



On the use of the address terms *guys* and *mate* in an educational context

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ABSTRACT

In an educational context, the use of address terms indicating familiarity is one factor that contributes to a friendly classroom environment. The current study investigates the use of the address terms *mate* and *guys* in a corpus of classroom discourse in a vocational institution in New Zealand. Findings reveal that in addition to *mate* employed to address one person, and *guys* employed to address many people, these two address terms had very different functions. *Guys* was used to attract students' attention, to indicate the start of, end of, or change in task, and to emphasize important content, while *mate* functioned largely in mitigating face threats and in affective functions, such as encouragement and praise. This study shows how the use of these address terms facilitated the tutors' achievement of these functions, which are all central to teaching.

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1. Introduction

Address terms are one of the features of language that speakers use in order to form connections with or distance themselves from others. Studies of address terms in naturally occurring discourse are useful in providing insight into the (in)formality of interaction within and between certain groups. In addition, such studies show how levels of (un)familiarity, power, solidarity and equality are enacted between groups. Address terms have been studied in a range of contexts including casual conversation, television and sports teams. Address terms specific to certain language groups or nationalities have also been studied, as has gender and the use of address terms. Educational contexts have also received attention, but much of the focus in these has been on university contexts. This study examines the use of address terms in a hitherto unstudied context, tertiary vocational education.

As a category, terms of address can include endearments (e.g. *darling*), family terms (e.g. *grandad*), familiarizers (e.g. *guys*, *mate*) first name (e.g. *Ellen*), or Title and last name (e.g. *Mr. Petersen*) (Leech, 1999, p. 110). The specific focus in this article is familiarizers used in an educational institution; in particular, focus is limited to the familiarizers, *guys* and *mate*. The study aims to show how these familiarizers are used by tutors² in a vocational institution in New Zealand, and the purposes they serve in the tutors' interactions with their students. Do they, for example, contribute to the instructional aims of tutors?

After reviewing literature on the use of address terms, particularly familiarizers, this article describes the context, corpus and methods used in the study. Following a quantitative description of the familiarizers found in the data, a qualitative

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² Teachers in the New Zealand post-secondary vocational context are known as tutors.

discussion explores the frequency and function of the familiarizers, *guys* and *mate*, and how they contribute to achieving tutors' instructional aims.

2. Review of the literature on address terms and practices

Prior research into the use of address terms has focused on a range of contexts, including casual conversation (Bucholtz, 2009; Kiesling, 2004), university lectures (Formentelli, 2009), the media (Alba-Juez, 2009; Rendle-Short, 2010; Giles-Mitson, 2016) and service encounters (Staley, 2018). Many prior studies have used corpora, such as the British National Corpus (Alba-Juez, 2009), Longman corpus of spoken and written English (Leech, 1999) and the International Corpus of English (Giles-Mitson, 2016). Alternatively, some studies have relied on self-report via questionnaires (Alimoradian, 2014; Rendle-Short, 2009), observation (Bogoch, 1999), focus groups (Clyne et al., 2009; Burt, 2015) and task experiments (Fuller, 2005).

Previous research on the use of address terms in educational contexts has focused largely on address terms in university settings (Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2012; Burt, 2015; Clyne et al., 2009; Formentelli, 2018; Formentelli and Hajek, 2013, 2015; Unuabonah, 2018). Formentelli (2009), investigating address terms at a British university, found that *guys* and *you guys* were common and that terms like *mate*, *chum*, *young lady* and *young man* were also used. Similarly, Formentelli and Hajek (2016), in a questionnaire study focused on Australian universities, found that lecturers reported addressing students using their first names or *guys*. Several studies (e.g. Burt, 2015; Dickey, 1997; Formentelli, 2009) investigated the use of first name (FN) or title and last name (TLN) between university students and staff. Formentelli (2009), for example, found an asymmetric address pattern on a British university campus with academic staff typically addressed as TLN and students usually addressed as FN. However, the use of FN and TLN is not a part of the current study which focuses only on familiarizers. While studies by Tainio (2011) and Lehtimaja (2011) investigated the use of address terms in Finnish secondary schools, the current study investigates tertiary vocational education, a post-secondary educational context unexplored to date.

Prior research has found that address terms play a range of social functions. In the present study address terms are grouped into the following functions: (a) attention-gaining; (b) affective; (c) mitigation of face-threats; and (d), and expression of hostility. Attention-gaining functions include address (Bucholtz, 2009), summons (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2003), attention-getting (Wilson, 2010), and highlighting important information (Bucholtz, 2009). Affective functions include solidarity (Alba-Juez, 2009; Giles-Mitson, 2016; Kiesling, 2004; Rendle-Short, 2009; Wilson, 2010), friendliness (Rendle-Short, 2010), acknowledgement (Rendle-Short, 2010), agreement (Kiesling, 2004; Rendle-Short, 2010), compliments (Wilson, 2010) encouragement (Wilson, 2010), deference (Afful and Mwinlaaru, 2012), and humour/badinage (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2003). Mitigators, such as directives and criticism, can soften the effect of face-threats (Bucholtz, 2009; Kiesling, 2004; McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2003; Rendle-Short, 2010; Wilson, 2010). Finally, used sarcastically or disrespectfully, address terms can express hostility (Alba-Juez, 2009; Giles-Mitson, 2016; Rendle-Short, 2010).

Previous research has also found associations of certain address terms with particular groups. For example, Rendle-Short (2009, 2010) found *mate* to be associated with male speakers and addressees, and avoided by women, particularly older women. Similarly, Kiesling (2004) found *dude* to be associated with young male speakers; this was also the case for the use of *güey* (Bucholtz, 2009) by Mexican immigrants in the US.

However, Bucholtz (2009) argues that social categories like gender, ethnicity and age are not the only factors to consider. Although address terms are one linguistic means that speakers use to display identity, speakers also rely on subtler interactional moves to take stances and construct personas. In addition, linguistic forms which were initially associated with interactional stance-taking can come to be associated ideologically with larger social categories. Equally, ideological associations can change, resulting from how speakers use them in interaction.

