

## Interacting with vocatives!

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The goal of this talk is to account for a distributional difference between proper names (henceforth names) and common nouns (henceforth nouns): only names can be used as sentence initial vocatives without further marking. If a noun is used as a vocative of this type, it needs to be introduced by a special marker of address, such as *hey*, whereas this is optional with names (1). This difference between names and nouns cannot be reduced to the well-known fact that names are definite DPs. If names were a type of definite DP, other definite DPs should also function as vocatives, contrary to fact: Nouns preceded by a definite determiner cannot be vocatives (2).

- (1) a. \*(Hey) kid, that martini is for James.      b. (Hey) James, your martini is ready.  
 (2) \*Hey the kid, that martini is for James.

So why do names differ from both nouns and definite DPs in their ability to function as bare vocatives? And why do definite DPs resist vocativization altogether? We propose that these constraints on vocatives derive from **i)** the lexical representation of names and nouns and **ii)** the syntax of vocatives.

**i) Lexical representation of names and nouns:** We assume a division of the lexicon into *the narrow lexicon* and *the compendium*. The *narrow lexicon* contains syntactically relevant information for each root, morpheme and idiomatic phrase that the speaker knows, as well as its meaning. We assume that the meaning of a noun is its descriptive content whereas the meaning of a name is simply that it *is a* name (e.g. for a male or female person). The *compendium* contains extra-grammatical information about the items listed in the narrow lexicon. For nouns, the *compendium* contains sociolinguistic constraints on use and perhaps etymological information. The *compendium* also lists each individual that the speaker knows, and the names that they know them by. The entry for a given individual is associated with an *extensional index*, which is attached to all their names (e.g. *James Bond*<sub>007</sub>, *Bond*<sub>007</sub> and *James*<sub>007</sub>).

**ii) Syntax of vocatives:** We assume, following Ritter & Wiltschko (2018, 2019) that nominals contain an interactional layer of structure above the DP, as in (3). See also Hill (2007, 2014).

- (3) [<sub>ResponseP</sub> [<sub>GroundP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub>]]]

Sentence-initial vocatives are calls for the addressee's attention (Zwicky 1974). As such, they are realized in ResponseP, which has this interpretive function (Wiltschko & Heim 2016). More specifically, bare names are realized in Spec of ResponseP as in (4a). They are the only units of language that can associate with this position because they bear an extensional index. Vocatives consisting of *hey*+{name/bare noun} have a different structure. The function of *hey* is to turn a name or noun into a call on the addressee. Formally, we propose that *hey* assigns an *addressee index* to its complement. Thus, in the presence of *hey* both nouns and names are associated with GroundP, as in (4b). DPs, however, cannot function as complements of *hey* (4c) because they are indexed as discourse referents (DR). A DR is somebody we talk *about*, not somebody we talk *to*. A DP with a DR index cannot appear in GroundP, because GroundP is restricted to nominals that bear interactional indices, like addressee. In this respect, DPs differ from bare nouns, which have no index, and from names, which have an extensional index.

- (4) a. [<sub>RespP</sub> James<sub>007</sub> [<sub>GroundP</sub> [<sub>DP</sub>]]]  
 b. [<sub>RespP</sub> *hey* [<sub>GroundP</sub> {James<sub>007</sub>/kid}<sub>Adr</sub> [<sub>DP</sub>]]]  
 c. \* [<sub>RespP</sub> *hey* [<sub>GroundP</sub> [the husband]<sub>DR:i</sub> [<sub>DP</sub>]]]

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So why can names be used both for individuals we talk *to* and individuals we talk *about*? We propose that names are structurally ambiguous: When we talk to individuals we use bare names with their extensional index in the interactional layer; when we talk about individuals we use names as DPs with their DR index. Evidence comes from German dialects, where a definite article is required when a name is used as an argument, but is ungrammatical when the name is used as a vocative, as in (5).

- (5) a. (\*Der) Johann, der Martini ist fertig.                      b. Der Martini ist für \*(den) Johann.  
      '(\*the) Johann, the martini is ready.                      The martini is for the Johann.

## References

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