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APPELLATIVES AND VERBAL FORMS OF ADDRESS

This paper deals with such sentences as, in English, *Mum, will you have some coffee?*, or in Polish, *Mamo, napijesz się kawy?*. The sentences contain **appellatives** (usually called ‘vocatives’ in the literature) – the words *Mum* and *Mamo* – followed by **verb forms** – *will you have* and *napijesz się*. The author claims that appellatives and verb forms are two different things, deserving separate description.

The usual division of sentences into those that use a familiar *T*-pronoun (Latin and French *tu*) and those that use a polite *V*-pronoun (Latin *vos* and French *vous*) is inadequate for two reasons:

- a. There are numerous languages in which there are several (and not just two) pronouns on the scale between familiar informality and polite formality.
- b. English, French, German etc. are non-pro-drop languages. There are, however, numerous pro-drop languages (Polish or Latin, for example), in which the **form of the verb** makes the use of a personal pronoun superfluous.

What is more, a *V*-form of the verb in a sentence directed at the interlocutor does not necessarily require a formal appellative; example from French: *Jean, vous allez prendre du café?* – as against *M. Dupont, vous allez prendre du café?* Aside from that, the appellative (for example, in Polish) may be in the vocative or the nominative case, so that different permutations are possible.

It is suggested that it is the **verb form** in the sentence addressed to the interlocutor that we should consider **primary**. The appellative may or may not be there: there is no obligation to name the addressee.

In every language, both appellatives and verb forms in sentences accompanying appellatives are laid out on a scale, stretching from **non-formal** to **formal**. The ‘non-formal’ end includes ‘familiar’ and even ‘intimate’, while the ‘formal’ end comprises ‘honorific’.

1. Introduction

This article discusses linguistic forms used in addressing people. The languages studied are mainly English, Polish, French, and German; but Russian will also be occasionally referred to. The approach is chiefly grammatical and – in part – semantic; the pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of the use of forms of address will only be discussed where needed. This does not mean, of course, that they are not important or worth studying. The grammatical aspects of the phenomenon, however, are complex enough to be worth a separate investigation.

One consequence of the grammatical bias of this study is that it will not discuss the difference (or lack of difference) in the reciprocal use of forms of address by the speaker and by the addressee – depending, for example, on their respective social positions¹. This kind of investigation would necessitate the usage of tools characteristic of sociolinguistic research.

Studies on forms of address have a long history. Brown & Gilman (1960) quote a 17th century publication on the use of personal pronouns in English², an 18th century publication on German pronouns used in addressing people³, and a number of 19th century publications on the subject, relating to English, German, French, and Italian. Tomiczek (1983) quotes a number of publications referring to the use of personal pronouns as forms of address in German in the 18th and 19th century. Needless to say, the 20th century brought a spate of articles and books on the subject, in many languages.

Contributions dealing with address in Polish go back at least a century: suffice it to mention Grosse (1906), Nitsch (1907), Łoś (1914 and 1920), Brückner (1916). It would be interesting to draw up a bibliography of studies on forms of address in Polish (and, perhaps, in other Slavonic languages); this seems an exciting potential research project.

2. Appellatives and verb forms (with or without a pronoun)

Modern studies on forms of address – in a number of languages – have been dominated by two articles: Brown & Gilman (1960) and Brown & Ford (1961). Brown & Gilman divided pronouns of address into two categories: *T* (from Latin and French *tu*) for a **familiar** pronoun, and *V* (from Latin *vos* and French *vous*)

¹ Brown and Gilman's (1960) paper investigates the use of forms of address as a sociolinguistic reflection of relations of 'power' and 'solidarity'. The concepts of 'power' and 'solidarity' have to do with reciprocal vs non-reciprocal use of forms of address; therefore they will not be dealt with in this study.

² Farnsworth, R. (1655). *The Pure Language of the Spirit of Truth ... or 'Thee' and 'Thou' in its Place ...* London.