An example of how interactional stance-taking can become associated ideologically with larger social categories, and how these ideological associations can change, can be seen with the familiarizer *mate* in Australia. Wierzbicka (1997) traces how *mate* was originally associated with the 'bush ethos' of colonial Australia and later with unionism and the working class. It is currently widely used by Australian men to index equality, solidarity and mutual commitment. Rendle-Short (2009) even found that young women reported using *mate* as a term of endearment to their friends. She views them as asserting themselves as part of Australian male culture, and as showing themselves capable of forming solidarity relationships. Thus, a term once used by men taking an interactional stance of male solidarity came to be associated ideologically with solidarity amongst working class men. Its interactional use then extended beyond working class men to all Australian men and more recently to young women asserting their own participation in the ideology of equality, solidarity and 'mateship'.

As this discussion indicates, the solidarity function of *mate* has been a focus of attention in the literature. Solidarity as a function of *mate* stresses egalitarianism, making this function distinct from other affective functions of *mate* such as agreement, encouragement and humour, where equality and 'mateship' are less salient. Regarding its solidarity function, Page (2002) describes a 'mate' as someone to whom one is committed and towards whom one feels solidarity, equality, and a bond of oneness. 'Mates' are those with whom one feels a special connection engendered by shared work or hardship (Page, 2002).

As in Australia, in New Zealand, the use of *mate* has been closely associated with an ideal of hardy, self-reliant working men (Bannister, 2005). 'Mateship' has been associated with rural production and the egalitarian ethic of working-class camaraderie (Bannister, 2005). This association of *mate* with working class solidarity is of relevance to this study, as the tutors in the study have extensive experience in blue-collar industries, and students are learning a blue-collar 'trade'.

Kleinknecht and Souza (2017) note that familiarizers like *guys* and *mate* not only indicate a relationship of familiarity between speaker and addressee, but also function to intensify the affectivity of the speaker. Because familiarizers index

affective stance, they heighten the emotion of the speech activity and invite the hearer to participate in the feelings indexed by the familiarizer. In this way, familiarizers make what is said more persuasive (Kleinknecht & Souza, p.264). Kleinknecht and Souza note the co-occurrence of familiarizers with other cues of affective intensity, such as intonation, taboo words, and repetitions. These 'signal the speaker's heightened emotional commitment towards what he is saying.' (p. 265). Such expressivity is also influenced by position in an utterance, whether initial, medial or final.

Two studies are particularly relevant to the present study, because they were also undertaken in New Zealand. Wilson's study (2010) of address terms that were used by coaches and players in a rugby team found that *boys* was favoured by the players, while *guys* was used almost exclusively by the coaches. He suggests that *boys* was used to enhance solidarity among the players, and that if the coaches had used *boys*, it might function to emphasise a difference in status. Thus, the use of *guys* by the coaches was a choice that stressed greater equality, an important social value in New Zealand.

A second New Zealand study (Giles-Mitson, 2016) considered the use of familiarizers in three corpora collected during the 1990s (Wellington corpus of spoken English; International corpus of English, New Zealand; Language in the workplace project) and in New Zealand media collected in 2015. In the 1990s data, *mate* was largely used by and addressed to men. It was more frequent in blue-collar workplaces than white-collar. Following Holmes (2006), she ascribes this to the masculine interaction style in blue-collar workplaces. *Mate* was less frequent in the media data³ and mainly evidenced in the language of older speakers, leading Giles-Mitson to speculate that its use may be declining in New Zealand. She found greater use of *guys* by men than women in the 1990s data, but in the 2015 media data it was equally used by and addressed to women.

Given the relatively low number of studies on the use of familiarizers in educational contexts, outside of universities, the present study examines the use of familiarizers by tutors interacting with their students in a vocational education institution in New Zealand. Although university contexts have been investigated in Britain (Formentelli, 2009) and Australia (Formentelli and Hajek, 2016), these studies relied on interviews, questionnaires and a small number of lecture recordings. The current study draws on a larger corpus of recorded classroom interaction.

Specifically, the research questions in this study are:

1. What familiarizers do tutors in New Zealand vocational education institutions use to address their students?
2. What function do the familiarizers *guys* and *mate* have in this context?
3. How do these familiarizers contribute to the instructional aims of teachers?

3. Methodology

This section describes the corpus that was used for this study, the participating tutors, their teaching context, and the data analysis process.

3.1. Corpus

This study draws on 270,830 words of spoken classroom discourse. Eighteen New Zealand born tutors from the trades of Automotive Technology, Carpentry, Fabrication⁴ and Plumbing contributed to this data with a mean contribution of 15,046 words from each tutor. Tutors wore recording devices while teaching. A maximum of 20,000 words from each tutor was included in the data set. The exceptions were the recordings of the single Māori tutor (25,747 words) and the single Pasifika tutor (33,672 words). All recordings contributed by these tutors were included in order to maximize the contributions of these underrepresented groups. Drawing only on speakers of New Zealand English means that the address terms in the data are specific to New Zealand usage. In addition to the Māori and Pasifika tutors, 16 Pakeha⁵ tutors contributed to the data. Table 1 shows the number of words from each of the four trades.

Before the collection of the data, the informed signed consent of both tutors and students was sought to allow the recording of classroom interaction. Staff who were willing to participate wore recording devices, and students were aware of this and were in agreement that recordings could be made.

Table 1
Trades in the study.

Tutors and recordings	Automotive Technology	Carpentry	Fabrication	Plumbing	Total
Number of tutors	9	3	3	3	18
Number of recordings	34	20	10	7	71
Total words in recordings	99,200	81,191	56,641	33,798	270,830

³ Giles-Mitson (2016) media data was drawn from spontaneous and scripted speech collected from New Zealand radio and television.

⁴ Fabrication involves design and manufacture of products using a range of materials (e.g., metal and acrylics) and processes (e.g., welding and machining).

⁵ Pakeha usually refers to ethnically European New Zealanders (Wevers, n.d.).

Table 2
Age of tutors.

30's	40's	50's	60's	unknown	Total
4	3	7	2	2	18

3.2. Tutors and students in the study

Tutors in the New Zealand post-secondary vocational context combine teaching qualifications with vocational qualifications and considerable industry experience. As a group, the tutors appear in the data to be very kind, patient and supportive of their students. All tutors in the study were men, reflecting the male-dominated nature of the construction and engineering trades. Table 2 shows the ages of the 18 tutors included in the data.

Demographic information about students, such as age and ethnic group, was not collected. For the most part, however, students had recently completed secondary school, and were in their late teens. Like the tutors, the students in the study were largely male, with a small minority being female: about one or two out of 16 in each class.

