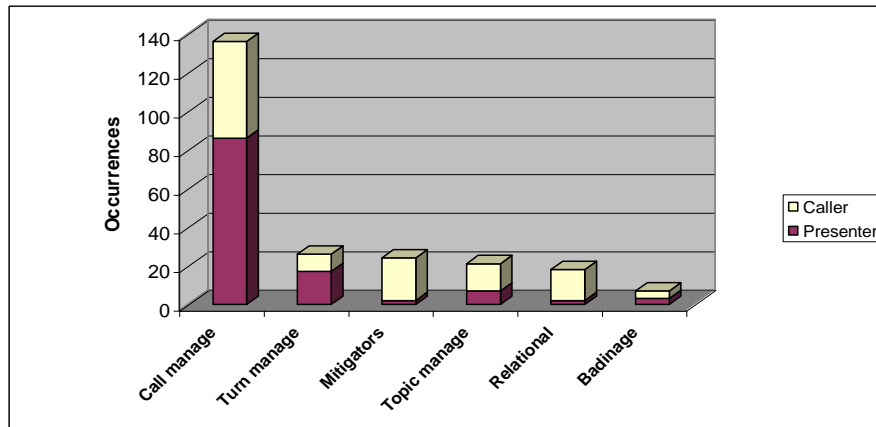
Figure 5: Role-related use of vocatives per function in *Liveline*

Of note, we find that in *call management,* there is only slightly more vocative use on the part of the presenter. This is attributable to the frequent reciprocity of vocative use at junctions such as openings (including phatic exchanges) and closings. In the case of turn management, the higher result for the presenter is clearly due to her implicit right to manage who speaks when and to whom. The presenter, in some cases of turn management, can use a vocative alone to perform acts such as turn granting and response directive. Indeed, the only instance of caller use of a vocative within this function is in 'turn claiming', which is again indicative of the real power distribution.

39)   <$3> **Marian** may I come in there for a moment please.

Most notably, vocative use in the environment of mitigation of disagreements, challenges and adversative comments is far more specific to the caller, accounting for 91% of all such uses. This suggests a much higher degree of deference by callers towards the presenter, where the caller mitigates negative face threats:

40)   [A caller in disagreement with the presenter]
       <$4> …that's that's not the point that's not the point I'm trying to make
       Marian.

Counter to what one might expect, the instance of vocative use in the context of topic management reveals a slightly higher result for caller use. This can be explained again by the caller's need to attend to negative face when taking liberties such as topic expansion, topic opening, and side sequencing. The presenter is within her role-related rights and addressee expectation to manage topic, and so she has less cause to use a vocative to mitigate here. Callers frequently use vocatives at points of topic expansion, leading to longer than usual turns (see section 6.11 on how this relates to position of vocative):

41)   [A caller, who is an air steward, expands his answer beyond the presenter's original question in the context of advice to a caller who is worried about her daughter going to work in Saudi Arabia]
<$2> …you know we're told as an airline that you've got to you now you've got to do this you've got to do that am what I'm referring to **Marian** really is that woman's daughter who's gone down to work in Saudi for twelve months you know I would really I would beg that young girl to you know find out as much information as she could about the Saudi regime about the Saudi culture. Because even the slightest you know show of an ankle you can get se= you can get ou= actual men spitting at you. You know that's the way it is.

Similar to the CANCODE extract 5, above, we see an example of a caller using a vocative in topic validation*,* drawing on the assumed shared experiences of the other caller.

42)   [Rita (<$2>) is reminiscing about her days in a convent boarding school. The other caller on the line, Anne (<$3>), has had a similar education.]
<$2> Well I think it giv= gives you great sense like whether you had a pound or whether you had five pounds you had to budget that and I didn't get home as I'm sure you didn't **Anne** either thirty years ago+
<$3> No.
<$2> You got home at Halloween you got home at Christmas+
<$3> That's right yeah.

Vocatives in relational contexts of agreements, apologies, compliments and evaluations are also found to be far more specific to callers: 88% of all relational contexts refer to callers. However, this is accounted for by the role-specificity of these acts in this genre. Interestingly, vocatives used in the context of badinage are equal in their distribution across roles, again indicating reciprocated use of vocatives in simulating closeness and common identity through such small talk.

Taken in total, the distribution of vocatives is more or less equal. But leaving out the call management function, which is assumed within the role of the presenter, the caller uses more than double the number of vocatives than the presenter.

