Dear, my dear, my lady, your ladyship
Meaning and use of address term modulation by *my*

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This paper investigates the use of *my* as part of address formulae by means of a corpus consisting of eight British English plays published between 1899 and 1912. For each conversational turn, address terms, speaker, addressee, power and solidarity dynamics, and speech acts have been identified. The address terms most frequently modified by *my* have been selected for further investigation, which allows an analysis of the alternation between *dear* and *my dear*, as well as *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship*. Results show that, when *my* has impact on the power dimension, the address formula with *my* construes the addressee as less powerful than the speaker. When *my* has impact on the solidarity dimension, the address formula with *my* construes the addressee as a close interlocutor. The functional import of *my* varies depending on the address term it modifies, which is consistent with its function as a modulating element.

Keywords: address system, 20th century, British English, drama texts, modulation, speech act analysis

1. Introduction

In any language, there is an impressive range of options speakers can choose from to address their interlocutor. As such, language allows speakers to construe the addressee in many different ways. Research on address usage has focused on identifying the various determinants that shape speakers' choices. For pronominal address terms, Brown and Gilman (1960) have introduced power and solidarity as essential, defining dimensions. They observe that many European languages distinguish between two second-person pronouns: a T pronoun (after Latin *tu*) and a V pronoun (after Latin *vos*). A speaker using a T-pronoun construes the addressee as socially inferior to the speaker (power), or as intimate with the

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speaker (solidarity). The V pronoun is then used to construe the addressee as socially superior to the speaker (power) or unfamiliar with the speaker (solidarity). This power-and-solidarity model has been used to explain the variation between address terms for different languages, including different stages of English. The model has also been applied to nominal address terms by Brown and Ford (1961), who argue that the contrast between GIVEN NAME and TITLE + SURNAME resembles the T/V contrast. The system of nominal address terms is much more open-ended than a pronominal T/V system. Nevertheless, for Modern English as well Present-Day English, linguists have tried to identify functional profiles of nominal address terms, often relying at least implicitly on the power-and-solidarity model. Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1995), for instance, note that, in the seventeenth century, nicknames are used when gentlemen address other gentlemen (power) who are friends (solidarity). Similarly, Leech (1999) argues that familiarizers such as *buddy* and *mate*, mark the relation between speaker and addressee as friendly (solidarity) and as equal (power).

In their account of nominal address terms, Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1995), as well as Busse (2006), observe that address terms can be used in many different combinations, i.e. they can function as modifiers in complex address formulae, such as *my most dear cousin*. Especially since some address terms, such as *old, little* and *my*, are uniquely used as modifiers, a closer examination of modifying address terms is particularly interesting. In their analysis of a corpus of letters, Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1995) distinguish between noun modifiers (e.g. *master* and *brother*), modifying adjectives (e.g. *honoured* and *dear*), intensifiers (e.g. *right* and *most*), and the possessive pronoun *my* or *mine*. They give an overview of the address terms that most often co-occur in complex address formulae and trace the popularity of specific modifiers throughout the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth century. In the same vein, Busse (2006) notes that, in her corpus of Shakespearean plays, *my lord* is the most frequent collocation and *good* is the most frequent modifying adjective. Busse also remarks that the modifying address term *good*, like many modifiers, clearly displays "a variety of semantic meaning and interpersonal shades" (2006, 219). However, the investigation of a modifier's impact on the functional profiles of address formulae remains a challenge for address research. Especially when examining modifying address terms that occur in a wide range of address formulae, it becomes clear that an investigation of the address term's semantics does not suffice.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the use of *my* as part of address formulae, as in (1). Even though *my* is one of the most frequent modifying address terms, a systematic functional analysis of *my* is lacking. For this reason, this paper aims to examine how including *my* in an address formula affects the way in which a speaker uses the address formula to construe the addressee in terms of power and

solidarity. Earlier studies have already described *my* as a marker of intensified intimacy and affection between speaker and addressee (Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 1995, 556). Busse, for instance, notes that deictic elements such as *my* serve as a form of orientation by reference to the speaker, and that, in the case of *my*, the direct and immediate address of the speaker to the addressee is highlighted (2006, 96). She goes on to argue that, when Ophelia addresses Hamlet with *my lord*, the address term not only marks deference, but also emphasizes that Hamlet has once been Ophelia's lover and that he might still be obsessed by her beauty (2006, 97). In another example, Antony addresses Cleopatra with *my precious queen*. According to Busse, *my* indicates Antony's twofold identity: his "Roman sense of male dominance and his possession of Cleopatra' and 'the sincere, emotional, personal, and more Egyptian wish to stay with her" (2006, 198). In the same vein, Nevala (2004) makes some observations that suggest that *my* is associated with a high degree of solidarity. She notes that, although in direct address, *my* is mostly a conventionalized part of the address formula, *my* is most often used in combination with kin terms, such as *my brother*, and seems to have been excluded or replaced by *dear* in later uses (Nevala 2004, 2146). Still, although *my* seems to be a marker of intimacy, Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg also mention that *my* "may simply delimit the described reciprocal relationship between two persons" (1995, 556). The analysis presented in this paper, which investigates *my*'s functional import by comparing the use of *dear* and *my dear*, as well as *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship*, will demonstrate that *my* does affect the speaker's construal of the addressee, and that adding *my* to the address formula not only affects its meaning in terms of solidarity but also in terms of power, depending on the address term *my* modifies.

(1) *My dear*, I wish you could be frank without being sententious. (MAU1912)

In what follows, the functional profile of *my* will be investigated by means of an analysis of nominal address terms in a corpus of eight British English plays, published between 1899 and 1912. Section 2 below gives some background on the notions of power and solidarity, and how they have been shown to influence address usage in English. Section 3 describes the corpus data and the annotation procedure. In Section 4, we discuss the results and concluding remarks are offered in Section 5.

2. Theoretical framework

Address terms constitute a core resource for realizing social deixis, marking the relation between speaker and addressee. In order to fully understand the linguistic

meaning of address terms, it is necessary to identify the determinants that define speaker-addressee interactions. Seminal work by Brown and Gilman (1960) has introduced the power-and-solidarity model,[1] which has been shown to motivate some kind of default address usage between two interlocutors. Brown and Gilman (1960) for instance note that parents address their children with the T pronoun and receive V in return, and that siblings address each other with the T pronoun, while strangers opt for V. In those cases, power and solidarity are usually interpreted in terms of age difference or family membership, which remain constant for one pair of interlocutors.

However, power and solidarity have also proven to be flexible dimensions: power and solidarity dynamics between two interlocutors can change depending on the context. A number of studies on pronominal address terms have shown that a speaker can alternate between the T pronoun and the V pronoun when addressing the same interlocutor, even within the same conversation. This type of pronoun switching has been defined as a momentary shift of mood (Brown and Gilman 1960), or as a mixed style in which the speaker can express affect (Aalberse 2004). Although these definitions aim to highlight that pronoun switching is associated with emotionally loaded situations, qualitative analyses also show that switching indicates a temporary change in the solidarity and/or power dynamics between speaker and addressee. In her analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Mazzon argues that Claudius, who normally uses V to address Laertes, switches to T "to offer solidarity for the younger man's mourning and his desire of revenge" (2003, 233). Similarly, Vismans observes that the host in a contemporary Dutch radio show switches from T to V when his guest, a politician, moves on from a personal account to a more serious, controversial political topic (2016, 124). Vismans notes that the host's switching to the V pronoun might encode a temporary decrease in intimacy (2016, 125). These qualitative analyses show that, depending on the context, speakers may want to modify or highlight existing power and/or solidarity dynamics, which is then reflected in the construal of the addressee by means of address usage. Note that context has been defined in terms of style and topic (Vismans 2016), but has been interpreted pragmatically as well (Mazzon 2003; Norrby et al. 2018), i.e. differences in speech acts might influence address usage. The investigation of address usage by means of a speech act analysis has also been suggested by Martiny, who notes that address terms "play an important role in the performance of speech acts" (1996, 767). As such, identifying speech acts will be a fundamental part of the analysis presented in this paper, since it can reveal context-dependent changes in power and solidarity.

