

being twins of each other ascribed distributively to two subsets of the set referred to by the subject, one consisting of Bill and Fred, the other of Mary and Jane.

### 19.3 Distributive interpretations in quantified constructions

Distributivity of the kind considered above does not mean that the property expressed in the predicative necessarily applies to every individual in the set referred to by the subject. Consider, for example:

- [17] *The office buildings downtown are skyscrapers.* [distributive]

This does not explicitly say (and thus does not have as a truth condition) that every individual office building downtown is a skyscraper (the old courthouse, for example, might be a single-storey edifice). To ensure an interpretation in which every atom either individually (in the case of distributive predicatives) or collectively (in the case of non-distributive ones) possesses the predicative complement property, explicit quantification is required. This is illustrated in the examples in [18], which have distributive interpretations, still in accordance with rule [12]:

- [18] i *All/Both the office buildings downtown are skyscrapers.*  
ii *The office buildings downtown are all/both skyscrapers.*

We find, however, that rule [12] does not apply in all cases of explicit quantification in that distributive interpretations can be obtained without pluralisation:

- [19] i *Ed's daughters are a nuisance.* [non-distributive]  
ii *Both Ed's daughters are nuisances / a nuisance.* [distributive]

In [i], only the collective interpretation of *a nuisance* is possible, since the only interpretation which can apply in the absence of pluralisation or quantification is the non-distributive one. With the presence of the quantifier *both* in [ii], however, the versions with *nuisances* and *a nuisance* are equivalent, having distributive interpretations in which each daughter individually is a nuisance. The semantic basis for the effect of the quantifier here is clear. *Both* itself yields a distributive interpretation (see §7.3), so that it is not essential for distributivity to be marked by pluralisation of the predicative, which can therefore maintain its basic singular form.<sup>75</sup> The plural, however, remains the default option, with the singular available only with a restricted range of predicatives. We could not, for example, have a singular in the *both* version of [18]: *#Both the office buildings downtown are a skyscraper.*

## 20 Proper names, proper nouns, and vocatives

### 20.1 The distinction between proper names and proper nouns

The central cases of **proper names** are expressions which have been conventionally adopted as the name of a particular entity – or, in the case of plurals like *the Hebrides*, a collection of entities. They include the names of particular persons or animals (*Mary*, *Smith*, *Fido*), places of many kinds (*Melbourne*, *Lake Michigan*, *the United States of*

<sup>75</sup>The quantifiers *each* and *every* are themselves explicitly distributive and as quantifiers in subject NPs enforce singularity on the whole clause, including the predicative complement: *Each/Every office building downtown is a skyscraper*. This can be seen as a fully grammaticalised version of the principle that distributive quantification removes the need for plural forms.

*America*), institutions (*Harvard University, the Knesset*), historical events (*the Second World War, the Plague*). The category also covers the names of days of the week, months of the year, and recurrent festivals, public holidays, etc. (*Easter, Passover, Ramadan*). In many cases there are different versions of a proper name, typically with one more formal than the other(s): *the United States of America vs the United States, the US, the States*, or *Elizabeth vs Liz and Lizzie*.

In their primary use proper names normally refer to the particular entities that they name: in this use they have the syntactic status of NPs.<sup>76</sup> For the most part, however, they can also be nominals that are parts of larger NPs: such nominals may be attributive modifiers or heads that are accompanied by dependents that are not part of the proper name itself. Compare:

- |     |   |                                      |            |
|-----|---|--------------------------------------|------------|
| [1] | i a. <i>She lives in New Zealand.</i>     | b. <i>Clinton was re-elected.</i>    | [full NP]  |
|     | ii a. <i>the New Zealand government</i>   | b. <i>the Clinton administration</i> | [modifier] |
|     | iii a. <i>the New Zealand of my youth</i> | b. <i>the new Clinton</i>            | [head]     |

**Proper nouns**, by contrast, are word-level units belonging to the category noun. *Clinton* and *Zealand* are proper nouns, but *New Zealand* is not. *America* is a proper noun, but *The United States of America* is not – and nor are *The United States* or *United* and *States* on their own. Proper nouns function as heads of proper names, but not all proper names have proper nouns as their head: the heads of such proper names as *The United States of America, the Leeward Islands, the University of Manchester*, for example, are common nouns. Proper names with common nouns as head often contain a smaller proper name as or within a dependent, but they do not need to: compare *Madison Avenue* and *Central Avenue*, or *Harvard University* and *The Open University*. We noted above that many proper names have alternant versions, and one type of alternation is between a formal name with a common noun as head and a less formal version with the common noun omitted: *The Tate Gallery* vs *The Tate*.