6.10 *Liveline* functional contexts compared with CANCODE

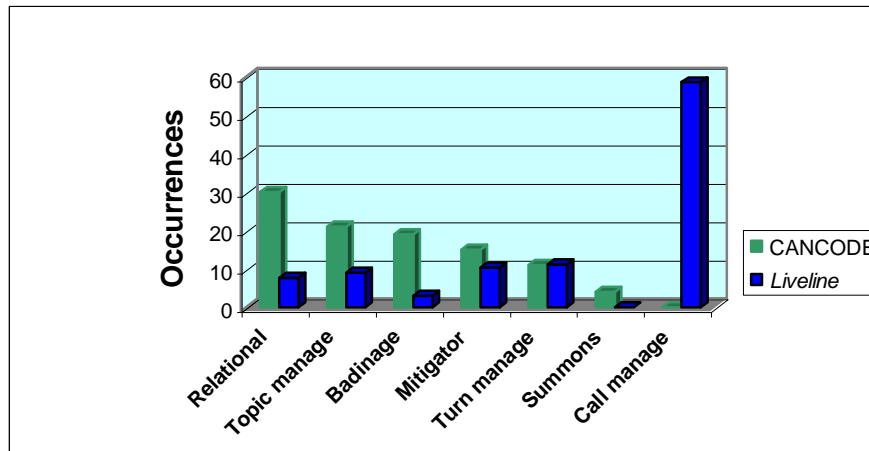On comparing the CANCODE and *Liveline* analyses we find the following.

Figure 6: CANCODE and *Liveline* vocatives compared across functions (*Liveline* results have been normalised to occurrences per one hundred vocatives.)

Obviously, the results for *call management* are channel related and their absence in the CANCODE totals is due to the limiting of the analysis to the face-to-face channel. Summonses are absent from the radio data. It could be argued that they might occur if a caller did not come on the line when identified; however, in the framework for call opening sequences, the *summons* is conventionally considered to be the phone ringing (see for example, Schegloff 1979, and Hopper and Drummond 1992). We also note that, across the range of functions common to both datasets (relational, topic management, badinage, mitigators and turn management), there is a higher overall count of vocative use in casual conversations. This may be due to the fact that while radio phone-in may invoke and simulate intimate casual conversation between strangers, it has a narrower spoken genre range and opportunity. One will not find the intimate styles of family talk or dinner-table talk on a radio phone-in programme, nor will one find genres such as 'language in action' (language produced in the course of undertaking some non-linguistic task such as dishing out food) and so one. Therefore the possible number of social rituals and/or speech acts will be fewer and will thus reduces the 'vocative opportunity' in the radio data.

Contrary to the general trend, the result for *turn management* shows a marginally higher result for the radio data. In real conversations speakers do not normally need to make overt claims to turns, no more than they grant or direct them; such discourse features are indicative of asymmetrical conversational conditions. Noteworthy also is the fact that badinage has a much lower occurrence in

Liveline. This relates to the socially-constructed expectation of the genre of radio phone-in as a forum for trials, tribulations and trivia. Callers have greater topical focus; they have a clear reason for calling the show and there is an implicit limit on their time, and so badinage is less likely.

6.11   Positions of the vocative in *Liveline* compared with CANOCDE

In the classification of vocative positions in *Liveline*, we also encountered problems within the category of *medial* vocatives. The following examples are typical of *Liveline* call openings:

43)   <$1> Welcome back to the programme. **Noel** what's the weather like in Cork today?
      <$2> It's absolutely lovely **Marian**.

44)   <$1> Now we go on from weighty matters of state to weighty matters of sport and ah sport on television in particular. **John** good afternoon to you.
      <$2> Hello **Marian**. How are you?

Based on written norms, the vocative in each of the presenter's opening turn *(Noel* and *John*, respectively) seems to be in the medial position. However, the vocative actually marks a change in what Goffman (1979) terms *footing*. This phenomenon refers to the 'change in the alignment we take up to ourselves and the others present'. As we see above in extracts 43 and 44, the vocatives in the presenter's opening turns signal a change in the presenter's alignment. Initially she was addressing the audience; from the vocative onwards she is addressing the caller, while the audience becomes the 'hearer' rather than the 'addressee'. It seems more accurate therefore to classify all such seemingly medial vocatives as initial. In line with the CANCODE classifications (see section 5.9), vocatives in turns prefaced by discourse markers will be treated as initial rather than medial, as in extract 45.