1. The large amount of terminological variation regarding the power-and-solidarity model has been summarized by Spencer-Oatey (1996).

As address terms are important resources for encoding aspects of the social relationship holding between speaker and addressee, it is not surprising that politeness studies have identified address usage as a politeness strategy (Brown and Levinson 1987; Brown and Gilman 1989; Culpeper 1996). This means that address terms can be recruited by speakers who want to mitigate a face-threatening act (or FTA). Brown and Levinson, for instance, identify the address term *sir* in (2) as a politeness strategy that fits the heavy FTA context (1987, 183). In short, when a speech act has the potential to harm the addressee's face, address usage makes it possible to encode certain aspects of the speaker-addressee relation in order to soften the potential harm.

(2) Excuse me, *sir*, but would you mind if I close the window?
(Brown and Levinson 1987, 183)

In their politeness framework, Brown and Levinson (1987) note that the relative power and social distance between speaker and addressee have an impact on whether a speech act is face-threatening, and as a consequence, on the use of politeness markers such as address terms. This way, Brown and Levinson's politeness framework (1987) is in agreement with Brown and Gilman's power-and-solidarity model (1960). Importantly, Brown and Levinson (1987) also distinguish between two types of face-threatening acts, which require different politeness strategies. When the speaker intends to impede the addressee's freedom of action (= negative FTA), the face-threatening act can be softened by negative politeness, which emphasizes the addressee's relative power (Brown and Levinson 1987, 130). When the speaker indicates a lack of care for the addressee's feelings or wants (= positive FTA), the face-threatening act can be softened by positive politeness, which shows that the speaker wants to 'come closer' to the addressee (Brown and Levinson 1987, 103). These descriptions of negative and positive politeness demonstrate that speakers can change the way in which they encode speaker-addressee relations in terms of power and solidarity, depending on the presence of a face-threatening act (i.e. the extent to which a speech act is face-threatening) and the type of face threat it involves (i.e. whether the speech act is a threat to the addressee's positive or negative face). Brown and Levinson indeed argue that situational factors have an impact on the values for power and solidarity, so that the values assessed hold only for speaker and addressee in a particular context, and for a particular face-threatening act (1987, 79). Again, parallels can be drawn with the context-dependent notions of power and solidarity that have been shown to influence address usage in qualitative analyses. The interpretation of context in terms of speech act pragmatics seems to be especially relevant when address usage is understood as a politeness strategy. In what follows, all address terms will be analysed in terms of politeness, i.e. whether they are most likely employed as a

positive or negative politeness strategy, and whether they occur when politeness is particularly urgent.

The analysis presented in this paper examines address terms in terms of power and solidarity, which are considered stable as well as flexible dimensions. This means that, on the one hand, the annotation for power and solidarity describes the relationship between speaker and addressee by means of relatively constant characteristics. On the other hand, the speaker's construal of the addressee in terms of power and solidarity is expected to change depending on context, particularly the speech act involved. For this reason, speech acts, including face-threatening acts, have been identified.

3. Methodology

3.1 Corpus

This study of *my* as a part of address formulae is based on a corpus of eight British English plays, published between 1899 and 1912. Table 1 gives an overview of the plays and their authors (five men, three women), the years of publication and the size of each play. Corpus size is expressed in the number of speaker turns rather than in the number of words, as the turns are treated as the units of analysis in this study.

Table 1. Selected plays

Author	Year of publication	Title	Size (in turns)	Reference
Arthur Wing Pinero	1899	*The Gay Lord Quex*	1,689	PIN1899
Henry Arthur Jones	1903	*Whitewashing Julia*	1,378	JON1903
John Galsworthy	1909	*Strife*	727	GAL1909
Harley Granville Barker	1910	*The Madras House*	1,382	BAR1910
Florence Bell	1910	*The Way The Money Goes*	920	BEL1910
Elizabeth Baker	1911	*Chains*	1,156	BAK1911
Cicely Hamilton	1911	*Just To Get Married*	1,137	HAM1911
Somerset Maugham	1912	*Lady Frederick*	1,233	MAU1912

This corpus consists of comedies and social realist plays, which have been chosen because they aim to depict contemporary, everyday life. They were pub-

lished at a time when British theater is increasingly interested in naturalistic drama texts, and favors more natural dialogue and a sincere effort to make the stage the mirror of life (Thorndike 1965, 561). Still, a corpus of drama texts contains constructed dialogues and has its disadvantages for pragmatic analysis (as pointed out by Austin 1962 and Taavitsainen and Jucker 2003). Even though the plays in this corpus have been selected because they aim to depict contemporary life, the social relations in the fictional world of the plays do not necessarily reflect real-life relationships. On the contrary, the drama texts in our corpus often select unusual or strenuous relationships, in order to achieve comic effect or another form of emotional release. However, this does not necessarily affect the pragmatic meaning of address terms: address usage can adjust to the fictional social universe of the plays (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2003; Buyle and De Smet 2018). Furthermore, drama texts are particularly useful for an analysis of address usage. They give access to many different and easily identifiable speaker-addressee relations. Stage directions too are particularly useful when describing turns in terms of power and solidarity. Finally, as drama texts consist almost entirely of dialogues, nominal address terms occur frequently and enable a quantitative approach.

3.2 Annotation procedure

For each turn in the corpus, address terms have been identified, as well as the speaker and the addressee. Each turn has also been annotated for power and solidarity, which have been shown to affect a speaker's address choices. As a first step, power and solidarity have been interpreted in terms of stable social roles. This means that, typically, all the turns in which one speaker addresses one fixed interlocutor (e.g. all the turns in which Philip addresses Thomas in *The Madras House*) receive the same value for power (e.g. level) and for solidarity (e.g. close). As a second step, power and solidarity have been interpreted as context-dependent dimensions, and the speech acts with which address terms occur have been identified. The following paragraphs explain how these three determinants, i.e. power, solidarity and context, have been operationalized.