Proper nouns are nouns which are specialised to the function of heading proper names. There may be homonymy between a proper noun and a common noun, often resulting from historical reanalysis in one or other direction. For example, the underlined word in *the Earl of Sandwich* is a proper noun, while that in *a ham sandwich* is a common noun. Similarly proper *Rosemary* (a female name) is homonymous with common *rosemary* (denoting a type of shrub). As this formulation indicates, we take such cases to involve pairs of different words, so that we can still say that proper *Sandwich* and *Rosemary* are specialised to the proper name use. Note by contrast that we don't have homonymy in pairs like *the University of Manchester* and *I haven't yet decided which university to apply to*: there is a single word *university*, functioning as the head of a proper name NP in the first case and of an ordinary NP in the second. The difference, of course, is that while the University of Manchester is a university, Sandwich is not a sandwich, and so on.

## 20.2 The form of proper names

Most proper names, in their primary use, are NPs. The names of various kinds of artefact – the **titles** of written works, movies, TV programmes, etc. – allow a wider range

<sup>76</sup> Also included under the primary use is the non-referential use of proper names in identification statements: see §8.3 above.

of forms, including main clauses (e.g. declarative *White Men Can't Jump*, interrogative *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, imperative *Kiss Me Kate*) and subordinate interrogatives (*How the West was Won*; *How to Marry a Millionaire*). Even when they have the form of NPs, titles are much less constrained than other kinds of proper name and are excluded from the following account.

To a large extent the syntactic structure of proper names conforms to the rules for the structure of ordinary NPs, but there are a number of respects in which they depart from the general pattern. We consider first the question of determiners, and then look at the structure of proper names with composite heads.

### 20.2.1 Strong and weak proper names

By virtue of its use to refer to a particular entity or collection of entities that bears the name, a proper name is inherently definite. This excludes the inclusion of an indefinite determiner, and makes the marking of definiteness unnecessary. We distinguish, then, between **strong** proper names like *Kim* or *New York*, where there is no determiner, and **weak** proper names like *the Thames* or *the Bronx*, where definiteness is redundantly marked by the definite article *the*. In some names *the* is optional, so that we have both strong and weak versions: e.g. *Gambia* or *the Gambia*.<sup>77</sup>

Weak proper names normally lose the definite article when they don't constitute a full NP – when they are modifying the head of an NP or are themselves modified:

- [2] i *a Thames cruise, two United States warships, both Republic of Chad delegates*
- ii *It was [a very different Thames from the one I remembered from my youth].*

These are positions where the grammar allows nominals, not NPs, so the dropping of the article reduces the proper name to nominal form.<sup>78</sup> There are, however, differences among weak proper names as to how readily they enter into these constructions. It is virtually impossible, for example, to drop the article from *the Hague*: \**two Hague councillors, an impressively modernised Hague*.

Plural proper names are always weak. Plural names apply to mountain ranges (*the Alps, the Himalayas, the Urals*); island groups (*the Bahamas, the Hebrides, the Maldives*); occasional other geographical entities (*the Netherlands, the Balkans, the Dardanelles*). Groups of performers may have weak plural names (*the Beatles*) or strong collective singulars (*Abba*).

Among weak singular names with proper nouns as head we find the following types:

- [3] i *the Argentine, the Ukraine, (the) Sudan, (the) Yemen* [countries]
- ii *the Crimea, the Caucasus, the Ruhr* [geographically defined regions]
- iii *the Colisseum, the Pantheon, the Parthenon* [famous buildings]
- iv *the (River) Thames, the Potomac, the Bosphorus* [rivers, straits]

<sup>77</sup> Whether proper names are strong or weak is, from a cross-linguistic perspective, a rather arbitrary matter. Personal names like *Mary* are weak in modern Greek, but strong in English. Similarly, river names are invariably weak in English, but in Bulgarian some are strong and some weak. Nevertheless, as we shall see, there are some generalisations that can be made about the strong/weak distinction **within** English.

