



The English Pronouns and Their Usage

**Egamnazarov Kobil
Abdunazarovich**

Independent researcher, Samarkand state institute of foreign languages

ABSTRACT

This article highlights about the English Pronouns and their usages. The Pronoun, as we all know, is a word used in place of a noun. Over the years, the effective use of English Pronouns by the users has been observed by researchers as a problematic circumstance. In the study, the background issues surrounding the existence of Pronouns have been revealed; some types of Pronouns have been identified, explained and illustrated with copious example as well as the features of the Pronouns.

Keywords:

Pronouns, features, types, parsing, commandments, indefiniteness, syntaxes.

There are a number of distinguishing features of the English Pronouns. For easy understanding and comprehension, the features are categorized into four maxims; they include:

- (a) Person (b) Number
- (c) Gender (d) Case

Types of Pronouns

There are many types and subtypes of Pronouns in English. This paper shall identify and discuss with copious examples, some types of Pronouns. They are as follows: the personal, possessive, relative, partitive, reflexive, demonstrative, interrogative, indefinite, distributive, universal and reciprocal Pronouns.

1) Personal Pronouns: The personal Pronouns include: (I, you, he, him, we, us, me, she, her, it, they and them). They are referred to as personal because refer to the person speaking or being spoken to. The following are examples of personal Pronouns within the sentence structure.

- a) I reported the case to the police
- b) The doctor told me I will be fine

- c) Leave us alone, we will survive the storm
- d) She told her the secret
- e) He rarely eats sugar
- f) It is sunny today, I am sure they will go visit them

2) Possessive Pronouns: The possessive Pronouns include: (my, our, your, their, her, his and mine, ours, yours, theirs, hers, his). They are referred to as possessive because they function in genitive case (i.e they indicate ownership and express possession relationship) to the person speaking or being spoken to. The following are examples of possessive Pronouns in sentences.

- a) Our teachers are working hard.
- b) Theirs is to eat and mine, to buy.
- c) Should the pen be his, the book is ours.
- d) His mother is my friend
- e) Her car is dirty, she needs yours.

3) Relative Pronouns: Relative Pronouns are used to relate an adjectival or describing clause to the noun

or Pronoun it describes. They show relationship between two or more sentence elements.

They include:

(who, whom, whose, which, that, what, when, why, so and how). The relative Pronouns “who” and

“whom” relate or refer to person, i.e when the antecedent is animate whereas “which” is used when the

antecedent is inanimate, such as things, objects, events etc. The following are examples of relative

Pronouns in sentences.

- a) Look at the man who killed his mother.
- b) Let me have the book that I asked you to buy.
- c) The students lack the idea about how they failed the test.
- d) Meet my son in whom I am well pleased.

4) Partitive Pronouns: These are Pronouns which refer to parts (not the whole) of the antecedents (what they represent). They include: (any, some, something, no, nothing, anything). Examples of partitive Pronouns include:

- a) Please give me some plain sheets
- b) There must be something wrong with Jane.
- c) Students don't read anything lengthy.

5) Reflexive Pronouns: Reflexive Pronouns are those which refer directly to the nouns or the noun phrase. According to Okunowo, reflexive Pronouns indicate co-referential relationship, i.e when the subject and object are the same referent. Such Pronouns include: (myself, themselves, itself, yourself, himself, herself, ourselves, yourselves). Examples of reflexive Pronouns include:

- a) They themselves are the evil doers
- b) If you come yourself, he may be lenient
- c) She solved the problem herself
- d) The goat delivered an offspring itself
- e) I can drive the car myself

Akinbode, [4] adds that a reflexive Pronoun is one which shows that the action in the sentence has its effect on the person or thing that does the action. However, some

personal Pronouns are joined with the word “self” (singular) or “selves” (plural) to form what is known as reflexive Pronouns.

6) Demonstrative Pronouns: These Pronouns are used to indicate or point out the person or thing being referred to. The English language has four basic demonstrative Pronouns. They are: this, those, that and these. They can be classified on two basis – nearness [this] and distance [that] as well as singular [this] and plural [these]. Examples of are given below:

- a) Are these the gifts from John?
- b) This is my pen.
- c) That may not be my property.
- d) Excuse me gentleman, those boots are not yours.