The annotation of speaker-addressee relations along the stable power and solidarity dimensions is primarily based on social role sets, such as parent-child or husband-wife. These role sets have been identified and classified according to their relevance for power (cf. Table 2) and solidarity (cf. Table 3) in reliance on previous research on address usage or politeness (Brown and Gilman 1960; Bates and Benigni 1975; Hook 1984; Jaramillo 1996; Spencer-Oatey 1996; Moreno 2002; Fanego 2005; Hickey and Stewart 2005; Clyne et al. 2006; Levshina 2017). Mainly based on these role sets, speaker-addressee relations in our corpus have received values for the stable power and solidarity dimensions. The power determinant

has three possible values: upward, downward and level. Speaker-addressee relations have been marked as upward when the addressee has the ability to influence the speaker, while the speaker does not; they have been marked as downward when the speaker has the ability to influence the addressee, while the addressee does not; and they have been marked as level when there is no obvious power asymmetry. For instance, when the leader of a group addresses a regular member, the speaker has the ability to influence the addressee, which means the speaker-addressee relation is marked as downward. The solidarity determinant has three possible values: distant, close and service. Speaker-addressee relations have been marked as distant when speaker and addressee have never interacted before or had limited contact; and they have been marked as close when speaker and addressee interact regularly, with high degrees of emotional involvement. For instance, if speaker and addressee are immediate colleagues, they can be expected to interact regularly and be involved in each other's lives, which means the speaker-addressee relation is marked as close. The master-servant role set has been classified separately and labelled service, and includes relations in which speaker and addressee find themselves in a master-servant relationship. The master-servant role set has received a separate value for solidarity because, contrary to other role sets, solidarity can be asymmetrical: servants can be very much involved in their masters' lives, while masters know little about their servants' personal affairs.

In most cases, speaker-addressee relations can be described by means of the same role set during the entire play, but this is not always the case. Interlocutors can adopt new roles, and their values for power or solidarity might change. Changes usually occur after time lapses, which coincide with changes of scene. For instance, two young people might meet for the first time in one scene, and be in love in the next scene. In that case, the role set assigned to this speaker-addressee relation changes from 'strangers' (distant) to 'lovers' (close). Importantly, although role sets are relatively uncontroversial measures of power and solidarity, they do not always translate easily to the power and solidarity dynamics in real life or, for that matter, fiction, which are often more complex. For instance, two interlocutors might be brothers (level), but also boss and employee (upward/downward), and in practice, these role sets are not easily distinguishable. Moreover, as the plays in our corpus often deliberately violate social rules, the translation of role sets to the universes of the plays might become potentially problematic. For instance, while it seems rather unlikely that the boss of a factory would have considered an employee as his equal in the beginning of the 20th century, it is quite plausible in Galsworthy's *Strife*, where a strike rearranges traditional hierarchies. For these reasons, we have made adjustments to the annotations based on role sets if the plot gives clear evidence that they are inconsistent

with actual power or solidarity dynamics (see above). A final note on the annotation procedure for the power determinant considers the speaker-addressee relations that do not correspond with any previously established role sets (as summarized in Table 2). Those relations have been classified as level, unless the plot gives unambiguous evidence of the contrary.

Table 2. Role sets relevant to the power dimension

Power value	**Role set**
upward/ downward	leader of a group/regular member of a group; company hierarchy (different levels); teacher/student; employed service provider/customer; family members (different generations); master/servant; adult/child; caretaker/elderly patient; gangster/ victim; homeowner/boarder; official/citizen; nobility/commoner; rich (does not have to work)/poor (needs to work)
level	company hierarchy (same level); self-employed service provider/customer; family members (same generation); husband/wife; young lovers

Table 3. Role sets relevant to the solidarity dimension

Solidarity value	**Role set**
distant	strangers; interlocutors who are relatively unacquainted with each other
close	(nuclear) family; in-laws; in-laws-to-be; friends; lovers; colleagues; neighbours (live in the same town)
service	master/servant

Context has been interpreted in terms of speech act pragmatics. For each address term under investigation, speech acts have been identified in the communicative units (henceforth C-units) to which the address terms belong. In order to distinguish between different C-units, we follow Leech, who defines the C-unit as "a unit with optimal syntactic independence, in that it is not part of a larger syntactic unit, except by means of coordination" (1999, 108). For all instances in our corpus, C-units correspond with the orthographic units divided by full stops, (semi-)colons, exclamation marks or question marks. The identification of speech acts is based on Weigand's dialogic principle, which claims that individual speech acts are part of a dialogic sequence, including an initiative and a reactive action (2009, 30). In our analysis, the C-unit is always considered as part of such a dialogic sequence: other units within the speaker's turn, as well as the addressee's initiative or reactive action within the same dialogic sequence, influence the identification of the C-unit's speech act. An example of such a dialogic sequence can

be found in (3). In the first turn, Maggie takes the initiative and expresses her worries about the future, while in the second turn, Lily reacts by reassuring Maggie. The speech act in the C-unit to which the address term *dear* belongs can only be properly analyzed as part of the dialogic sequence: Lily's aim is to reassure Maggie, and not to make a mere statement about the future.

(3) a. [Maggie to Lily] I wish I was a good housekeeper, Lil.
b. [Lily to Maggie] Oh, you'll soon learn, *dear*; and his other housekeeper wasn't very good. (BAK1911)

As a next step, speech acts are organized according to Leech's speech act classification (1983). In the same vein as Brown and Levinson (1987), Leech classifies speech acts according to how they relate to the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity (1983). He distinguishes four functional types: competitive, convivial, collaborative and conflictive speech acts (as summarized in Table 4). Leech (1983) tentatively remarks that with collaborative speech acts, politeness seems largely irrelevant, while with convivial speech acts, positive politeness is most likely. He also notes that with competitive speech acts, negative politeness can be expected, while impoliteness strategies are likely occur with conflictive speech acts. In other words, collaborative speech acts might be considered as face-neutral, convivial speech acts as face-enhancing, and competitive and conflictive speech acts as face-threatening.

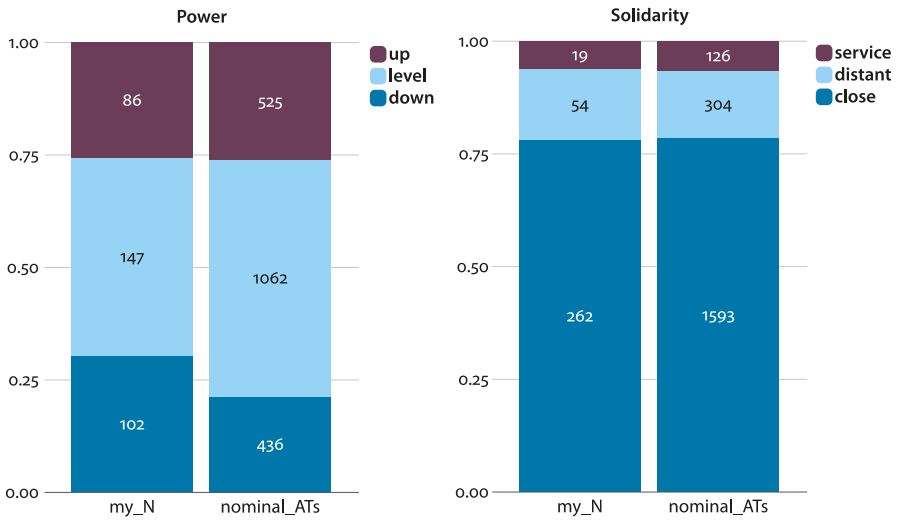
Table 4. Leech's speech act classification (1983)

Speech act type	Definition and examples
collaborative	the illocutionary goal is indifferent to the social goal; e.g. asserting, reporting, announcing, instructing
convivial	the illocutionary goal coincides with the social goal; e.g. offering, inviting, greeting, thanking, congratulating
competitive	the illocutionary goal competes with the social goal; e.g. ordering, asking, demanding, begging
conflictive	the illocutionary goal conflicts with the social goal; e.g. threatening, accusing, cursing, reprimanding

By exhaustively listing all the speech acts an address term occurs with, we hope to gain more insight into its pragmatic functions.