3.3. The teaching context

Teaching in the four trades of Automotive Technology, Carpentry, Fabrication and Plumbing was highly practical. Part of the corpus was recorded during theory lessons in classrooms, and part was recorded in workshop sessions (Automotive Technology, Fabrication and Plumbing) or on building sites (Carpentry). The data in the corpus is about evenly divided between classroom-based teaching and practical work in the workshop or on site. The classroom teaching contains both dialogic talk, involving tutor questioning and student answers, and tutor monologue (see Coxhead et al., 2020); during practical teaching, students work in pairs, teams or on their own, while the tutor circulates among them to offer guidance. Students are taught by a single tutor in groups of about 16 students, with courses ranging in duration from one semester to two years after which students move into an apprenticeship in their chosen industry. As a result, tutors usually get to know their students well.

3.4. Analysis process

Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 2012) was used to create a wordlist of all words in the corpus. This was inspected manually to identify all address terms, which are shown in as Table 3 below. In order to address Research Question 2, concerning the functional meanings of *guys* and *mate*, the concordance function was then used to identify all instances of each term in context. Each instance was inspected qualitatively in context in order to record who the speaker was, and to code the function of the utterance associated with the address term.

Instances where address terms were used for reference were omitted from the study. For example, instances such as *Come over here... I'll show you... these two guys are pretty good* were not included. Instances where *you guys*, *you fellas*, *you boys* were used as a replacement for the second person plural pronoun *you* are also not included. For example, instances such as *I'll get you guys to figure it out for me* were omitted from the count. It can be argued that *you guys* may go beyond plurality to function pragmatically. For example, the phrasing of the directive in *I'll get you guys to figure it out for me* is softer than *(you) figure it out* would be.⁶ However, to keep the study to a manageable size, *you guys* was not included, although its role is worthy of further investigation.

4. Results and discussion

In answer to Research Question 1, as Table 3 shows, *guys* and *mate* were the most common familiarizers used. Other familiarizers that are used in New Zealand, including *man*, *boys*, *bro* and *fellas*, were far less frequent. Terms which were used very infrequently, such as *dude* (1), *girls* (1) and *chaps* (3) were omitted from the table. Worth mentioning is the fact that only the Maori tutor and the Pasifika tutor used the terms *bro* and *fellas*, which are widely viewed as features of Maori English (Dupuy, 2018).

As can be seen in Table 3, there were only a few uses by students of familiarizers, which can be explained by the fact that the data was recorded via a device worn by the tutors. Thus, a limitation of the study is that only a small amount of student talk was captured. As a result, there is limited discussion on student use of familiarizers in what follows.

⁶ I am indebted to a reviewer of this article for noting this point.

Table 3

Tutors' use of familiarizers.

Use of familiarizers	guys	mate	boys	man	fellas	buddy	ladies	bro
Number of instances of use by tutors	174	107	22	19	15	9	5	4
Number of tutors who used this term	17	14	9	5	2	4	3	2
Number of instances of use by students	0	9	0	7	0	0	0	6

The presence of female students is not reflected by the use of female address terms by the tutors who only occasionally used *girls* or *ladies*, often for jocular effect. For example, *Hey, ladies, can I gather you round for a minute, please? I just want to do a demo* appears to involve the 'humorous' address of the mainly male students by using a female address term. In contrast, in the following extract, *ladies* seems to be directed at female students: *T: What is going on here ladies, eh? S: [indistinct] T: You will be fine, [female name], trust me... you will be fine.*

Thus, *guys* and *mate* are the focus of discussion in what follows for a number of reasons. In addition to being the two most frequent familiarizers in the data, as Table 3 shows, they are both used by most of the 18 tutors. Another factor is that *guys* is a term used to address more than one person, while *mate* addresses only one person, providing insight into the functions for which these familiarizers are used in each case. Again, the dearth of familiarizers used by students compared to tutors is an artefact of the data-collection process, in which the talk of tutors was more likely to be recorded than that of students, because the tutors were wearing the recording devices.

Table 4 provides a summary of the functions of *guys* and *mate* in the data. As discussed in Section 2, prior research has identified a range of functions played by familiarizers. In this study these are grouped into instructional functions, mitigation of potentially face-threatening acts, and other affective functions.

Table 4The function of utterances associated with the familiarizers *guys* and *mate*.

Function	Guys	Mate
Mitigation of potentially face-threatening acts	15	50
Directive	7	27
Correction		4
Criticism		9
Delay		1
Disagreement		2
Interruption		4
Tone		1
Questioning	8	1
Error		1
Affective functions	9	44
Encouragement		6
Praise	2	10
Reassurance		9
Agreeing		2
Apology	2	
Humour	1	6
Reported speech	1	2
Solidarity		3
Acknowledgement	3	4
Greeting		1
Exclamation		1
Instructional functions	150	13
Check understanding	3	2
Gaining attention	50	1
Drawing attention to start/end/change of task	27	
Emphasis	70	10
	174	107

As Table 4 shows, emphasis and gaining attention were the most frequent of the instructional functions. The most frequent use of familiarizers for the purpose of mitigation was in conjunction with directives, questioning and criticism. Other affective functions included familiarizers used to heighten the effect of praise, reassurance, encouragement. Familiarizers used for the function of solidarity, much discussed in the literature, was an infrequent function.

As shown in Table 4, *guys* and *mate* served quite different functions. This is partly because *guys* addresses the students as a group, while *mate* addresses individuals. However, it may be that the basic/original meaning of *mate*, that of recognizing the addressee as a friend, promotes its use as a softener of potentially face-threatening acts such as directives and criticism. As these functions are common in teaching, particularly the teaching of practical skills, this is the main way that *mate* is used in the data (see examples in 4.2.1 and 4.2.1). Also, perhaps because *mate* has a long history of use in New Zealand, it has a very wide range of other functions, as Table 4 shows.

In contrast, *guys* is mainly used for the more instructional functions of emphasis and gaining attention, when tutors address the whole class or a group of students. Gaining attention relates to the basic purpose of use of any address term, which is attracting attention, or indicating who is being addressed. However, it is also used for other functions, most notably emphasis, but also directives and questioning. These have not previously been mentioned in the literature with regard to the use of *guys*.