³ Gedike, F. (1794). *Über Du und Sie in der deutschen Sprache*. Berlin.

for a **polite** pronoun⁴. This division became standard, and has been referred to in many publications, dealing with many languages, right up to the present day.

There are two reasons why the division is inadequate. First, there are languages – Romanian, or Japanese, for example – in which there are more than two pronouns of address, expressing more than just two categories. Polish is another such language; more about this below. Secondly, the division into *T*-forms and *V*-forms conflates two things: on the one hand, *FORMS OF ADDRESS PROPER* – such as, in French, *Maman*, *Monsieur Duval* – and on the other, *VERB FORMS*, with or without a pronominal subject, used in sentences addressed to the interlocutor – such as, in French (in questions, and with a pronoun), *veux tu...?* or *voulez vous...?*⁵.

I used examples from French, because English has lost the division of personal pronouns into *T* and *V*: in present-day English the form *you* is used instead of both *thou* and *ye* in the older periods of the history of the language, and is followed by the bare form of the verb⁶. Therefore it seems advisable that we should study the phenomenon of forms of address in languages other than English – for example, German, French, Russian, or Polish – without, of course, ignoring interesting results achieved by researchers working on the English language.

Brown & Gilman concentrate their attention on pronouns; however, in the chapter of their article entitled ‘Semantics, social structure and ideology’ they state:

Even if the pronoun can be avoided, it will be implicit in the inflection of the verb. ‘Dites quelque chose’ clearly says *vous* to the Frenchman.

Thus, they admit that what really matters is not the pronoun, only the **verb form**; we shall discuss this in detail below. What is more, in the same chapter Brown & Gilman mention such forms as *Citoyen* in revolutionary France, *Comrade General* (or, rather, the Serbo-Croat equivalent) in communist Yugoslavia, and title+last name (eg. *Professor Smith*) in American university life. These are

⁴ The opposition ‘familiar’ vs ‘polite’ is commented on below, on p. 40.

⁵ Tomiczek (1983: 27-28) introduces a distinction between „formy adresatywne syntaktycznie zintegrowane” [‘syntactically integrated forms of address’] and „formy adresatywne syntaktycznie niezintegrowane” [‘syntactically non-integrated forms of address’]. The latter seem to correspond to our ‘forms of address proper’, and the former, to our ‘verb forms, with or without a pronominal subject’.

⁶ Speakers of English seem to feel a need for 2nd person singular and 2nd person plural pronouns to be different. In American English and in the north of Britain there exists the form *youse* (Quirk et al. 1985: 344, Biber et al. 1999: 330). Quirk et al. call the form ‘low-prestige’, and Biber et al. call it ‘dialectal’. Another way of marking plurality of the pronoun is the use of the form *you-all*, or even *y’all*. Quirk et al. place the form in the south of the United States, while Biber et al. say that it is used both in the USA and in Britain – but in American English three times as often as in British English. Biber et al. also mention the form *you two*; one could also add *you guys*.

what we called above ‘forms of address proper’: a linguistic phenomenon different from pronouns and verb forms that go with them. Yet the two phenomena are not kept apart in the article, and a number of researchers working on the subject – and quoting Brown & Gilman – confuse the two (cf. for example Łaziński 2005). Forms of address proper are the subject of an article by Brown & Ford (1961). However, their text mentions also ‘pronouns of address’; thus, they too conflate the two different phenomena.

Forms of address proper are the phrases which we use to name the person we are speaking to, and which adjoin a sentence expressing what we want to say. I said, ‘person’, and not ‘persons’. It is of course possible to study forms of addressing many people. In this study, however, we shall concentrate on one-to-one communication: on phrases used to address just one person. As examples of such phrases in German we can quote *Hans, Mutti, Liebling, Frau Schneider, Herr Professor*. In French we have *Jean, Maman, Chéri/Chérie, Madame Dupont, Monsieur le Professeur*. In Polish we have, accordingly, *Jasiu, Mamo, Kochanie, Proszę pani, Panie profesorze*.