4. Results

Based on the coding of address terms for power, solidarity and context, it is possible to identify functional profiles. First, we aim to describe *my*'s functional profile in terms of the stable power and solidarity dimensions. To this end, the number of turns in which *my* occurs are compared with the number of turns that contain nominal address terms, but not *my*. Note that this measure for comparison only serves as a first step in the analysis and is to be thought of as strictly exploratory, since it contains many different address terms and does not make a difference between turns that consist of more than one address term and those that do not. Still, it gives an instructive first impression of *my*'s position in the corpus.



Figures 1 and 2. Power and solidarity: *my* and other nominal address terms

Figure 1 shows the distribution of turns with *my* for power and reveals that *my*, in comparison with other nominal address terms, is more often used in turns marked as downward ($p < 0.001$, $\chi^2 = 12.915$, $df = 1$). Figure 2, in comparison, shows that the distribution of solidarity values for *my* is, on the whole, not significantly different from the distribution for other nominal address terms. Arguably, power is more important than solidarity in explaining *my*'s meaning. At the same time, it is important to note that *my* is in fact very versatile, occurring in all relation types as defined by power and solidarity, which in the end may be consistent with its

function as a modulating element. This is also evident from Table 5, which lists all nominal address terms that are modified by *my*.

Table 5. Nominal address terms modified by *my*

Address term	Frequency
dear **+ NOUN**	**139**
GIVEN NAME	54
VARIANT OF GIVEN NAME	17
KIN TERM	15
TITLE + SURNAME	12
boy	11
(little) girl	10
friend, lady + SURNAME	3
admiral, (sweet) child, duchess, lad, lady, SURNAME	2
captain + SURNAME, *chap*	1
dear	**79**
HONORIFIC (no other modifiers than *my*)	**75**
lord	40
lady	35
other	**48**
(good, little, own) girl	12
(poor) boy	11
darling	4
friend, love, (good, old) man	3
lad, (good) GIVEN NAME	2
(good) child, dearest, friend + SURNAME, *(good) lady, son,* SURNAME, *(pretty) teacher, wife*	1

The overview in Table 5 shows how, based on corpus frequencies, the address terms modified by *my* can be divided into three large groups and a smaller residual group. *My* most often modifies *dear*, which functions as a modifier itself (139 occurrences). When *dear* does not modify other address terms, it can combine with *my* in the address formula *my dear* (79 occurrences). *My* also occurs in combination with the honorifics *lord* and *lady*, unmodified by other adjectives (75 occurrences). Finally, a number of various other address terms combine with *my*, often including additional modifying adjectives (e.g. *my girl, my poor boy*). Note

that some honorifics can occur in combination with *my* and *dear* (e.g. *my dear lady*) as well as with *my* and *good* (e.g. *my good lady*).

As a next step in the analysis, the investigation of *my*'s functional profile will focus on the address terms most frequently modified by *my*, i.e. *dear* and *lord/lady*. This makes it possible to compare attestations of specific address formulae in which *my* is either present or absent. An examination of the alternation between *my* with a specific address term and the same address term used without *my* provides a more informative measure for comparison than the diverse group of address terms in the first step of the analysis. With respect to *(my) dear*, only those instances in which *dear* does not modify other address terms have been selected for analysis, since the variation of address terms modified by *my dear* would again complicate the investigation of *my's* functional profile. For example, at first sight, it seems possible to examine the alternation between *my dear* GIVEN NAME and *dear* GIVEN NAME, but even though the former address formula has 54 attestations in the corpus, the latter only has six, which does not suffice for a comparison. In what follows, results will be discussed for the analysis of *(my) dear* (cf. Section 4.1) as well as for the analysis of *(my) lord/lady* (cf. Section 4.2)

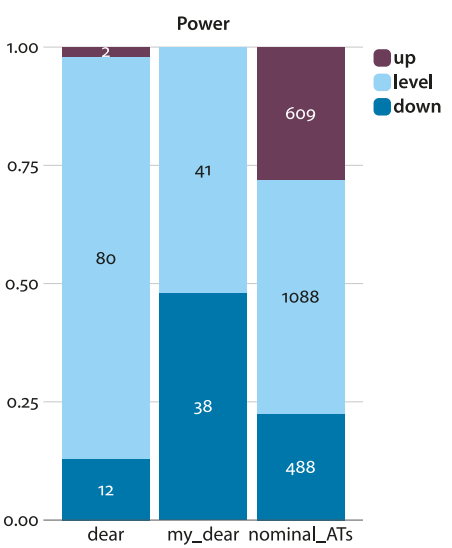
4.1 *First alternation*: Dear *and* my dear

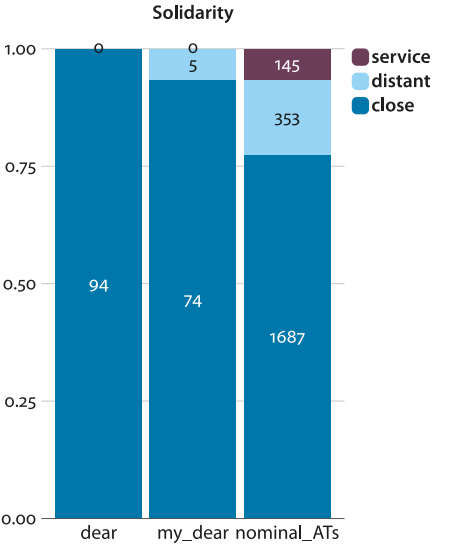
Figures 3 and 4 show how *dear* (when it is not modified by *my*), as in (4a), and *my dear*, as in (4b), are characterized in terms of the stable power and solidarity dimensions. In the final bar of each plot, the number of turns with nominal address terms other than *dear* or *my dear*, have been summarized to obtain an additional level of comparison.

(4) a. But, *dear*, how do you know what Captain Bastling means to say to you tomorrow? (PIN1899)

b. *My dear*, you sometimes say things which explain to me why my brother-in-law so frequently abandoned his own fireside for the platform of Exeter Hall. (MAU1912)

With respect to power, both *dear* and *my dear* occur less often in turns marked as upward in comparison with other nominal address terms ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 29.142$, $df = 1$ and $p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 28.72$, $df = 1$), which confirms Anglemark's analysis of DEAR (2018). While *dear* is more frequent than other nominal address terms in turns marked as level and less frequent in turns marked as downward, *my dear* occurs more often in turns marked as downward. Furthermore, a comparison between *dear* and *my dear* shows that *my dear* is more frequent than *dear* in turns marked as downward ($p < 0.001$, $\chi^2 = 26.082$, $df = 1$) and less frequent in turns marked as level ($p < 0.001$, $\chi^2 = 22.516$, $df = 1$). These





Figures 3 and 4. Power and solidarity: *dear, my dear* and other nominal address terms

findings indicate that, when *my* modifies an address term with a pronouncedly level profile, the newly combined address term becomes more closely associated with downward interactions. With respect to solidarity, both *dear* and *my dear* are more frequent in turns marked as close than other nominal address terms ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 26.096$, $df = 1$ and $p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 11.023$, $df = 1$). Still, while *dear* occurs in close turns only, *my dear* occurs in five turns marked as distant as well ($p < 0.05$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 4.079$, $df = 1$). These five attestations of distant *my dear* can be found in two different speaker-addressee relations, both marked as downward (i.e. when an older countess and homeowner addresses a young shop assistant, and when a wealthy client addresses her dressmaker). Also, four out of five attestations occur in disagreements or complaints directed towards the addressee (as in (5)), when exerting power is especially important. A plausible interpretation, then, is that, in these five turns, solidarity is overruled by power, i.e. *my dear*'s strong association with downward interactions is more relevant in explaining the speaker's choice for *my dear*, than its association with close interactions.