4.1. *Guys*

Guys and *you guys*⁷ were both common in the data. Their frequency is greater than that reported by Giles-Mitson (2016) in a similar sized blue-collar corpus. The combined use of *guys* and *you guys* in Giles-Mitson's study was 28 uses by both men and women (11.2 uses per 100,000 words), compared with a combined use in the present study of 328 uses (174 instances of *guys* and 154 of *you guys*⁸), that is, 121.1 uses per 100,000 words. This difference may stem from the nature of the teaching context, where tutors use familiarizers to engage the attention of their students.

In the present study, *guys* appears to be the collective term of choice for the tutors in addressing their students. The use of *guys* by the tutors as a collective address term aligns with Wilson's (2010) findings in a study of rugby coaching. He suggests that *guys* rather than *boys* was used by the rugby coaches to avoid stressing the unequal power relationship between coach and players. In the data in the present study, *boys* was used by tutors, but far less frequently than *guys* (22 instances of *boys*; 174 instances of *guys*).

In the current study, *guys* was prominently used for the instructional function of gaining the students' attention and emphasising important materials. Its function also extended to drawing attention to the start, end or change of a task or lesson. This occurred during whole-class theory teaching or while tutors were interacting with students in the workshop. As shown in Table 4, far less frequently, *guys* was used with directives, questioning, understanding-checks, acknowledgement, apology, humour and reported speech. Examples of these functions are included below.

4.1.1. Use of *guys* to gain attention

In Example 1, the tutor uses *guys* to attract student attention. That he is doing so is supported by several other attempts to gain attention including *quiet please* in his previous turn, repetition of *can anyone tell me*, the exclamation *hey!* and the directive to *listen up*.

Example 1

T: [Student name], you got it? Yeah... ok. Now, those people with the sticks, those people with the sticks you need that. Who else has got a stick? Yeah? Yes how..., quiet please... yes?
S: [indistinct]
T: Nope. Ok, so *guys*, can anyone tell me... can anyone tell me... hey! Listen up because you haven't got using a staff... how are we gonna use these? [Carpentry]

4.1.2. *Guys* to signal the start, end or change of task

Guys is often used when the tutor wants to signal the start or end of an activity, or to signal a change of task. This function is closely related to the function of gaining attention (Section 4.1.1), but differs in being more specific in what hearers are being asked to attend to. This is likely to be a more common function in the classroom than elsewhere and it assists in lesson organisation. Example 2 shows the tutor calling the attention of the students to signal the start of the lesson and the first task:

Example 2

T: Ok *guys* so we're just going to recap yesterday's lesson and we're going to start off with our meter. [Automotive]

In Example 3, the tutor signals a change of task during the lesson, using *guys* to alert students to this change.

Example 3

T: Ok, *guys*, at the front please... Up front, *guys*... Come up front... Come up the front... Turn your torch off, come up the front. *Guys*, when you do this plug weld... When you do the plug weld, just drill your holes in the centre or slightly off-centre. [Fabrication]

In Example 4, the tutor signals the end of the work the students have been doing inside the classroom and the move to the building site outside.

Example 4

T: Alright *guys*, let's all finish we are going outside [Carpentry]

⁷ *You guys* occurred 142 times in the data, with a further 12 instances of *you guys*.

⁸ Giles-Mitson (2016) reports the combined use of *guys* and *you guys*. For the purpose of this comparison, the frequency of both *guys* and *you guys* in the present study is included here. Elsewhere in the article, the frequency of *guys* only is reported.

It is notable that in Examples 1–4, *guys* appears in initial position in the utterance, and co-occurs with *ok* or *alright*, which support *guys* in drawing students' attention.

4.1.3. Use of *guys* for the purpose of emphasis

A high proportion (40%) of instances of *guys* in the data are used for emphasis. Interestingly, emphasis is not a function mentioned for *guys* by Wilson (2010) in his study of rugby training discourse, a context with some similarities with the practical context of vocational education.

In the current study, an interesting feature of the use of *guys*, which is shown in the examples below, is that, in emphasising information, *guys* is placed in medial position syntactically. Following Leech (1999, p. 115), medial position refers to occasions where *guys* is inserted in the middle of a syntactically independent communicative unit rather than at the beginning or end.⁹ Although 40% of the instances of *guys* in the data in the present study were used for emphasis, only 9% of vocatives were found by Leech (1999) to be placed in medial position. Similarly, Alba-Juez (2009) reports that fewer than 12% of instances of *man* in her study were in medial position. As Leech (1999, p. 116) notes, different positions of address terms in an utterance serve different functions. Placement of *guys* in medial position functions to increase listener attention to what comes after it. Speakers often combined *guys* with other features to increase the emphasising and attention-drawing function. This supports Kleinknecht and Souza's (2017) finding that address terms co-occur with other cues.

In Example 5 the tutor inserts *guys* into his utterance to emphasise the approximate nature of what he is talking about: in Turn 1, he says *you're looking at 150, 165*, suggesting an approximate rather than an exact figure. In Turn 3, he explicitly states the approximate nature of the figure, stressing that it is *a round... ball-park figure*, using *guys* to further emphasise this, before giving the reason for it.

Example 5

1. T: you're looking plus 1 atmosphere, you're looking at 150, 165 will be the highest it will be. Yeah?
2. S: 13 to 1 would be very high?
3. T: Yes very high for any petrol engine, but this is a round... ball-park figure, *guys*, because what happens is your valve timing is going to ruin it. [Automotive]

As noted above, *guys* combines with other elements to perform the function of emphasis. In Example 6, the tutor not only uses *guys* medially in Turn 3, but also uses a *wh*-cleft (Collins, 1991), starting this particular utterance with *what happens*, to push the new information about the danger of water in the carburettor into second position in the utterance. Both *guys* and *what happens* focus attention on the important point the tutor is making about the boiling point.

Example 6

1. T: I used to work with a guy... he used to pour some water down the carburettor with an atomizer. But if you put too much in, what do you think is going to happen to the engine?
2. S: Hydraulic it
3. T: Hydraulic it. And we know a liquid can't compress and we could damage the engine. It's still a liquid. So therefore... what happens, *guys*, is the boiling point is a lot lower so therefore it will vaporize and atomize before it goes into the combustion chamber. [Automotive]

In Example 7 too, *guys* combines with a *wh*-cleft to emphasise subsequent new information:

Example 7

- T: what I'm going to do *guys* is I'm just going to run through these pictures in here, alright? [Automotive]

In addition to *guys* and *what you can do*, Example 8 has another element drawing the hearer's attention to what follows and emphasises it: *just have a look*.