In the literature on forms of address such phrases are usually called ‘vocatives’. Yet there exist languages in which there is opposition between the nominative and the vocative form of nouns (Polish is one such language); we need, therefore, a different term for phrases used to address a person. I suggest that we name such phrases *APPELLATIVES*.

Let us begin our discussion of forms of address with a description of appellatives. Next we shall discuss the sentences accompanying appellatives – or, rather, we shall talk about the verb forms in those sentences, with or without pronominal subjects.

3. Classification and characterisation of appellatives

The appellatives can be divided into three categories: initial, final, and medial – that is, they can precede the accompanying sentences, follow them, or be inserted inside them. Utterances (1) to (3) illustrate initial appellatives (together with sentences accompanying them) in three languages:

- (1) (a) *Mutti, willst du einen Kaffee trinken?*
(b) *Herr Professor, wollen Sie einen Kaffee trinken?*
- (2) (a) *Maman, (est-ce que) tu vas prendre du café?*
(b) *Monsieur le Professeur, (est-ce que) vous allez prendre du café?*
- (3) (a) *Mamo, napijesz się kawę?*
(b) *Panie profesorze, czy napije się pan kawę?*
(Words in parentheses () stand for an optional element of the sentence accompanying the appellative.)

Zwicky (1974: 787) and Quirk et al. (1985: 773) give initial appellatives ('vocatives' is their term) the name of *CALLS*. The calls 'draw the attention of the person or persons addressed' (Quirk et al., op. cit.). Final and medial vocatives are given – both by Zwicky and Quirk et al. – the name of *ADDRESSES*, 'expressing the speaker's relationship or attitude to the person or persons addressed' (Quirk et al., op. cit.)⁷. However, the latter statement can, surely, also apply to calls – as Quirk et al. state in the next section: 'Vocatives addressed to strangers are not neutral, since they always express some relation or attitude'. We will take the stance that all appellatives, irrespective of their position, express the speaker's attitude to the person addressed.

As for the intonation of appellatives, Quirk et al. (1985: 773) write:

... fall-rise for an initial vocative functioning as a call, and otherwise rise;
rise for a vocative functioning as an address.

Let us go back to the position of appellatives in the utterance; in particular, the position of calls. The sentence directed at the interlocutor can also come **after the response** to the call. Here is an English example:

(4) A. *Mum?*

B. *Yes, darling?*

A. *Will you have some coffee?*

Biber et al. (1999: 1111) divide English appellatives (they, too, call them 'vocatives') into four categories, depending on their position in the whole utterance. Aside from the three categories listed above – initial, medial, and final – they postulate a separate category of 'stand alone' appellatives, and give *Mom!* as an example. What they have in mind here is probably the category of calls separated from the relevant sentence by a response (as in example 4 above).

Biber et al. concentrate on appellatives in initial and final position. They quote intriguing corpus data (from a corpus of American English and British English conversation), according to which c. 70 per cent of appellatives stand in final position, and only c. 10 per cent in initial position, with medial and 'stand alone' appellatives accounting for the remaining 20 per cent (Biber et al. 1999: 1111). This ties up with Sinclair, ed. (1990: 435): 'Vocatives are often used at the end of a sentence or clause'. These statements are very interesting, and go against frequent assumptions of writers on the subject (cf., for example, Łaziński 2005: 103).

⁷ In actual fact, neither Quirk et al. nor Zwicky explicitly give the name 'calls' to initial appellatives, and the name 'addresses' to final and medial ones. They just give examples; but from those examples one can, surely, draw the conclusion that that is how they interpret the terms 'calls' and 'addresses'.

On the subject of the function of ‘vocatives’, Biber et al. (1999: 1112) write:

The suggestion is that an initial vocative combines (1) an attention-getting function with (2) the function of singling out the appropriate addressee(s). On the other hand, a final vocative is more likely to combine function (2) with function (3), that of adjusting or reinforcing the social relationship between the speaker and the addressee.