(5) a. Oh, this garden! they may well call it heavenly.
b. **[distant, downward, disagreeing]** They ought not to call it that, *my dear* (…) (PIN1899)

In order to refine the analysis for power and solidarity, the next part of the comparison between *dear* and *my dear* will focus on the speech acts with which they occur. For each occurrence of *dear* and *my dear*, speech acts have been identified

and organized according to Leech's speech act classification (1983). An overview of the different categories and speech acts attested in our analysis can be found in Table 6. Note that the speech act *requesting* subsumes a number of different directives, including orders, advice, proposals, invitations and suggestions (Risselada 1993, 48). The classification in Table 6 is of course not unambiguous, and some speech acts could belong to other categories. Especially some of the conflictive speech acts are often also competitive. When a speaker complains about something the addressee has done, the speaker's social goal is not only to let the addressee know that the speaker has been wronged in some way, but also to get the addressee to change future behavior. In her analysis of complaints, Trosborg indeed remarks that complaints are representative of Leech's conflictive function (1995, 312), but she also demonstrates that when a complaint is issued, a directive act (= competitive speech act) may be implied (1995, 320). Arguably, the same can be said for threats and disagreements. With respect to the collaborative type, it is clear that the illocutionary goals of speech acts such as asking for information, confirmation or clarification are not entirely indifferent to the social goal: the speaker wants something from the addressee, and in that way, they resemble competitive speech acts. However, as the cost for the addressee is quite low, especially in comparison to requests, they have been classified here as collaborative.

Table 6. Speech acts with *(my) dear* and *(my) lord/lady*

Speech act types	**Speech acts**
collaborative	stating; asking for information, confirmation or clarification; answering question (information); asking for attention
convivial	agreeing; complying with request; offering help; giving permission; assuring; wishing well; greeting; taking leave; consoling; expressing sympathy, compassion, joy or relief for the addressee; praising; accepting praise; thanking; apologizing
competitive	requesting; asking for permission; warning
conflictive	disagreeing; declining request; threatening; complaining; criticizing; boasting; insulting; expressing disapproval, disdain or scepticism; defying

Five attestations of *dear* and five attestations of *my dear* have been excluded from the speech act analysis. Some attestations are stand-alone address terms (as in (6a)), which means that the speech acts cannot be determined for the C-units in which these address terms occur. Other attestations resemble expletive *dear* (as in (6b)). For these attestations, it is difficult to determine whether they primarily function as address terms, or as expletives expressing surprise.

(6) a. Four and sixpence! *Dear*! it's a pity you can't put it on the Grand Yorkshire! (…) (BEL1910)
b. *My dear*, coming all this way with it! Why didn't you telephone? (BAR1910)

Figure 5 gives an overview of the speech act types both *dear* and *my dear* occur with. While *dear* is more frequent with collaborative and convivial speech acts ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 23.712$, $df = 1$ and $p < 0.05$, $\chi^2 = 6.835$, $df = 1$), as in (7) and (8), *my dear* is more frequent with conflictive speech acts ($p < 0.001$, $\chi^2 = 49.979$, $df = 1$), as in (9). With competitive speech acts (e.g. (10)), both *dear* and *my dear* are rather infrequent, and differences are not statistically significant. Figure 6, too, gives an overview of the speech act types for *dear* and *my dear*, but only includes attestations in the nine speaker-addressee relations that allow switching between *dear* and *my dear*. In those relations especially, the choice for *dear* or *my dear* has to be contextually motivated. Importantly, the distribution in Figure 6 is similar to the distribution of all attestations of *dear* and *my dear* (cf. Figure 5), which shows that a speech act analysis does indeed make it possible to investigate context-dependent changes in power and solidarity, i.e. observed differences in speech acts do not merely reflect stable power and solidarity dynamics.

(7) a. **[level, close, asking for information]** What time is it, *dear*?
b. Half-past one. Lunch-time. (PIN1899)

(8) a. Cremation is best with dead loves too.
b. **[level, close, thanking]** (When the envelope is burnt.) Thank you, *dear*. (MAU1912)

(9) a. (He raises his eyes from his book and gives her a significant look. Leaning upon the arm of the settee, she says faintly.) You-you-!
b. **[down, close, threatening/complaining]** Yes, I tell you again, *my dear*, you have got yourself into a shocking mess. You've got me into a mess, and you've got yourself in a mess. (PIN1899)

(10) **[down, close, requesting]** Now you must pack off to bed, *my dear* (…) (MAU1912)

Interestingly, most conflictive speech acts *my dear* occurs with are complaints, disagreements and threats, and all conflictive speech acts *dear* occurs with are disagreements. Precisely these speech acts are often competitive as well as conflictive. If we also take into account that purely competitive speech acts are rather infrequent with both *dear* and *my dear*, we can conclude that, when *dear* and *my dear* occur with speech acts that signal that the speaker wants something from the addressee, these speech acts usually also involve an element of conflict. This is not surprising: endearments are most likely to occur as positive polite-

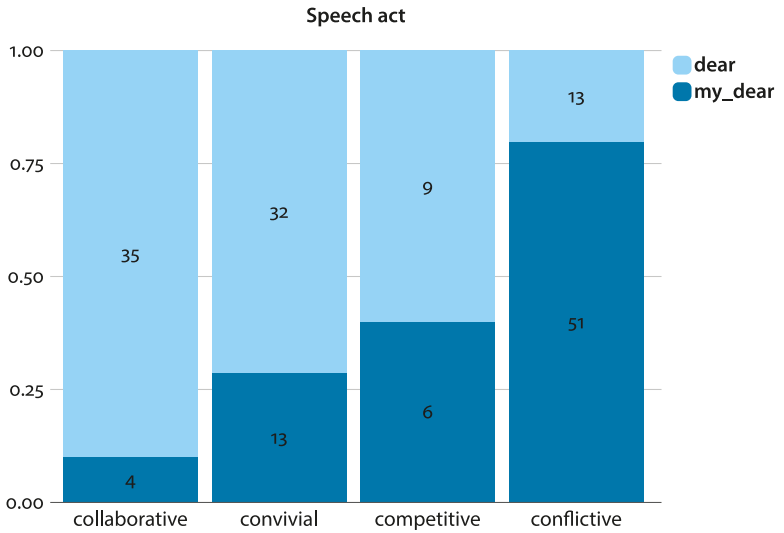


Figure 5. Context: *dear* and *my dear* (all relations)