<sup>78</sup> There are some cases where the article is exceptionally retained in attributive modifier function, as in *The Gap State High School*. This refers to a state high school in a suburb of Brisbane called *The Gap*; such schools in suburbs with strong names have no article (cf. *Kenmore State High School*), so we can infer that *the* forms a constituent with *Gap* rather than being an immediate constituent of the matrix NP. Note, however, that the matrix NP in this case is itself a proper name: in ordinary NPs the article drops in the usual way: *Gap residents are protesting against this decision*.

v <i>the Adriatic, the Atlantic, the Mediterranean</i>	[seas, oceans]
vi <i>the Gobi, the Sahara, the Negev</i>	[deserts]
vii <i>the Eiger, the Jungfrau, the Matterhorn</i>	[Swiss Alpine peaks]
viii <i>the Knesset, the Kremlin, the Pentagon</i>	[political/military authorities]
ix <i>the Bodleian, the Guggenheim, the Tate</i>	[libraries, galleries, etc.]
x <i>the Bible, the Koran, the Talmud</i>	[religious tracts]
xi <i>The Economist, The Guardian, The Times</i>	[newspapers, periodicals]

There are in addition isolated weak names in other categories: e.g. *the Hague* as a city name, *the Bronx* naming a borough of New York City. The names in [i] are relatively exceptional: countries usually have strong names (and note *Argentina* as a strong version of *the Argentine*). Names of the categories illustrated in [ii–vi] are normally weak, but region names formed from Latinate proper nouns in ·ia are strong: *Scandinavia, Siberia, Transylvania*. Names of individual mountains (as opposed to ranges) are generally strong, but those in the Swiss Alps may have weak names, as in [vii]. The categories in [viii–x] are normally weak, as are the names of newspapers (with capitalised *The*). Periodicals often have strong names as their official titles: *New Scientist, Journal of Linguistics*; in most contexts, however, a weak alternant is used: *I doubt whether the New Scientist would publish a paper like that.*

### 20.2.2 Proper names with simple and composite heads

The head of a proper name is the name less the article in the case of weak names. This may be **simple**, i.e. a single noun (including compounds of various kinds: *Fortescue-Smythe, Alsace-Lorraine*), or **composite**, i.e. a nominal with internal syntactic structure.

#### Simple heads

In strong proper names, simple heads are normally proper nouns: *Kim, Jones, Boston, Italy*, etc. Within a family, however, there are constraints on the use of given names, so that kin terms are commonly used instead when a child is referring to an adult, or when one is talking to a child: *Mum/Mom/Mummy/Mother wants you; Have you seen Grandma/Granny/Nana?* In such cases the terms have the status of proper names, though they belong syntactically to the category of common nouns. One or two other common nouns can similarly be used with the status of proper names in restricted contexts: *Have you seen Nurse?*

#### Composite heads

The main kinds of composite head structures are illustrated in [4]:

- [4] i *Kim Jones, Emma Ann Barton, J. C. Smith, John C. Smith, J. Edgar Hoover*
- ii *Queen Mary, Pope John Paul, Major White, Nurse Fox, Dr Brown, Mr Black*
- iii *British Columbia, Upper Saxony, North America, the Northern Territory, New York, Long Island, Good Friday, the Iron Duke, the National Gallery*
- iv *Oxford Road, Harvard University, the Ford Foundation, Christ's College*
- v *Lake Michigan, Mount/Mt Everest, the River Thames, Ward 17*
- vi *The Isle of Skye, the Bay of Biscay, the University of Sydney, John of Gaunt, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Institute of Modern Art*
- vii *Henry Cotton Senior, Peter the Great, (King) George the Fifth / V*

### Combinations of given and family names

Personal names typically consist of a combination of one or more given (first, Christian) names and a family name (surname), as in [4i]; given names may be reduced to an initial letter. This construction is unique to personal names, and there is no convincing evidence for treating one element as head.

### Appellations

The underlined elements in [4ii] are appellations, pre-head modifiers of personal names, expressing the status of the individual concerned.<sup>79</sup> The kinds of status they indicate include: royal/aristocratic office or rank (*King, Queen, Prince, Earl, Lord, Emperor, Count*, etc.); clerical office (*Pope, Archbishop, Sister*); military and police rank (*Private, Captain, Squadron Leader, Admiral, Inspector*); political office (*President, Senator, Governor, Councillor*); judicial office (*Judge*); academic status (*Dr, Professor*). The default set of appellations – *Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss, Master* – indicate sex and in some cases also marital or maturity status. It is arguable whether appellations form part of the proper name or are an embellishment of it; the case for including them within the name would seem to be stronger in cases like *King George* or *Pope John* (where a particular personal name is chosen for use with the appellation on accession to the office) than with others. Some combinations of appellations are permitted: *Professor Sir Ernest Rutherford, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth*.