Example 8

- T: What you can do then *guys* just have a look is with your compass again just develop with that line there [Plumbing]

In Example 9 the tutor not only uses a *wh*-cleft together with medial *guys*, but also explicitly states that he is highlighting his point:

Example 9

- T: saltwater freezes at a lower temperature so it has to be really cold to watch the harbour freeze. So what I'm trying to highlight here, *guys*, is what we think is hot and cold... we might be talking 18 to 24 degrees is mostly our comfort zone, but when we're looking at hot places on exhaust pipes, they might be 100 degrees Celsius. [Automotive]

⁹ To distinguish medial, initial and final position, in Examples 1–4, *guys* is in initial position; Example 13 contains an instance of *guys* in final position; In Examples 5–12 *guys* is in medial position.

In Example 10, a *to*-clause is fronted and together with medial *guys* it draws attention to what follows.

Example 10

T: We have a circle right in the middle, we'll make that 60 diameter. Cool. To get the centre of the circle, guys... Once you've drawn your square, to get the centre of the circle, just do a couple of dimension lines across and just cross them over in the middle [Plumbing]

In Example 11, an *if*-clause (which explicitly calls for student attention) and a *wh*-cleft combine with *guys* to emphasise what follows.

Example 11

T: If you just have a look, guys, across the bottom, what we've done is also numbered those, so that's number 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12. [Plumbing]

In Example 12, a *that*-clause (*the only reason we're doing this is [that]...*) combines with medial *guys* to focus listeners' attention on the new information that follows.

Example 12

T: The only reason we're doing this, guys, is when we go to make the transition piece, it's just going to make it easier for you guys to reference back to. Ok? [Plumbing]

The emphasising function of *guys* closely relates to the gaining-attention function, which in turn is close to the core meaning of any address term, which is to indicate to hearers that they are included in the group being addressed. The high frequency of the emphasising function in this study is likely to be related to the pedagogical purpose of talk. In any teaching situation, gaining students' attention, and emphasizing key information is important for teachers. This may be particularly the case where practical skills are being learned, as students must master entire processes, rather than gaining an understanding of concepts, where a less than total understanding may be acceptable.

4.1.4. Use of *guys* in conjunction with checking understanding

The final instructional function of *guys* was its use by tutors as a collective address term to signal that the tutor was checking the understanding of the entire group. In Example 13, *guys* as a collective term combines with *we* and *all* to signal to students that the comprehension check includes all of them:

Example 13

T: We're all good on that, *guys*? Next one, now above that drawing you've just done, what we're going to do [Plumbing]

The above discussion and examples have been focused on instructional functions. The focus now shifts to a discussion on occasions when *guys* is used with the potentially face-threatening acts by giving instructions (directives) and asking questions, inclusive of examples for each.

4.1.5. Use of *guys* in conjunction with directives

Far less frequently than its use in attracting listeners' attention or emphasising information, *guys* was used in conjunction with directives. However, in contrast with what will be seen with *mate*, there was no implication that *guys* was used to mitigate the face-threatening nature of directives. Instead it was used to indicate that the directive was addressed to the students collectively, as Examples 14–16 show. Here there appears to be no risk of offense to students at being given orders, as the orders are entirely facilitative of their learning.

Example 14

T: different things like that one there... you've got base coat foam paper... paper back but I'll show you, alright, so... follow me round the workshop, *guys*. [Automotive]

Example 15

T: You guys, who are happy with your drawings, show them to me first, then I'll collect them off you. Grab some more paper, *guys*, and put some more paper on your... [Plumbing]

Example 16

T: Cool Cool, I think that's everything, valve seats, valves, spring, squareness, core plug, yeah... that's us... cool, carry on *guys*. Yay... That's fine, yeah [Automotive]

4.1.6. Use of *guys* in conjunction with questions

All eight instances of *guys* being used to ask questions were used by a single tutor. As with directives, there was no implication that *guys* was being used to mitigate the face threat of being questioned, because the tutor is using *guys* collectively, thus giving the students the option of whether to answer the question or not. In Example 17, in Turn 1, *guys* is used as part of the tutor's teaching routine. Using the three-part Initiation-Response-Evaluation interaction (Mehan, 1979), he signals to the students that he is inviting any of them to reply to his question.

Example 17:

1. T: What's the f stand for, guys?
2. S: Faraday
3. T: Now we'll all have a look next week with regards to what Mr. Faraday actually... his laws and how he went about what he found. [Automotive]

As Table 4 shows, in addition to the use of *guys* for instructional purposes and in conjunction with functions like giving directives and questioning, *guys* was also used for affective functions including praise, acknowledgements and humour. Examples of these are examined in the next section.

4.1.7. Use of *guys* in praise, apologies and acknowledgements

Although rare, *guys* was also used with praise (Example 18), apologies (Example 19) and acknowledgements (Example 20) directed at the whole class. Interestingly, Example 20 contains both praise and an acknowledgement:

Example 18:

T: And I'm sure all of you went and got fuses last night... well done *guys* so we can all carry on and facilitate the work today... [Automotive]

Example 19:

- T: This is from there to there... should be 60. You've drawn yours in the centre...
 S: nah that's 40 and 60
 T: Oh it is too, I fucked up, didn't I? Sorry, *guys*, sorry sorry! I screwed up. [Automotive]

Example 20:

- T: Does anyone know the two types of core plugs there are, the names of them. No?
 S: Cup and bolt.
 T: Well done. You remember that from last year or... no... you just... Cool, thank you, *guys*. [Plumbing]

4.1.8. Use of *guys* in conjunction with humour

Finally, there was one instance of *guys* used with humour (Example 21). Here the tutor is using a multimeter as part of a demonstration. His directive to students to *look at that* indicates that they can see the multimeter. Possibly to ensure close attention, he jokes that he wrote the reading on the multimeter rather than reading it off the electronic display:

Example 21:

T: The d/c amps are... oh, look at that: 1 point 09. Actually that's just something I wrote on the multimeter... that's not the multimeter reading at all, it's got a flat battery... jokes, jokes, jokes, *guys*, jokes. 1 point 09. [Automotive]

From the findings shown in Table 4 and the resulting discussion, it is clear that, overwhelmingly, *guys* functioned to gain the attention of the group as a whole, or to signal to the students that a task was about to start, end or change, or to emphasise a point. The emphasising function is particularly interesting in that *guys* appears medially, usually accompanied by other attention-focusing features such as wh-clefts. In addition, more rarely, *guys* co-occurs with other functions such as directives and questions to the group of students as a whole. These uses of *guys* have not been previously discussed in the literature. A further interesting finding is that *guys* used with these functions gives no sense of mitigating a face-threatening act; rather, in these cases, *guys* signals that the directive or question addresses the whole group.