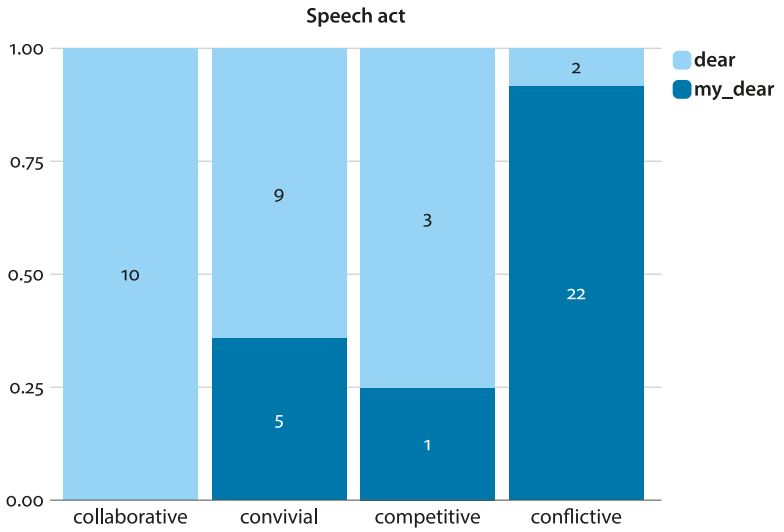


Figure 6. Context: *dear* and *my dear* (turns in speaker-addressee relations that allow both options)

ness strategies. Furthermore, as the overview in Figure 6 shows, especially *my dear* frequently occurs with these competitive-conflictive speech acts. In (11), for instance, Maggie says she is in no hurry to get married, and her mother responds with a complaint: she thinks Maggie should not have said that (= conflictive),

and she also wants to prevent Maggie from talking about marriage in that way in the future (= competitive). The high frequency of *my dear* with conflictive-competitive speech acts is related to findings for the power determinant: if speakers show that they find the addressee's behavior or opinions problematic and make clear that they want the addressee to make changes, they are likely to exert power over the addressee. At the same time, *my dear*'s close association with face-threatening acts (i.e. competitive-conflictive speech acts), in contrast to *dear*'s preference for face-neutral and face-enhancing speech acts (i.e. collaborative and convivial speech acts), says something about context-dependent solidarity as well. As the results for the stable solidarity determinant have shown, most attestations of both *dear* and *my dear* can be found in close interactions. *Dear*'s association with closeness is clearly reflected in the high frequency of *dear* with face-enhancing acts, which are expected to occur with positive politeness strategies. With face-enhancing acts, *dear* mainly strengthens the already solidary act. *My dear*'s association with closeness, on the other hand, is of a different nature. With face-threatening acts, the use of politeness strategies, such as *my dear*, does not merely support the speech act involved, but is meant to soften the threat to the addressee's face. One could thus argue that, while *dear* reflects an already existing level of intimacy, *my dear*'s function is to temporarily evoke a degree of solidarity that is not inherent to the context in which it occurs. So, although the analysis for the stable solidarity dimension did not reveal any significant distinctions between *dear* and *my dear*, the contextual analysis does show some functional differences in terms of solidarity.

(11) a. [Maggie to her mother] I'm in no hurry.
b. [Mother to Maggie] Don't talk like that, *my dear*. (BAK1911)

In conclusion, the analysis of *dear* and *my dear* for power, solidarity and context shows that (1) *dear* mainly signals symmetry with respect to the power dimension, and closeness with respect to the solidarity dimension; and that (2) by adding *my*, the address formula may signal that speakers want to exert power over the addressee, and that they want to increase solidarity with the addressee because they need something that inherently clashes with the addressee's feelings and wishes. Adding *my* to an address term that reflects level power dynamics and close solidarity dynamics creates a new address formula that is more closely associated with downward power dynamics and temporarily increased closeness.

Interestingly, the functional differences between *dear* and *my dear* are also reflected in gender-related differences. Figure 7 gives an overview of the distribution of *dear, my dear* and other nominal address terms in the corpus for gender. Turns have been coded for the gender of both speaker and addressee, and labelled as male-male, female-female, male-female and female-male. Figure 7 shows that

both *dear* and *my dear* are obsolete in male-male interactions and occur almost equally often in female-female interactions. However, *dear* is significantly more frequent in female-male interactions, while *my dear* occurs more often in male-female interactions ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 53.765$, $df = 1$). Our findings confirm the claim that endearments are rare in male-male interactions (Leech 1999). Furthermore, *my dear*, which is more closely associated with exerting power and face-threatening acts, is more often used by male speakers when addressing women. By contrast, *dear*, which merely reflects power symmetry and closeness, is more often used by female speakers when addressing men. If we assume that gender inequality was an integral part of British society in the period between 1899 and 1912 (Thompson 1990; Mahood 1995; Holloway 2005; Davis 2014), it is not surprising that inequality is also reflected in the address system, as a core resource for realizing social deixis.

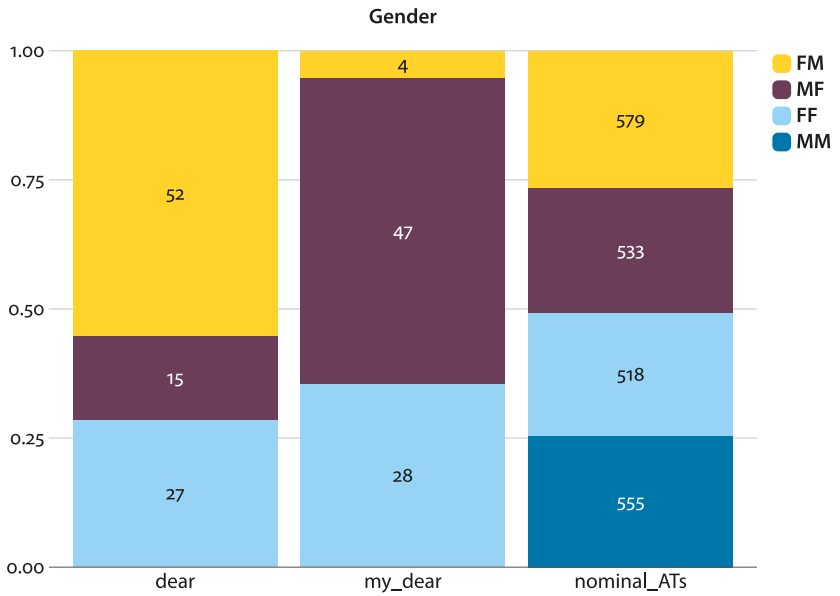


Figure 7. Gender: *dear, my dear* and other nominal address terms

Recall that for the analysis of the alternation between *dear* and *my dear*, only those instances of *dear* in which it does not modify other address terms have been selected. Where *dear* or *my dear* are followed by a nominal address term, the number of comparable collocations is too small. Still, it is possible to investigate which nouns are modified by *dear* and *my dear*. The overview in Table 7 shows that *dear* most often modifies *lady* + SURNAME, which is less frequently modified by *my dear* ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 25.839$, $df = 1$). This corresponds with findings

for power and solidarity, as *lady* + SURNAME is most frequent in turns marked as upward and close. Furthermore, GIVEN NAME is more often modified by *my dear* than by *dear* ($p < 0.02$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 6.09$, $df = 1$), which corresponds with findings for power, as GIVEN NAME is attested in turns marked as level (380 instances) as well as down (209 instances).