Another interesting observation is that, in English, first names – either in full, or shortened (familiarized) – amount to c. 60 per cent of all the appellatives used. Thus, ‘vocatives [are] being used vastly more as markers of familiarity than as markers of respect’ (Biber et al. 1999: 1112). However, in English, appellatives are not used at all among close associates: in the corpus there are long conversations between mother and daughter, or between wife and husband, where no appellatives occur (Biber et al. 1999: 1112-13). Compare examples (5 a-d) – sentences without an appellative:

- (5) (a) *Willst du einen Kaffee trinken?*
 (b) *(Est-ce que) tu vas prendre du café?*
 (c) *Will you have some coffee?*
 (d) *Napijesz się kawę?*
 (Words in parentheses () stand for an optional element of the sentence.)

4. Exclamations

As we said above, communication between the speaker and his/her interlocutor is perfectly possible without an appellative. An appellative, however, cannot stand alone; we expect it to be accompanied by a sentence directed at the interlocutor. True enough, there exist *EXCLAMATIONS* – such as, in English, *Michael! Mum!*, and in Polish, *Michał! Mamo!* – which **can** stand on their own. Exclamations are set apart from calls by intonation. In English, the characteristic intonation of exclamations appears to be (high) fall or rise-fall; the same seems to be true of Polish.

Exclamations should not, however, be treated as appellatives, if by that term we mean ‘the phrases which we use to name the person we are speaking to, and which adjoin a sentence expressing what we want to say’ (cf. page 32). Exclamations always express surprise, criticism, warning, outrage, anger, etc., and they stand by themselves. On the other hand, an exclamation cannot be followed by an offer of service, a suggestion, an invitation, a proposal, and so on – that is, by one of a number of speech acts which usually adjoin an appellative.

5. Verb forms and pronouns in non-pro-drop languages and in Polish

I would like to suggest that it is the sentence addressed to the interlocutor that we should consider primary. The appellative may or may not be there: there is no obligation to name the addressee. What matters in that sentence is the **verb form** – with or without a pronoun.

It is in sentences addressed to the interlocutor that a familiar or a polite form (to use Brown & Gilman's terminology) can be used. Here are some examples of such sentences from three languages:

- 6) (a) *Willst du einen Kaffee trinken?*
 (b) *Wollen Sie einen Kaffee trinken?*
 (7) (a) *(Est-ce que) tu vas prendre du café?*
 (b) *(Est-ce que) vous allez prendre du café?*
 (8) (a) *(Czy) napijesz się kawę?*
 (b) *(Czy) napije się pan/pani kawę?*

In German and in French, a pronoun – a *T*-form (*du, tu*) or a *V*-form (*Sie, vous*) – is necessary: German and French are non-pro-drop languages. In Polish, a pro-drop language⁸, the distinctive verb ending makes the second person singular pronoun in subject function (the *T*-form, ie. the familiar form) superfluous. – except when the speaker wants to emphasize the pronoun.

However, the situation is different in the case of the polite form. By far the most common polite form in Polish is the verb in the third person singular with the subject position filled by the word *pan* (for men) and *pani* (for women). I would like to claim that here the word *pan/pani* functions as a *pronoun*. In this I follow, among others, Stone (1981: 57-58), Sikora (1993: 300), Huszcza (1996: p. 8, and Chap. 2), and Łaziński (2005: 103). Grammatically, the verb accompanying the pronoun *pan/pani* is in the third person singular; the whole form, however, is directed at the interlocutor, so from the semantic point of view it functions as if it was in the second person – which means that the lexeme *pan/pani* functions, actually, as a *V*-pronoun (in Brown and Gilman's sense), ie. the polite pronoun⁹.