45)   <$1> Right. Okay **James** thank you very much indeed for talking to us about that.

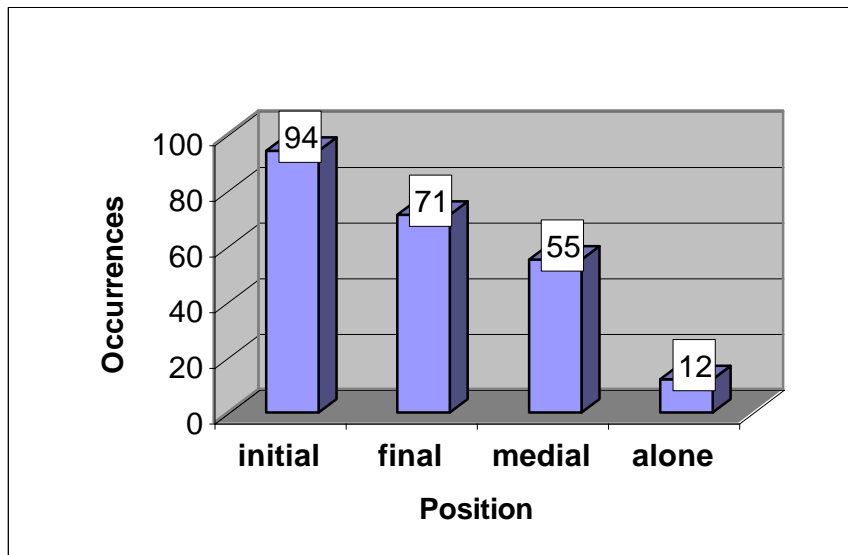Figure 7 illustrates the results for positions of vocatives in *Liveline*.

Figure 7: Positions of vocative in *Liveline*

The distribution profile of vocative positions in *Liveline* differs substantially from the CANCODE results. Figure 8 illustrates this.
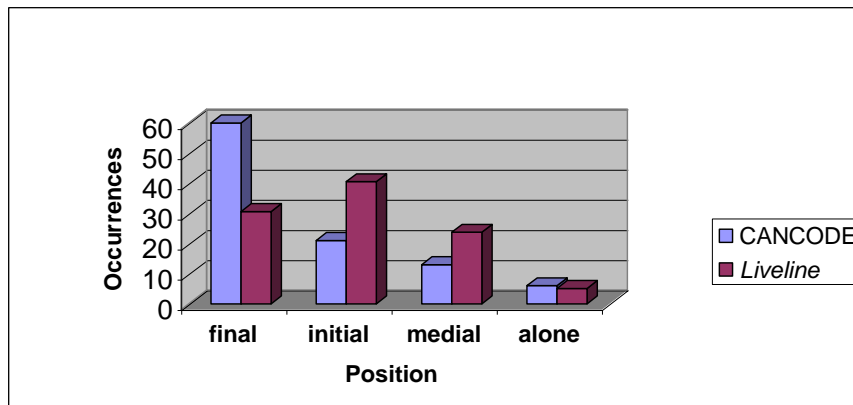

Figure 8: Position of vocatives in CANCODE and *Liveline*

Initial position is most frequently used in *Liveline*, closely followed by final position. This is in contrast with the CANCODE data, which is dominated by final-position vocatives. Certain genre-related factors account for these differences. Firstly, the relative balance in the ratio of initial to final position vocatives in the *Liveline* data is the result of a particular reciprocity pattern in openings where the presenter addresses the caller with an initial position vocative and the caller reciprocates with a final position vocative. This happens in 49% of all call openings:

46)   <$1> That was Nathalie Imbruglia and Torn. Now **Emmet** good afternoon
          to you.
        <$2> How are you **Marian**?

47)   <$1> Now **Tess** hello there.
        <$3> Hello **Marian**.

48)   <$1> Welcome back to the programme. **Adrienne** good afternoon to you.
        <$2> Hello **Marian**.

We also find that 21% of final position vocatives occur in call closings:

49)   <$1> Right okay thank you very much indeed for that **Josephine**.
        <$2> Nice to talk to you **Marian**.