Table 7. Nominal address terms modified by *dear* and by *my dear*

Address term	Frequency
***dear* + NOUN**	**38**
lady + SURNAME	11
GIVEN NAME, TITLE + SURNAME	6
boy	4
admiral, (old) chap, (young) lady	2
child, creature, KIN TERM, *pupil*, VARIANT OF GIVEN NAME	1
***my dear* + NOUN**	**139**
GIVEN NAME	54
VARIANT OF GIVEN NAME	17
KIN TERM	15
TITLE + SURNAME	12
boy	11
(little) girl	10
friend, lady + SURNAME	3
admiral, (sweet) child, duchess, lad, lady, SURNAME	2
captain + SURNAME, *chap*	1

4.2 *Second alternation*: My lord/lady *and* your lordship/ladyship

The next part of the analysis aims to compare the functional profiles of *my lord/lady*, as in (12a) and *your lordship/ladyship*, as in (12b). Importantly, this analysis is less straightforward than the comparison between *dear* and *my dear*. *My* HONORIFIC rarely if ever alternates with unmodulated forms. However, *my* HONORIFIC does alternate with address formulae of the type *your* HONORIFIC, often within the same speaker-addressee relation. The alternation is complicated because the comparison includes, to some extent, lexical variation (e.g. *lord* versus *lordship*) as well as syntactic variation (i.e. in this corpus, *my lord/lady* is a vocative (Zwicky 1974), while *your lordship/ladyship* only occurs as an argument of a verb). Nevertheless, the contrast between *my* HONORIFIC and *your* HONORIFIC offers another

opportunity to pinpoint the functional contribution of *my*, as the following analysis shows.

(12) a. No trouble at all, *my lord*-quite an honour. (PIN1899)
b. But I'd rather *your lordship* let me out without the bother- (Piteously.) Do! (PIN1899)

Overall, 75 attestations of *my lord/lady* and 20 attestations of *your lordship/ladyship* have been coded for power, solidarity and context. Importantly, 19 out of 20 attestations of *your lordship/ladyship* occur in speaker-addressee relations in which *my lord/lady* is also attested. Since the number of turns per speaker-addressee relation can heavily skew the results, a comparison for the stable power and solidarity dimensions at the level of the turn is not revealing. At the level of the speaker-addressee relation, results do show that, for power, *your lordship/ladyship* occurs only in relations coded as upward, while *my lord/lady* is attested in speaker-addressee relations coded as upward, and to a lesser extent, as level. Interestingly, when a modifying adjective is included in the address formula (e.g. *my good lady, my dear lady*), attestations can also be found in speaker-addressee relations marked as downward. With respect to solidarity, results show that both *your lordship/ladyship* and *my lord/lady* occur in service, distant as well as close speaker-addressee relations. Tentatively, we can say that *your lordship/ladyship* is more closely associated with upward power dynamics than *my lord/lady*, while for solidarity, no notable differences can be observed.

Both *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* co-occur in four different speaker-addressee relations. In order to investigate how switching is motivated by speech act pragmatics, attestations of both address formulae in these four speaker-addressee relations have been coded for context. Note that one attestation of *my lord*, which is a stand-alone address formula, has been excluded from the analysis. Figure 8 gives an overview of the speech act types with which we find *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship*.

While *your lordship/ladyship* is more frequent with competitive speech acts ($p < 0.001$, Yates' $\chi^2 = 16.866$, $df = 1$) (see, for instance (13)), *my lord/lady* seems more likely to occur with collaborative, conflictive and convivial speech acts (see, for instance, (14–16)).

(13) a. Ha! (Calmly.) No, my dear Sophy, I wasn't aware that your fiancé is in the house. So the situation comes home to you a little more poignantly now, does it?
b. **[up, close, requesting]** Oh, won't *your lordship* trust me? (PIN1899)

(14) a. How long have you been with Mr. Fouldes?
b. **[up, service, answering question (information)]** Twenty-five years, *my lady*. (MAU1912)

(15) a. **[up, close, taking leave/wishing well]** (Impulsively, offering him her hand.) I wish you luck, *my lord*.
b. (He takes her hand and wrings it.) (PIN1899)

(16) a. Yes, I tell you again, my dear, you have got yourself into a shocking mess. You've got me into a mess, and you've got yourself in a mess.
b. **[up, close, insulting]** (Pulling herself up and advancing to him till she faces him.) You-you are an awful blackguard, *my lord*. (PIN1899)

In brief, speakers especially opt for *my lord/lady* with face-neutral and face-enhancing speech acts, as well as with face-threatening acts that are in conflict with the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity. In comparison, *your lordship/ladyship* is the preferred option when speakers want something from the addressee, and is most likely employed as a negative politeness strategy. As such, findings for speech act pragmatics tie in with our tentative conclusion regarding power: *your lordship/ladyship* uniquely occurs in upward speaker-addressee relations and is most often used with face-threatening acts that can be mitigated by signaling deference. *My lord/lady*, on the other hand, occurs in level as well as

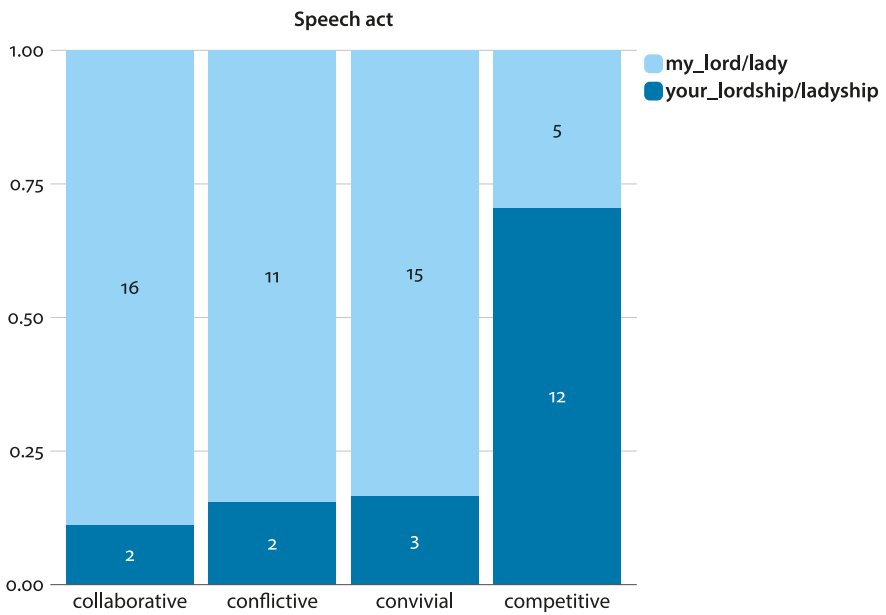


Figure 8. Context: *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship*

upward speaker-addressee relations, and is most often used with speech acts that do not require emphasis on existing power dynamics. Admittedly, *my lord/lady* occurs in a variety of situations, in contrast to *your lordship/ladyship*, which has a more clearly delineated functional profile. Still, results definitely show that the variation between both address formulae is functionally motivated. Also note that these findings are consistent with the syntactic difference between *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship*. By placing *your lordship/ladyship* in subject or object position, speakers have the opportunity to avoid direct address by means of the second-person pronoun *you*, which also mitigates the attack on the addressee's face.

In previous research on speech acts and politeness, requests especially have received a lot of attention. Interestingly, Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) classify requests based on the degree of directness, which influences the degree of imposition involved in the speech act, i.e. the strength of a face-threatening act or the degree to which it interferes with the addressee's face (Brown and Levinson 1987). Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) argue that the strength of a face-threatening act can be minimized by choosing an indirect realization of requests over a direct realization. They propose three different levels of directness: direct requests, conventionally indirect requests and non-conventionally indirect requests. Direct requests are weaker face-threatening acts than conventionally indirect requests, which are in turn weaker threats to the addressee's face than non-conventionally indirect requests. If switching between *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* can be explained by speech act pragmatics, variation between both address formulae might not only be affected by the presence and type of face-threatening acts involved, but also by the strength of the face-threatening acts. If we assume that *your lordship/ladyship* is the preferred option when conveying negative politeness, *your lordship/ladyship* can be expected to occur more often with indirect requests than with direct requests. The opposite should be true for *my lord/lady*. For the present study, we have analyzed the requests based on the classification scheme proposed by Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (1984) and Economidou-Kogetsidis (2010), which can be found in Table 8. This overview lists the three request types and the different speech act realizations for each type. The realizations of requests in the second column are positioned on a cline from most direct (top) to most indirect (bottom). Examples for each request realization can be found in the third column.