⁸ Matthews (1997: 250), in the entry entitled 'null-subject parameter' defines it as "Parameter in Chomsky's Principles and Parameters Theory distinguishing languages in which verbs must have an overt subject from those in which they need not. English is one in which a subject is obligatory: *Mary has come*, but not simply *Has come*. But in e.g. Italian it is not needed: *Maria è venuta* 'Mary (lit.) is come' or simply *È venuta* '(She) is come'. Italian is, in that sense, a 'null-subject language'. – Also (and originally) called the 'pro-drop parameter'; thus Italian is in the same sense a 'pro-drop language'".

It is interesting that Brown & Gilman (1960) mention also such languages as Italian or Spanish, which are clearly pro-drop.

⁹ In actual fact, we should call forms such as *pan/pani* 'nouns functioning as pronouns', since they can be modified by adjectives (eg. *szanowny pan* – literally, 'honourable sir') or by nouns

Why is the pronoun necessary here although the verb ending makes it clear that the sentence is in the third person singular? To answer this question, we have to make a distinction between the lexeme *pan/pani* functioning as a pronoun and the same lexeme functioning as a noun. The difference can be illustrated by quoting two sentences from Huszcza (1996: 112):

- (9) (a) *Czy pan mnie rozumie?*
 {'Do you [*V*-form] understand me?'}
 (b) *Czy ten pan mnie rozumie?*
 {'Does this gentleman understand me?'}
 {'Does this gentleman understand me?'}
 {'Does this gentleman understand me?'}

In (9 a) the lexeme *pan* is a pronoun, the verb is in the third person singular, but the whole sentence is directed at the interlocutor, i.e. functions as if it was a sentence in the second person. In (9 b), the lexeme *pan* 'gentleman' is a noun (used deictically or anaphorically), and the sentence is in the third person, both grammatically and semantically – consonant with the verb form. Instead of *ten pan* 'this gentleman' we can say *on* 'he' – that is, use the "classical" third person singular personal pronoun. In the anaphoric function, when the person referred to by the phrase *ten pan* has already been identified, we can sometimes leave out the pronoun *on* and say *Czy mnie rozumie?* 'Does (he) understand me?'. Thus, the difference between *pan* used as a pronoun and *pan* used as a noun consists in the fact that, firstly, the pronoun *pan* refers to the interlocutor (not to a third person) – i.e. it is part of a verbal form of address – and, secondly, it cannot be left out. The noun *pan*, on the other hand, is used referentially, and not as a form of address.

Two things should have become obvious by now. First, that appellatives, on the one hand, and verb forms in sentences accompanying them, on the other – are two different things, deserving separate description. Secondly, that the division of sentences into those that use a *T*-pronoun and those that use a *V*-pronoun has been based mainly on a study of non-pro-drop languages, such as English, French, and German. However, in a number of languages some pronouns are superfluous because of the distinctive form of the verb; moreover, in a number of languages there are more pronouns referring to the addressee than just two.

6. Lack of parallelism between appellatives and verb forms

We said above that appellatives, on the one hand, and verb forms in sentences that accompany them, on the other, are two different things. They are, however, often treated in a parallel way: many researchers tacitly assume that if we get a familiar, *T*-form in the sentence, we automatically get a familiar, or even intimate,

in apposition e.g. *pan dyrektor* – literally, 'Mr director/headmaster'. Aside from *pan/pani*, other nouns functioning as pronouns belong here: *ksiądz* ('the reverend'), *ciocia* ('auntie'), etc.

form in the appellative (let us call it for the time being, by analogy, a *T*-form). Similarly, it is tacitly assumed that if we get a *V*-form in the sentence, we automatically get a formal, polite form in the appellative (let us call it, by analogy, a *V*-form). Examples:

- (10) (a) *Mutti, willst du einen Kaffee trinken?*
 (b) *Herr Professor, wollen Sie einen Kaffee trinken?*
 (11) (a) *Maman, (est-ce que) tu vas prendre du café?*
 (b) *Monsieur le Professeur, (est-ce que) vous allez prendre du café?*

The assumption outlined and exemplified above is untrue: in some languages a *T*-form in the appellative can go with a *V*-form in the accompanying sentence. Here is an example from French:

- (12) *Jean, (est-ce que) vous allez prendre du café?*

Polish affords an even better example:

- (13) *Basiu, (czy) napije się pani kawy?*
 {'Barbara [+diminutive, +vocative], will you [*V*-form] have some coffee?'}
 coffee?'