4.2. *Mate*

As Table 3 shows, there were 107 uses of *mate* by tutors and 9 uses by students in the 270,830-word corpus (42.8 per 100,000 words). This is a much higher frequency than found by Giles-Mitson (2016, p.26) in blue-collar workplaces in New Zealand corpus data from the 1990s (23.6 per 100,000 words). This therefore does not support Giles-Mitson's suggestion that the use of *mate* is declining in New Zealand English; *mate* was the most-used address form by students, who were largely in their late teens.

Table 4 shows a wide range of functions of *mate*, many more than the functions with which *guys* was associated. In Giles-Mitson (2016) study, *mate* was strongly associated with humour or with expressions of solidarity. She also found instances (infrequent in the 1990s blue-collar data but frequent in media data) where *mate* was associated with hostility. In contrast, in the present study, humour, solidarity, and hostility were rare. The functions of *mate* in the vocational education data were largely relational, including mitigation, encouragement, humour, acknowledgement, address, attention-getting, and exclamation. There was low use of *mate* in emphasis or checking understanding.

The most prominent function of *mate* in the data is mitigation of potential face-threats, with close to 50% of the tutor uses of *mate* suggesting mitigation in some degree (50 instances out of 107). This has also been mentioned in a number of previous studies of familiarizers (e.g. Rendle-Short, 2010; McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2003; Bucholtz, 2009; Giles-Mitson, 2016). In this study, mitigation is evident through the use of *mate* in directives, criticism, correction of mistakes, questioning, and disagreement. *Mate* was also used in mitigating delay and interruption.

4.2.1. Use of *mate* in mitigating directives

As teachers of students doing practical work, the tutors were inevitably involved in telling their students what to do and how to do it. Thus, the use of directives was extremely common. *Mate* functions to soften the directives in Examples 22–24:

Example 22:

T: I told you yesterday: bring a knife, *mate*, bring a knife, otherwise it's going to be painful. [Carpentry]

Example 23:

T: Out of the ears, *mate*. You know the rules, aye. I don't care what you're saying. Take them out of your ears. They're the rules that apply to everybody, not just you, ok?... It's dangerous. It's health and safety regulations... I have to enforce them. [Fabrication]

Example 24:

T: Ok, you've run out of room because you've started so high there. That's enough, *mate*, we're going to do another drawing anyhow so... [Plumbing]

In Example 25 *mate* combines with *alright?* to soften the effect of a string of directives about what to include in assignments, as well as the potentially face-threatening suggestion that the student is *getting all freaking out about it*.

Example 25:

T: Try when I get you to do your assignments... [student name], you've done a job, you've painted a car. Just write it down... how you've done the job from start to finish instead of getting all freaking out about it. And I don't know... when you do know, and you haven't done it. You only need to write down how you do it, *mate*, alright? [Automotive]

From students, there was only one use of *mate* to mitigate a directive. In Turn 2 in Example 26, the student repeats the tutor's directive to a fellow student. The tutor and students are leaving the classroom and setting off for the worksite. The tutor uses the familiarizers *bud*, *buddy* and *mate*.

Example 26:

1. T: I'll lock this, I'll lock this up here, ok? Alright? Alright? Let's go. [Student name], take your staff, *bud*. Take your staff.
2. S: Don't forget your staff, *mate*
3. T: Ok, that's alright, *mate*... Let's go. What are you after, *buddy*? [Carpentry]

4.2.2. Use of *mate* in mitigating criticism, correction and disagreement

Besides using *mate* to mitigate directives, tutors also used it to mitigate criticism, correction and disagreement. These functions are clearly important in a teaching situation in which practical work is being taught, as the tutor must provide the student with an assessment of how close they are to the target performance. In this supportive environment, these functions were often mitigated by address terms including *mate*. In Examples 27 and 28 the tutors mitigate criticism of a student's work using *mate*. In Example 27, the tutor goes through the task for the student, noting how to improve what the student attempts. This critique is softened by the use of *mate*.

Example 27:

T: Where's that one? Where's that mark there? Because you need to measure that to put at the bottom to get your true length, don't you? Get that one there. Now we come over to here, see there <unclear>. So this is your A so put A... Hang on, this is B so put B there, that is point 4 so put 4 there. Now let's go to that one. The trouble is with this, *mate*, this is so loose, you need to get a better one, and tighten that screw up a little bit. [Plumbing]

Example 28:

T: You could put..., I can't get one in there, ok, so you're good from here to here. You need to put another one here. Go twenty mil out and put in...
S: is that right?
S: Needs to be sixteen... ah twenty two...
T: Last minute, last minute... catch on. That's just how it is, *mate*, that's just how it is. That is ugly. See there? I think you need two... just to bring it back. [Carpentry]

In Example 29, the tutor mitigates a correction with *mate*.

Example 29:

T: But do your square first. Because they're actually dividing lines and you're actually going to divide each of those three. It's not square, *mate*, it's rectangular... got that fixed? Sweet. [Plumbing]

In Example 30, the tutor mitigates his disagreement with a student by the use of *mate* and also *sorry*.

Example 30:

T: so 'name the construction of materials in each of the procedures'... pretty straightforward... What do you think the top one's made out of?
S: um
T: Out of what?
S: foam
T: Blades scrapers, *mate*. Sorry [Automotive]

4.2.3. Use of *mate* in mitigating error

In Example 31 a student seeks to mitigate an error for which the tutor is reprimanding him in a way that verges on severe for this context. The tutor tells the student that what he has done *doesn't comply* with the building regulations. The student admits in Turn 4 that he was doing the work *roughly* and in Turn 6 ascribes his error to a *bit of rushing mate*. *Mate* heightens his effort to mitigate his error and appease the tutor.