The overview in Figure 9 shows how the requests with *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* are classified in terms of directness. While most attestations of *my lord/lady* occur with direct requests, *your lordship/ladyship* is most frequent with conventionally, and especially non-conventionally indirect requests. These findings appear to conform with our hypothesis, but the data are obviously too sparse to attain significant differences.

Table 8. Classification of requests according to their level of (in)directness (Blum-Kulka and Olshtain 1984; Economidou-Kogetsidis 2010)

Level of (in)directness	Realization speech act	Example
direct request	imperative	*Leave me alone.*
	explicit performative	*Please look after the kids for the evening.*
	hedged performative	*I'm here to ask for an extension.*
	obligation statement	*Madam, you'll have to move your car.*
	want or need statement	*I really wish you'd stop bothering me.*
conventionally indirect request	suggestion	*How about cleaning up?*
	reference to preparatory conditions (e.g. ability, volition or possibility)	*Would you mind moving your car, please?*
non-conventionally indirect request	strong hint	*You've left this kitchen in a right mess.*
	mild hint	*I'm a nun.* (in response to a persistent boy)

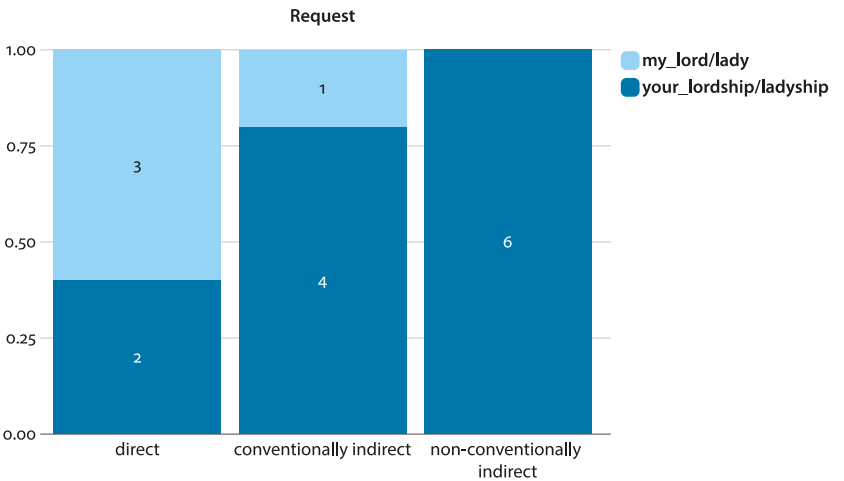


Figure 9. Requests: Levels of directness

Examples of *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* with direct requests can be found in (17a) and (17b). All direct requests with *my lord/lady* contain imperatives, which are positioned at the most direct end of the (in)directness scale (posi-

tion 1). The direct requests with *your lordship/ladyship* are less direct than those with *my lord/lady*: they both contain want statements (position 4). In (18a), *your lordship/ladyship* occurs with a conventionally indirect request, while the only attestation of *my lord/lady* with a conventionally indirect request can be found in (18b). The request in (18b) is a suggestion, i.e. the most direct realization of conventionally indirect requests. With non-conventionally indirect requests, *your lordship/ladyship* is the only option (as in (19)).

(17) a. [imperative (1)] Show me your nails, *my lord*. (PIN1899)
b. [want statement (4)] I hope *your lordship* will kindly let me go. (PIN1899)

(18) a. [reference to possibility/volition (7)] If *your lordship* has quite done with me-? (PIN1899)
b. [suggestion (6)] It's not quite two, *my lord*; if you like, you've just time to run in next door and have your palm read. (PIN1899)

(19) [strong hint (7)] Has *your lordship* got the key of this door? (PIN1899)

In conclusion, the analysis of *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* for power, solidarity and context shows that (1) *your lordship/ladyship* is mainly used to signal deference, especially when mitigation is necessary, i.e. when the speaker needs something from the addressee; and that (2) *my lord/lady* is less often used as a negative politeness strategy than *your lordship/ladyship*, and when *my lord/lady* does express deference, reinforcing upward power dynamics is less urgent.

5. Conclusion

The results for the analysis of (*my*) *dear* and (*my*) HONORIFIC show that *my* in early twentieth-century address formulae has a complex functional profile, that can be described in terms of Brown and Gilman's power-and-solidarity model (1960). The comparison between *dear* and *my dear* reveals that, when *my* modulates an address term that marks a high degree of solidarity and mostly occurs in the absence of hierarchical power dynamics, *my*'s functional import is mainly situated in the power dimension. The resulting address formula with *my* retains its association with closeness in the solidarity dimension, but becomes more closely associated with downward power dynamics. This way, our results correspond with Busse's suggestion for *my* in Shakespearean English, i.e. that *my* indicates a sense of dominance and possession (2006, 198). Furthermore, findings for the gender parameter show that *my dear* is especially frequent in male-female interactions, while *dear* occurs most often in female-male interactions. The comparison between *my lord/lady* and *your lordship/ladyship* reveals that, when *my* mod-

ulates an address term that construes the addressee as more powerful than the speaker and seems to have no clear meaning in terms of solidarity, the functional import of *my* is mainly situated in the solidarity dimension. The resulting address formula with *my* retains its association with upward power dynamics (although less pronouncedly so), and becomes more frequent with speech acts that are face-neutral and face-enhancing (i.e. that occur most often with positive politeness strategies). As such, findings for *my* indeed corroborate Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg's hypothesis for Early Modern English, i.e. that *my* may be used to intensify the intimacy and affection prevailing between two interlocutors (1995, 556). In short, the analysis of both alternations shows that *my*'s functional import varies depending on the address term it modifies. When *my* has impact on the power dimension, the address formula with *my* construes the addressee as less powerful than the speaker. When *my* has impact on the solidarity dimension, the address formula with *my* construes the addressee as a close interlocutor.

Although the results of this study correspond with observations made for earlier stages of English, it should be noted that the analysis of *my* as described in this paper is limited to address formulae in British English drama texts published between 1899 and 1912. An analysis of *my* in a corpus with Present-Day English spoken data might be an interesting area for further research. Still, the investigation of *my*'s functional profile has shown that it is worthwhile to go beyond larger address term categories when examining address formulae, and that speakers' choices for specific address terms or elements in address formulae are motivated by the same determinants that have been shown to explain variation between pronominal address terms and nominal address term categories. Furthermore, the proposed analysis demonstrates that power and solidarity can not only be interpreted in terms of stable social roles, but also underlie context-driven variation. The investigation of *my* has indeed shown that the identification of speech acts is particularly helpful in explaining variation in address usage, and especially in accounting for variation within one speaker-addressee relation. Finally, the combination of a qualitative-based annotation procedure and a more quantitative approach to data analysis has made it possible to conduct a functional study and disclose a comprehensive profile of *my* in address formulae.

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