On examination of the higher *Liveline* result for medial vocative positions, we
find that 78% of them are used by the caller, and the breakdown of their distribu-
tion across role and function is presented in figure 9 below.
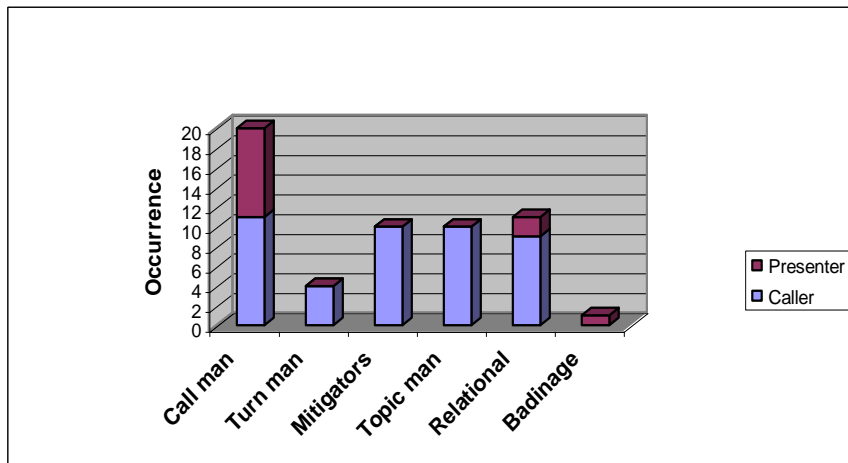

Figure 9: Distribution of medial vocatives across functions and roles in
Liveline

We find that medial vocatives in the contexts of turn management, mitigators,
topic management, and relational are dominated by caller use. In topic manage-
ment, for example, all of the vocatives are used by the caller and are found where
the topic is expanded or where a new topic is opened, as in extracts 50 and 51.

50)   [A caller is asked if he would send his child to boarding school on the ba-
          sis of his experiences]

<$3> Ah I'd say I would yeah probably because I wouldn't like him to get anyway ah get away any easier than I did you know like it's kind of a retribution thing ah I don't know yeah I'd probably ah I d= it's eh you're a good bit down the line **Marian** but ah yeah I suppose I would like a lot of people say they wouldn't actually they say that's the big question that when you leave boarding school would you send your own son to boarding school a lot of people say they wouldn't they say you know a lot of people come out of it saying you know no it's unnatural and you're living there under the same roof as in the all male atmosphere and it's outdated in the nineteen nineties and there is I suppose there is a case there but from my point of view I think it it hasn't damaged me or in in any significant way so I'd ah I+

51)   [A journalist is telling a story of how Northern Ireland Democratic Unionist Party politician Dr. Ian Paisley refuses to answer her question at a press conference because she is from the Irish language television station even though her question was in English. Having given her story, the presenter asks her if the whole incident provoked humour among the other reporters present]
       <$2> No there wasn't there wasn't actually and I suppose and I suppose maybe that's what am made people take that bit more note of it really. There wasn't a lot a sense of humour but then again Marian I have encountered this before from people other than Ian Paisley you know.

In extracts 50 and 51, we see that the vocative helps to secure the caller's turn when he or she has gone beyond the necessary information required to answer the presenter's question. This is something that one is less likely to find in casual conversation between friends, where there is more democratic negotiation of topic as well as more equal rights to the floor. It is indicative of the real asymmetric power semantic between the presenter and the caller in the radio data.

7.   Conclusion

In an attempt to find out more about the nature spoken genres, we have isolated and compared vocative use in two samples of language in use: casual conversation between family and friends, and radio conversations between a presenter and callers. In the casual data, the relationships are familiar and intimate, having developed over time. Since all participants have equal access to the floor and because real casual conversations are collaborative, topics meander and are democratically managed. In the radio data, on the other hand, while the participants might orient towards pseudo-intimate symmetrical discourse, in reality, presenter and caller are not equal in terms of their rights within the discourse.

A major factor in accounting for the differences in frequency between the two datasets is that the CANCODE participant relationships are real and genuine, and have developed over time. The talk that results between participants displays more solidarity through more equal functional distribution of vocatives. On the

other hand, the relationships between the speakers in the radio talk are pseudo-familiar and pseudo-intimate. They too have developed over time, but the participants only 'meet' on the airwaves in the public sphere. The *Liveline* callers know Marian, the presenter, but not really. They call her to talk about problems and issues that are important to them, but they know that it is her show. At the same time, it is in her interest to establish and maintain pseudo relationships with her callers so as to nurture the conditions for good intimate disclosures on national radio, and in so doing, to endear herself to the audience who constitute her show. Therefore, while the presenter controls the discourse, she tries to do so subtly. In this sense, there are many contradictions at play in the power semantic of the radio relationship and it is not truly symmetric.