In the Polish example the appellative is in the vocative case. We might – however marginally – also use the nominative case:

- (14) *Basia, (czy) napije się pani kawy?*
 {'Barbara [+diminutive, +nominative], will you [*V*-form] have some coffee?'}
 coffee?'

In both examples the appellative contains a diminutive, hypocoristic version of the name *Barbara*; thus it is, obviously, a *T*-form. In both utterances the pattern is, therefore, *T* + *V*. In Polish, however, more combinations are possible. What about this:

- (15) *Pani Basiu, (czy) napije się pani kawy?*
 {'Mrs. Barbara [+diminutive, +vocative], will you [*V*-form] have some coffee?'}
 coffee?'

Is the phrase *pani Basiu* – with the polite pronoun *pani* followed by a diminutive form of the name *Barbara* (in the vocative case) – a *V*-form or a *T*-form? Or perhaps it is something else again? Let us call it, temporarily, a *V/T*-form. The pattern for the whole utterance would, then, be *V/T* + *V*.

As speech acts, utterances (13) to (15) are identical: they are all **offers** of a cup of coffee. Sociolinguistically, however, each of them expresses – in a dif-

ferent way – the speaker’s wish to shorten the psychological distance from the interlocutor (ie. Barbara).

7. Four polite forms of the Polish verb

Polish seems to be a very good language for studying forms of address. Aside from the permutations discussed above, Polish has more than one polite form of the verb. There is the third person singular form, with the obligatory pronoun *pan/pani*, but there is also the second person plural form (with an optional pronoun *wy* – which is a literal equivalent of the French *vous*). Here are some examples:

- (16) (a) *Kolego (Kowalski), (czy) napijecie się kawy?*
 {‘Colleague [+vocative] (Kowalski), will you have [2nd person plural] some coffee?’}
- (b) *Towarzyszu (Kowalski), (czy) napijecie się kawy?*
 {‘Comrade [+vocative] (Kowalski), will you have [2nd person plural] some coffee?’}
- (c) *Druhu (drużynowy), (czy) napijecie się kawy?*
 {‘Troop leader [+vocative], will you have [2nd person plural] some coffee?’}
- (d) *Sąsiedzie, (czy) napijecie się kawy?*
 {‘Neighbour [+vocative], will you have [2nd person plural] some coffee?’}

The use of the second person plural form of the verb (with the optional pronoun *wy*) as a polite *V*-form is normal in most local dialects of Polish; (16 d) is a good illustration. It could, however, also be used in some registers of standard Polish: (16 a) could be uttered by a member of a trade union speaking to another member, (16 b) can be the polite mode of address among members of a communist party, (16 c) was, until recently, normal as a form used by a boy scout to his commander. Yet sentences (a), (b) and (c) seem to represent the language of the older generation; my students tell me that they sound definitely old-fashioned.

Incidentally, a sentence with the verb in the second person plural, preceded by the addressee’s first name and *otchestvo* (father’s name) as the appellative, is the standard polite mode of address in Russian.

In some dialects of Polish, mostly in Silesia and Wielkopolska (‘Greater Poland’), there is yet another polite form of address: third person plural of the verb (directed at a **singular** addressee). Example:

- (17) *Nowak, napiją się kawy?*
 {‘(Mr) Nowak, will they have some coffee?’}

This form is assumed to have come into Polish under the influence of German (Silesia and Wielkopolska were under Prussian domination during the partitions – that is, between 1795 and 1918). In German the polite form of address is the pronoun *Sie* followed by the third person plural of the verb – compare (6 b) and (10 b) above. In Polish the pronoun is superfluous: the verb ending makes it clear that the verb is in the third person plural.