Example 31:

1. T: Now technically, when it comes to this brace wall, if you don't follow these measurements and you have a failure in the bracing wall, you're the one that's liable. So why would you want to do short cuts? And honestly it takes fuck all. You just run your tape over there and you do running measurements. So the first one's fifty, the next one's a hundred, the next one's a hundred and fifty... You know, it's not... it's not hard maths!
2. S: <unintelligible>
3. T: ok? Sorry?
4. S: I was just doing it roughly... it was like that... boom... boom...
5. T: Yeah...
6. S: Bit of rushing, *mate*.
7. T: But hey, if they want to do that in the world, that's on to them, ok? This is the way I want you to do it. [Carpentry]

4.2.4. Use of *mate* in conjunction with praise agreement, encouragement, and reassurance

Encouragement (praise and reassurance) is another function that can be expected in a teaching situation, and this was frequent in the data. In these instances, the friendliness of *mate* intensifies the encouragement. This aligns with Kleinknecht and Souza's (2017) claim that familiarizers like *mate* heighten the emotion of the speech activity. In Example 32, the tutor praises a student, using *mate* as part of this praise, stressing the team nature of the student's success in *we* and *what a team*. Although the tutor uses the student's name in Turn 6, he addresses the student as *mate* in Turn 8, so *mate* is clearly doing more than merely functioning as an address term.

Example 32:

1. [sound of car trying to start; car starts]
2. T: [student name].
3. S: Guess what? Squirted CRC in it and it, they looked a little bit [inaudible] and it's been going like a rocket...
4. T: Ever since?
5. S: Ever since
6. T: Well we have fixed it, [student name], what a team, eh?
7. S: Yeah, what a team, huh. Can you believe that?
8. T: That is good, *mate*. [Automotive]

In Example 33, *mate* heightens the encouragement of *You'll get your head round it, eh?* and the reminder to the student that this is the *first time* he has done this task:

Example 33:

- T: Move it to there, which is foresight, then the next measurement on that same line is what you said, [student's name], is gonna be written on the backsight. Then all the other measurements will be the intermediates till you move it again. Sweet. Cool. You'll get your head round it, eh? First time, *mate*. Nice work, nice work, people. [Carpentry]

In Example 34, the tutor reassures a student that he intends explaining the different vehicle parts and processes, which the student has expressed confusion about. Again, the use of *mate* emphasises the kindliness of the tutor, intensifying the reassurance.

Example 34:

- T: We're only just starting, I'm going to go over and explain it all to you today, so next week you'll be a bit more aligned. Don't stress, it's alright, *mate*. [Automotive]

4.2.5. *Mate* and humour

Address terms have been noted in the literature as functioning in association with humour (Giles-Mitson, 2016) or 'badinage' (McCarthy and O'Keefe, 2003). In Example 35, *mate* combines with a phrase often used in a joking context, *service with a smile*, to signal that the tutor is joking when he says that the gift of a *rag and a blade* remunerates the student for his tuition fees.

Example 35:

- S: Does that look all right?
- T: Pretty good for your first one. Might want to come around a bit more and just take that lump off.
- S: where [indistinct] blades at?
- T: I've got them right here, look, service with a smile. How's that? There's your fees right there, *mate*. I gave you a rag and a blade today!
- S: I know! [Fabrication]

4.2.6. *Mate used with acknowledgement*

In Example 36, *perfect* combines with *mate* to increase the good feeling engendered by *thanks*. The tutor even repeats his thanks in [Student's name], *thank you*. This supports Kleinknecht and Souza's (2017) point that address terms work to intensify the affectivity of speakers.

Example 36:

T: So tell me... um, alright so we got... Oh thanks, *mate*, perfect. [Student's name], thank you. [Carpentry]

4.2.7. *Mate to express solidarity*

Solidarity as a function of *mate* emphasises a relationship of equality between participants. Although this function is highlighted in the literature (e.g. Rendle-Short, 2009; Giles-Mitson, 2016), this was a minor function in the data in the present study. Significantly, *mate* functioning to emphasise solidarity was used between peers rather than from tutor to student. In Example 37 two instances of *mate* appear in a brief conversation between two tutors discussing the bad behaviour of a student on site, and his tutor's attempts to *bring him into line* to teach him to behave professionally on site:

Example 37:

1. T2: [indistinct]
2. T1: why? Hey, I'm just bringing him in line, *mate*.
3. T2: still disappeared outside
4. T1: did he?
5. T2: I'm looking at rubbish on my site. Yeah, *mate*, he throws rubbish down. [Carpentry]

In Example 38, a student uses *mate* when commiserating with a fellow student, i.e. a peer. In Turn 2 *mate* is used with a directive; the tutor, referring to himself as *the boss*, stresses the power relationship between himself and the student. In Turn 4, he emphasises that the student does not have permission to miss class/work the next day to watch rugby. In the use of *mate* in Turn 11, a peer, Student 4, commiserates with Student 1, presumably about missing the rugby:

Example 38:

1. S1: What are we gonna do tomorrow?
2. T: Don't worry, *mate*. The boss has got plans.
3. S1: Go see the All Blacks. When? What time?
4. T: You tell me what time, I'll tell you, hey, don't come back here...
5. T: Nah, leave it and I'll put it in later. Leave it in the... ah... room. Are both shovels there? Oh oooo!
6. S2: Oh ah ah
7. T: Where's the other one?
8. S2: ah [name] has got it.
9. S1: [indistinct]
10. S3: When is it?
11. S4: Oh *mate*, hard luck. [Carpentry]

In an interesting instance, Example 39, the tutor shows solidarity with a student. The tutor addresses the student's identity as a (future) fellow professional subject to the strict standards of building inspectors, as all builders are:

Example 39:

- T: One of them is a little bit too thick, you know what I mean? It's just pushing the other one out. Yeah so we can just trim a bit of this... See, like that? Pass your knife... You got one knife?
- S: Yeah
- T: Beautiful! Don't try to tuck it in too much, eh? 'Cos then he goes 'oh don't try and tuck it in'. It's those inspectors, *mate*, they are just harsh! [Carpentry]

This finding that *mate* is used in this data as a marker of solidarity only between peers may support prior discussion of *mate*. Rendle-Short (2009) linked the use of *mate* as a display of solidarity with its function as displaying equality. The power relationship between tutor and student is not one of equality, so this may account for the scarcity of display of solidarity between tutor and students.