By looking at one pervasive feature common to both datasets, we have been able to profile in greater detail the part that vocatives (one of a number of devices) play in keeping the delicate balance between discourse control and participant relations. Allowing for channel-related factors *(call management* in particular), we have found that there are many parallels in how vocatives are used in the two corpora. At a schematic level, the functions can be divided into those that relate to the *organisational* level of the interactions and those that relate to the *interpersonal* level. Figure 10 compares the two functional contexts of vocatives in this way. The contexts common to both CANCODE and *Liveline* have been shaded.

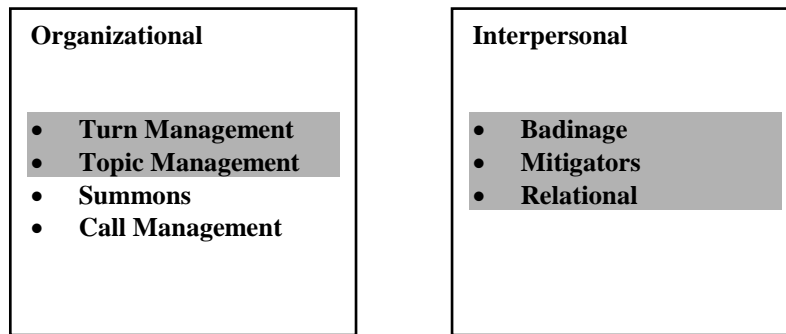| Organizational	Interpersonal
• **Turn Management** • **Topic Management** • **Summons** • **Call Management**	• **Badinage** • **Mitigators** • **Relational**

Figure 10: Schematic distribution of vocative use (functions common to both corpora are shaded)

At this schematic level, we see that there is most overlap in the interpersonal domain, where vocatives serve, in both cases, to maintain social relations. In the case of the radio data, vocative use is much greater in the organisational domain (call management, turn management, and topic management), again revealing the asymmetric nature of the genre. When we looked at how vocatives were distributed according to role in the radio data, we found that there was a high degree of reciprocity in vocative use within *call management,* especially at ritualised moments such as opening and closings. Over 90% of all vocatives that occurred with mitigators are used by callers, and almost 90% of relational context usage is by the caller. This clearly indicates greater attention to negative face concerns by the

caller. Deference is also evident in the callers' more frequent use of vocatives in topic management acts such as topic openings, expansions, and so on, which are not within their discourse rights. In addition, higher overall CANCODE totals for vocative use in all the common functions, apart from turn management, is indicative of the higher vocative occurrence when speaker relations are symmetric and there is a wider spoken genre range.

In our exploration of these relatively neglected features of discourse, we have found that vocatives are normally not critical, either syntactically or semantically, and that their most important functions are in fact pragmatic. In all, only 10% of CANCODE vocatives were deemed essential, and 15% of *Liveline* vocatives (including those that are vital at openings in the aural channel). In casual-intimate and pseudo-intimate conversation, vocatives help to create and sustain appropriate social relationships between the speaker and the addressee. Overall, in comparing radio phone-in data with casual conversation, we have attempted to show how vocatives play a strategic and defining role in the radio data, both in managing the interaction and how this is marked in terms of role-relatedness and power. At an interpersonal level, we found that vocatives play a part in invoking and sustaining pseudo-intimacy between strangers on the radio by simulating vocative use typically associated with casual conversation between intimates. The fact that 33% of all vocatives in the radio data were found in call openings substantiates the crucial part vocatives play in defining relationships.

On a broader level, we have shown that corpus-based analyses of a specific genre (in this case radio phone-in) reveal both overlaps and genre-defining differences with a general corpus of casual conversation. Using 'the bigger picture' as a benchmark for comparison, it is possible to isolate and quantify characteristic features of more specialised genres (e.g., *call management* in radio phone-in). In doing so, we have taken Leech's broad-brush corpus-based description of vocatives to a considerably greater level of delicacy and, we hope, contributed to the ongoing quest for an independent descriptive framework for spoken genre analysis.

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