In Polish there is also a fourth *V*-form of the verb: first person plural, used mainly by doctors or nurses in talking to their patients, or by mothers (and other caretakers) in talking to small children. In this respect Polish resembles English:

- (18) (a) *Jak się dziś czujemy, pani Krystyno?*
 (b) *How are we today, Mrs. Grey?*

It is a polite form, but with a tinge of condescension; some people would call it outright patronizing.

Thus, in standard Polish there are two *V*-forms of the verb, and if we include local dialects, there are three: third person singular, second person plural, and third person plural. If, moreover, we add the (patronizing) first person plural, we will eventually end up with four *V*-forms¹⁰. What is more, we saw that a *V*-form in a sentence directed at the interlocutor does not necessarily require a *V*-form in the appellative. Aside from that, the appellative may be in the vocative or the nominative case – see examples (13) and (14) above – so that different permutations are possible. It seems therefore that discussing forms of address in terms of the opposition *T* versus *V* is a gross oversimplification¹¹.

¹⁰ Actually, in local dialects and in very colloquial standard Polish there are even more polite forms. Sikora (1993: 305) lists four different verb forms with the pronoun *pan* used to address a single person:

Pan wiedzą [3rd person plural], *że...*
Pan wiecie [2nd person plural], *że...*
Pan wie [3rd person singular], *że...* (the standard form)
Pan wiesz [2nd person singular], *że...*

There are other peculiarities, as well. In local dialects one can hear such sentences as *Czy matka gadali z nim?* ‘Has Mother talked [3rd person plural, masculine] to him?’ – a question directed at ‘Mother’. Stone (1981: 65) discusses the variants of *V*-form as addressed to women. – Ours is not, however, a study of possible varieties of forms of address in Polish; we shall not, therefore, delve into this subject.

¹¹ It seems worth digressing here, to note that some linguists consider *you* and *I* two paradigmatic forms of the same pronoun. Bogusławski (1998) argues persuasively against this view. He writes “... ‘you’ invokes, among other things, the speaker and his product, his utterance, whereas ‘I’ does not make any recourse to the hearer or addressee, i.e., to ‘you’ ...” (1998: 180). He adds “... ‘you’ is particularly rich in synonyms whose use is determined by the relevant social relations having to do with the individuality of the respective persons, cf. the German *Sie*, the Italian *lei*, the Polish *pan*, *pani*, *ksiądz*, and others ...” (1998: 182).

8. Scale of formality

As we have seen, the appellatives used in a language cannot simply be divided dichotomously into *T*-forms and *V*-forms. In every language the **appellatives form a scale**: from the familiar (or even intimate), to formal (or even honorific).

What are the ends of that scale? There are several possibilities; among others, familiar vs non-familiar, non-formal vs formal, non-honorific vs honorific. If we allow ourselves to be influenced by British and American corpus studies quoted by Biber et al. (1999: 1112): ‘vocatives [are] being used vastly more as markers of familiarity than as markers of respect’ – then we will opt for the first solution, and say that the scale stretches from ‘familiar’ to ‘non-familiar’ (but definitely not from ‘familiar’ to ‘polite’, *pace* Brown and Gilman, because that would imply that familiar appellatives are not polite). If we adopt the point of view of an orientalist – for example, Romuald Huszcza, with his interesting study of honorifics in Japanese, Vietnamese, and Korean, compared to Polish and other European languages (Huszcza 1996) – then we will be tempted to say that the ends of the scale are ‘non-honorific’ and ‘honorific’. If, however, we decide to be language-neutral, we should, in my opinion, cast our vote for a scale stretching from **non-formal** to **formal**. The ‘non-formal’ end will include ‘familiar’ and even ‘intimate’, and the ‘formal’ end will be extended to cover ‘honorific’ (and ‘very honorific’).