4.2.8. *Mate used with checking understanding, emphasis and highlighting information*

In a teaching situation, the transactional functions of checking understanding, emphasis, and highlighting information are important. However, in contrast with *guys*, *mate* was used relatively infrequently in conjunction with these functions. In Example 40, the tutor checks the student's understanding:

Example 40:

- T: Ok, they're the same, now if you go from that one to that one, and then your other one is from here to there. That should be down here because you've drawn a full square. You're cool, *mate*? You're good. [Plumbing]

In Example 41 the tutor uses both *mate* and *trust me* to emphasise what is said. These relational features make the information more salient.

Example 41:

T: Now you've got a big problem 'cos now you pull it off and it's got bits of paper and stuff stuck to the original paint that you didn't want to damage. And trust me, most of the time you can't even polish it off of there, *mate*. So generally now you've just caused yourself a whole lot of grief. [Automotive]

Example 42 shows the same construction discussed in relation to *guys* above: the use of a wh-cleft together with *mate*. The use of both helps to emphasise the tutor's message which comes after *mate*.

Example 42:

T: Have you seen electricians setting out flush boxes on framing before? When they do the flush boxes...on a new house or something? What they do, they don't use their ruler, *mate*, or a tape, they'll just get a bit of stick and they'll want the bottom of the flush box 13 hundred off the floor. [Plumbing]

5. Conclusion

Returning to the first research question, Table 3 (Section 4) shows that the familiarizers most frequently used by tutors at this vocational institution were *guys* and *mate*, with terms like *man*, *bro*, *boys* and *fellas* used much less frequently. In answer to the second research question, the analysis of the use of *mate* and *guys* shows a very different pattern for these two familiarizers. These differences go beyond the fact that *guys* addresses groups and *mate* addresses individuals. In addition, these familiarizers do very different relational work. *Guys*' predominant use is the instructional functions of gaining attention and emphasising subsequent information. Seldom was *guys* used in conjunction with more relational functions such as praise, directives or questions. When it was used with directives there was no hint that this functioned to mitigate any threat to students' face, possibly because a directive addressed to a group, particularly in a teaching situation, is unremarkable and unlikely to cause offense. Nevertheless, the finding that *guys* was used for functions other than drawing attention and emphasis is interesting, and this has not previously been mentioned in the literature.

In addition, the neutrality of *guys* makes it an ideal address term for a group of students as a whole. It is neutral in the sense that it is widely used to include both men and women (Heyd, 2010; Sienicki, 2014; Giles-Mitson, 2016). Also, as Wilson (2010) notes, *guys* also does not emphasise the relative youth of addressees in the way that *boys* does, and thus allows tutors to avoid any emphasis on the power difference between them and their students. This is important in New Zealand society where equality and egalitarianism are stressed even in contexts in which a power difference exists, such as an educational context. Formentelli and Hajek (2016) make a similar point about academic settings in Australia, a context which shares with New Zealand an emphasis on reducing power differences in social interaction.

Compared with the largely instructional use of *guys*, which did not appear to function in softening potential face threats, the opposite pattern was seen with *mate*. *Mate* rarely contributed to the instructional functions of attention-gaining or emphasis. Instead, *mate* was largely used to mitigate potential face-threats such as directives and criticism, or to heighten the friendliness of affective functions like praise and reassurance. The base meaning of *mate* is 'friend', which makes it particularly effective in softening the effect of directives and criticism, and particularly useful in intensifying affective functions (Kleinknecht and Souza, 2017) such as praise. Notably, the mitigating and affective functions of *mate* were predominant in this context; perhaps unsurprisingly in an educational context, *mate* functioning in conjunction with hostility (Rendle-Short, 2010; Giles-Mitson, 2016) was completely absent.

The widely discussed solidarity function of *mate*, seen as particularly important amongst working men (Bannister, 2005), was rare. This was unexpected in a context in which students are being trained to join a blue-collar workplace. Interestingly, supporting the characterisation in the literature (Rendle-Short, 2009) of *mate* as a marker of solidarity between peers, the few instances of use with a solidarity function were between peers. This low frequency of the solidarity function of *mate* is thus to be expected, because tutors and students are not peers, given that there is a power differential between them. This power difference entails the teacher–student relationship, in which tutors are tasked with teaching and assessing students' content knowledge and process skills. The tutors have superior knowledge of the trade as well as experience in industry, and they are also older than the students.

Mate functioning with humour was also rarer in this context than reported elsewhere (Giles-Mitson, 2016). This highlights the importance of context in any analysis. The very wide range of functions for which *mate* was used speaks to the flexibility of this familiariser and its particular usefulness in this context.

Mate and *guys* thus have complementary functions, firstly in addressing individuals (*mate*) or groups (*guys*), and secondly in functioning on the one hand largely for instructional functions (*guys*) and on the other hand largely for mitigating and affective ones (*mate*).

Regarding the third research question, concerning how the use of *mate* and *guys* support tutors' purposes as teachers, both the mitigating function of *mate* and the instructional function of *guys* were important. Tutors used *guys* almost entirely for instructional purposes, in classroom management, to signal the start, end or change of a task. They used it for the essential functions of drawing students' attention to what was being said, and for emphasizing key information. As discussed in Section 4.1, the use of *guys* was ten times more frequent in this context than was found in a previous study (Giles-Mitson, 2016) that used workplace data. This high frequency suggests that tutors found *guys* useful in facilitating these instructional functions.

To support their purposes as teachers, tutors used *mate* almost entirely for mitigating and affective functions, and only rarely for instruction functions. *Mate* was used for the persuasive functions of making criticism and directives more palatable to students, and thus more likely to be accepted and learned by them. Also persuasive was its use for affective functions like praise and encouragement, which are equally important in teaching. As discussed in Section 4.2, *mate* was twice as frequent compared to Giles-Mitson (2016) findings in a workplace context. This high frequency suggests that tutors clearly found *mate* to be a useful softener, given that directives are a pervasive feature of classroom teaching in any context, and verbal criticism is a necessary element in teaching process skills. Tutors' high frequency of use of *mate* for affective functions like praise, encouragement and reassurance is also notable, and serves to support the importance of these functions in this education context.

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