### Other pre-head dependents

Pre-head dependents may, as in ordinary NPs, have the form of adjectives ([4iii]) or nouns – generally nouns that are themselves proper names ([iv]), or **descriptors** indicating what kind of entity the name applies to ([v]). The descriptors are generally ommissible: compare *Everest, the Thames*, and so on. The others tend to be an essential part of the name, but in a few cases are ommissible too, as when *the States* is used as an informal variant of *the United States*. As elsewhere, the construction is recursive: compare [*New [South Wales]*] or [[*Cambridge University*] *Press*].

Genitives, such as *Christ's* in [4iv], we take to be modifiers not determiners. They occur readily in names that are themselves functioning as modifier within a larger construction, as in *a Christ's College don*: this is a construction which accepts nominals but not full NPs in modifier position. Such genitives cannot normally contain a determiner – compare *King's College, Women's College*, etc.

### Post-head dependents

These most often have the form of PPs, generally headed by *of*, as in [4vi]. The oblique NP in this construction is commonly another proper name. A different kind of post-head dependent is seen in [4vii]: *Junior* is an adjective while the other two have the form of fused modifier-head NPs. Such post-head dependents as *the Great* occur only in proper names.

## 20.3 Embellishments

Proper names may occur, with the status of nominals, as head of a larger NP that refers to the bearer of the name:

<sup>79</sup>The term ‘title’ is more commonly used than ‘appellation’, but we have used ‘title’ for the proper name of a literary work or comparable artefact, and from a grammatical point of view appellations and titles are quite different.

- [5] i architect Norman Foster, mother of two Eileen Jones, special agent Cully, well-born Hampshire gentleman John Grant, nuclear physicist Lord Rutherford  
 ii beautiful Italy, dear old Mr Smithers, poor Henry, sunny Italy, historic Virginia; the inimitable Oscar Wilde, the distraught Empress Alexandra  
 iii Who's [this Penelope who's been sending you emails]?, [That Senator Fox] should be locked up, [Your Mr Jenkins] has been arrested again!

The underlined elements are semantically non-restrictive dependents that we refer to as **embellishments** of the proper name. The examples in [5] illustrate three main kinds of embellishment: nominal and adjectival attributive modifiers, and determiners.

Nominal modifiers generally occur with personal names and serve to categorise the person concerned. The construction is to be distinguished from the one where the proper name is an appositive: in *architect Norman Foster* the proper name is head and *architect* an ommissible embellishment, whereas in *the architect Norman Foster* the head is *architect* and the proper name is an ommissible appositive dependent.<sup>80</sup> We noted above that it is arguable whether appellations should be regarded as part of the proper name or as embellishments; certainly expressions like *Secretary of State Colin Powell* or *Prime Minister Tony Blair*, used more extensively in AmE than in BrE, bear a significant resemblance to those in [5i].

Adjectives occur as embellishments of proper names in two constructions: in bare NPs or in ones determined (redundantly) by *the*, as in the last two examples of [5ii]. The bare NP construction is restricted to a fairly small set of adjectives with emotive colouring: *beautiful* and *ugly*, *young* and *old*, and so on. The determined NP construction allows a somewhat larger range including *beautiful*, *dazzling*, *incomparable*, *inimitable*, *irrepressible*, *unfortunate*, *wretched*, and adjectives denoting emotional states such as *distraught*, *furious*, *jealous*. Such adjectives can in general modify the head of weak proper names: *the ill-fated Titanic*.

The main determiners that are used as embellishments are the demonstratives and genitive personal pronouns, as in [5iii]. The genitive indicates a close relationship: *your Mr Jenkins* suggests that you are a close acquaintance of Mr Jenkins. Often it is a parental relationship: [*My Jennifer*] has won the school prize again.