In English the scale would stretch from *honey*, through *darling*, to *Mike*, to *Michael*, to *Mr. Jones*, to *Doctor Jones*, to *Your Honour* – and further. That is just one, horizontal dimension; but there is another, vertical dimension – such as, for example, family and kinship terms, professional (and military) terms, nicknames, and so on.

The concept of scale applies also to **verb forms** (with or without a pronoun) in sentences accompanying appellatives. The non-formal end could be exemplified by an intimate, verbless utterance *Coffee, dear?*, while to illustrate the formal end we could quote an honorific utterance *Would Your Highness like a cup of coffee?*

The latter example is a sentence in the third person functioning as if it was an utterance in the second person. This reminds us of the Polish sentences with *pan/pani* used as a pronoun: they, too, are third person singular forms of addressing the interlocutor. In Polish, the formality (or the honorification) can go even further: the pronoun *pan* can be qualified by a modifier and a noun in apposition, and the choice of the verb can also be honorific:

- (19) *Czy szanowna pani profesor zechciałaby napić się kawy?*
 {‘Would the honourable madam professor care for some coffee?’}

Bogusławski’s little story (1998: 180) could be expanded by adding an appellative to the shy boy’s declaration of love: *Aniu, Kocham panią* (‘Ann [+diminutive, +vocative], I love you [*V*-form]’).

Analysis of pre- and post-modification of the Polish pronoun *pan/pani* (cf. note 9), both in appellatives and in sentences accompanying them, would take us too far away from the subject of our discussion. Suffice it to say that an examination of the pronouns and nouns in appellatives, and of pronouns, nouns and verbs in sentences accompanying appellatives appears to give support to our thesis that all these forms can be arranged between the non-formal and the formal end of a scale.

9. Summary

Let us sum up what we have said so far.

1. Appellatives on the one hand, and verb forms in sentences accompanying them, on the other – are two different things, deserving separate description. Appellatives are usually called ‘vocatives’ in the literature. In view of the fact, however, that there are languages in which the nominative and the vocative are different cases of the noun, there is a need for a different term: *APPELLATIVES*, instead of ‘vocatives’.

2. Appellatives are different, intonationally and semantically, from exclamations – such as, in English, *Michael! Mum!*, and in Polish, *Michał! Mamo!* Exclamations should not be treated as appellatives, if by that term we mean ‘the phrases which we use to name the person we are speaking to, and which adjoin a sentence expressing what we want to say’.

3. The division of sentences into those that use a familiar *T*-pronoun and those that use a polite *V*-pronoun has been based mainly on a study of languages such as English, French, or German, and is inadequate for two reasons:

a. There are numerous languages in which there are several pronouns on the scale between familiar informality and polite formality.

b. English, French, and German are non-pro-drop languages. There are, however, numerous pro-drop languages, in which the *FORM OF THE VERB* makes the use of a personal pronoun superfluous; therefore a division of forms of address based on the use of pronouns misses the point.

4. A *V*-form in a sentence directed at the interlocutor does not necessarily require a *V*-form in the appellative. Aside from that, the appellative may be in the vocative or the nominative case, so that different permutations are possible. This confirms the conclusion that discussing forms of address in terms of the opposition *T* versus *V* is an oversimplification.

5. I would like to suggest that it is the **verb form** in the sentence addressed to the interlocutor that we should consider **primary**. The appellative may or may not be there: there is no obligation to name the addressee. On the other hand, the appellative cannot stand alone; we expect it to be accompanied by a sentence directed at the interlocutor (otherwise it is an exclamation).

6. In every language, both appellatives and verb forms in sentences accompanying appellatives are laid out on a scale, stretching from **non-formal** to **formal**.

The 'non-formal' end includes 'familiar' and even 'intimate', while the 'formal' end comprises 'honorific'.

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