#### 20.4 Secondary uses of proper names

In their primary use proper names are inherently definite, and for this reason their heads do not select from the determiner system in the same way as ordinary heads in NP structure. Proper names also have various secondary uses where this inherent definiteness is lost, and where determiners are thus selected in the ordinary way.<sup>81</sup> Five such uses may be distinguished:

<sup>80</sup>The presence or absence of *the* does not serve to distinguish apposition from non-apposition in the case of such titles as *Emperor*, *Empress*, *Archduke*, which occur in both strong and weak proper names: *Emperor Haile Selassie* or *the Emperor Haile Selassie*. *The emperor Haile Selassie*, however, is possible though unlikely as an appositive construction.

<sup>81</sup>Note, then, that in its primary use a noun such as *Kim* is non-count: it is only in certain of the secondary uses that it can combine with numerals and hence qualify as a count noun.

## (a) To denote a set of bearers of the name

- [6] i [The Mary that you met yesterday] is my fiancée.  
 ii I've never met [an Ophelia] before.  
 iii There are [two Showcase Cinemas] in Manchester.  
 iv Shall we invite [the Smiths]?  
 v Was it [THE Bill Gates] he was talking about?

This use exploits the fact that names are quite typically not uniquely assigned. Although there is only one country named *Zaire*, there are thousands of people named *Mary*. The name *Mary* can then denote the set of people bearing this name, rather than some specific individual, as in the primary use. As a set-denoting noun, the name *Mary* then takes a full range of dependents, including determiners and restrictive modifiers, comparable to those permitted by common nouns. In [i], for example, I select from amongst the set of people named *Mary* the particular one that you met yesterday, and in [ii] I say that I have never met a person named *Ophelia*. Example [iii] illustrates the use of a proper name with a common noun head: it says there are two cinemas with that name in Manchester. A more specific use is seen in [iv]: *the Smiths* refers to an identifiable group of people with the surname *Smith*; here it will be a married couple or a family, but in other contexts it might be a dynasty. In [v] the stressed article indicates reference to the famous bearer of the name, as opposed to other people with that name.

## (b) To denote a set of entities having relevant properties of the bearer of the name

- [7] i We need [another Roosevelt].  
 ii She's [no Florence Nightingale].

In [i] we understand “another person with the properties associated with Roosevelt”, while [ii] says that she doesn't have the properties needed to qualify as another Florence Nightingale.

## (c) To denote a set of manifestations of the bearer of the name

- [8] i This is not [the Paris I used to know].  
 ii This is [a United States I prefer to forget].  
 iii [The young Isaac Newton] showed no signs of genius.

In [i] I distinguish between a previous manifestation of Paris (which may have been a pleasant one), and a current manifestation. Example [ii] shows that, in this use, a normally plural name can head a singular NP – when we are concerned with a single manifestation. In [iii] the adjective *young* is used restrictively: what is referred to is the manifestation of Isaac Newton in his youth, rather than as an established scientist; such a use should be contrasted with the non-restrictive embellishment use of the adjective in *Young Isaac Newton went off to Cambridge*.

## (d) To denote a set of products created by the bearer of the name

- [9] i The gallery has acquired [a new Rembrandt].  
 ii Let's listen to [some Beethoven] tonight.

In [i] the gallery has acquired a new picture by Rembrandt, and in [ii] I want us to listen to some music by Beethoven. As this latter example demonstrates, this use allows non-count as well as count interpretations.

This use covers various commercial products: in *She was driving [a Ford]*, for example, we understand “a car manufactured by Ford (i.e. the Ford Motor Company)”. This case is to be distinguished, however, from *She was driving [a Cortina]*, where *Cortina* is a tradename but not a proper name. It is not a name assigned to an **individual**: rather, it is a term coined to denote a **kind**. The same applies to a great number of commercial names. In *I bought [some Maltesers]*, for example, *Malteser* is simply a common noun denoting a kind of chocolate confection.

#### (e) To denote a set of copies/editions, etc., of the entity bearing the name

- [10] i *Can I borrow [your Guardian] for a few minutes?*
- ii *The film was reviewed in [yesterday's Herald-Tribune].*

This use is largely restricted to proper names belonging to the category of titles. These examples involve newspaper titles: we understand “your copy of ‘The Guardian’”, “yesterday’s edition of the ‘(New York) Herald-Tribune’”. The particular interpretation will depend on the kind of work bearing the title: compare *last night’s ‘Carmen’* (“performance”), *Peter Hall’s ‘Hamlet’* (“production”).

### 20.5 NPs in vocative function

NPs serving as terms of address are said to be in **vocative** function.<sup>82</sup>

- [11] *What do you think, Senator Fox?*

The main kinds of NP that can realise the vocative function are illustrated in:

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| [12] i <i>Mary, Smith, Mary Smith, Mr/Dr Smith, Sir John</i>                 | [personal names]          |
| ii <i>Mum/Mom/Mummy; son, daughter, aunt, uncle, cousin</i>                  | [kin terms]               |
| iii <i>Your Majesty, Your (Royal) Highness, Ma’am, sir, madam</i>            | [status terms]            |
| iv <i>driver, officer</i> (“member of police force”), <i>waiter, vicar</i>   | [occupational terms]      |
| v <i>buddy</i> (AmE), <i>mate</i> (BrE/AusE), <i>gentlemen, ladies, guys</i> | [general terms]           |
| vi <i>darling, dear, honey, love, sweetheart, gorgeous, handsome</i>         | [terms of endearment]     |
| vii <i>fatty, idiot, imbecile, nitwit, slowcoach, swine</i>                  | [derogatory terms]        |
| viii <i>you, you-all</i> (Southern US), <i>you with the glasses</i>          | [2nd person pronoun]      |
| ix <i>somebody, anybody, everybody, someone</i>                              | [compound determinatives] |

Personal nouns are used alone or with certain appellations. The use of a surname alone, once quite prevalent in Victorian Britain, is now restricted to a very few contexts, such as certain British public schools and the armed forces (addressing those of low rank). Forms like *Mary Smith* are also contextually restricted, but may be used in the classroom, especially if there is more than one Mary in the class. The kin terms include those that can be used with the status of proper names, but also others, such as *son* or *cousin*, that are hardly possible as proper names. (As a vocative, *son* can be applied to any young male, and in this sense it belongs with the general terms in [v].) The status terms include a good number of appellations. There are also special vocative terms for aristocrats and others of especially high status: *Your Majesty, Ma’am* (for the Queen), *My Lord, Your*

<sup>82</sup>The term ‘vocative’ is standardly used for both a function, as here, and, where relevant, a case (contrasting with nominative, accusative, etc.) used in vocative function. English of course has no vocative case, and hence ‘vocative’ is used in this grammar exclusively for the function.

*Honour* (for a judge), and so on. Some appellations and other terms have *Mr* or *Madam* added for the vocative: *Mr President*, *Madam Chair*/<sup>%</sup>*Chairman*. *Sir* and *Madam* are the polite terms for strangers (or in certain contexts for those of higher social rank); *Mr* and *Mrs* would generally be considered non-standard or impolite as vocatives, though *Miss* is used for girls or young women (and schoolteachers). The occupational terms in [iv] are not used as appellations, and as vocatives are normally used only when the person addressed is engaged in the relevant occupation.

General human nouns are often accompanied by such dependents as *my*, *old*, *young*: *my boy/girl*, *old chap* (BrE), *young man*. Genitive *my* is also often used with the terms of endearment: *my darling*; some of these terms are used as attributes to personal names or general nouns, as in *darling Anna*, *my dear friends*. Vocative *gorgeous*, *handsome*, and the like are syntactically NPs with fusion of modifier and head of a type permitted only in vocative function. Derogatory terms are commonly accompanied by determinative *you*, as in *you stupid bastard*, etc. The pronoun *you* (or *you-all*) in [12viii], by contrast, is head of the vocative NP. Among the compound determinatives ([ix]) the *some*- and *any*- forms are used when no specific person is addressed: *Fetch me a chair*, *somebody!* One further vocative type is the fused relative in, say, *Come out, whoever you are!*, characteristically used when I can't see you or otherwise don't know who you are.

Vocatives can be used to call someone (*Kim, dinner's ready!*), to attract their attention, to single out one person among a group as the addressee, and so on. It will be clear from the above survey, however, that vocative terms generally convey a considerable amount about the speaker's social relations or emotive attitude towards the addressee, and their primary or sole purpose is often to give expression to this kind of meaning, as in *Yes, sir!* or *I agree, my dear, that it's quite a bargain.*

A vocative can stand alone without any sense of ellipsis, and for this reason cannot be regarded as a dependent of the verb. It is best regarded as a kind of interpolation – one that can appear, like certain adjuncts, in front, central, or end position (cf. Ch. 8, §20).