7) Interrogative Pronouns: As the name implies, interrogative Pronouns are used to ask questions. More often than not, they appear as the first words in sentences terminating in a question. Many scientists, [1] observe that interrogative Pronouns have morphological shapes suggestive of relative Pronouns. The difference between the two, however, lies in the structural and functional characteristics. For instance, interrogative Pronouns regularly ask questions. They include: (who, what, which and who). Illustrations are provided below.

- a) What is your name?
- b) When is the event?
- c) Which of the clothes are yours?
- d) Who provided you the keys?

8) Indefinite Pronouns: Indefinite Pronouns refer to “unspecified referents”. This category of Pronouns often functions as adjectives. They include: each, every, anybody, anyone, anything, both, nothing, another, all, any, anybody, everyone, everybody, everything, few, many, some, nobody, none, no one, one(s), other, several, somebody, someone, something etc. Illustrations are provided below.

- a) Here are two ladies: an intelligent one and the rough one
- b) Many are called but few are chosen.

- c) I have another wife apart from this.
- d) It is anyone's whether or not I fail
- e) Time will come, when no one will be poor

9) Distributive Pronouns: These are Pronouns used to talk about each and every person separately. They include: each, either, none, both, everyone, every, neither, any, one, everybody, everything). Examples of such Pronouns include:

- a) Each of us has a car
- b) Everything good will come
- c) Either of them is beautiful
- d) Neither of my parents is educated

10) Reciprocal Pronouns: These are Pronouns used to talk about mutual relationship. They are those Pronouns which demonstrated share or common relationship or action. Eka [6] observes in Quirk and Greenbaum [5] that reciprocal Pronouns somehow are similar to the reflexive Pronouns but with slight differences. While the reciprocal Pronoun relates to the action, the reflexive relates to the person. There are basically two types of reciprocal Pronouns in English namely: each other and one another. Example:

- a) John and Mary love each other
- b) The teacher talked about examination and the students looked at each other
- c) They cheated one another in their business.

The Pronouns and Parsing

Parsing refers to the grammatical exercise involving the description of sentences and words. Parsing, Friend, [3] observes is achieved by giving names to the grammatical categories of various elements, for example, subject, predicate, verb, object, number, case, gender, person, etc. To parse a word simply means to examine it in two different perspectives: (i) what part of speech it is, and (ii) what part it plays in the building of a sentence.

How to Parse Pronouns

To parse a Pronoun, one has to show five different things concerning it:

- (a) of what kind it is – whether Personal, Possessive, Demonstrative, Relative (i.e. Conjunctive), or Interrogative.
- (b) of what gender it is – whether Masculine, Feminine, Generic, Common or Neuter of what number it is – whether Singular or Plural.
- (d) of what person it is – whether first, second, or third
- (e) in what case it is – whether Nominative, objective, genitive

For example, to parse the Pronouns in the sentence:

I have written down your names in my book

The following analysis applies:

I have written down your names in my book					
Pronouns	Kind	Gender	Number	Person	Case
I	Personal	Common/neuter	Singular	First	Nominative case – subjective to the verb 'have written'.
Your	Possessive	Common/neuter	Singular	Second	Possessive case – indicating possession of 'names'.
My	Possessive	Common/neuter	Singular	First	Possessive case (possessive adjective qualifying the noun 'book').

Usage of English Pronouns

1. The Pronoun should agree with the Noun in number, gender and person.

Example:

Nozim is my friend. He is in the hospital

Komila is my friend. She loves me much

My friends are very kind. They helped me much

2. If the Nouns are connected by each and every, the Pronouns must be singular.

Example:

Every man and boy has paid his fee

Every girl and woman has bought her book

3. If a singular Noun is combined with a plural Noun by or, nor, either- or, neither- nor, the Pronoun must be plural.

Example:

Neither the principal nor the teachers are interested in their duties.

Either Ulugbek or the other students have helped their teacher.

4. The correct form of Pronoun (subjective and objective case) must be used after than or a verb.

Example:

She loves me more than I love her

She invited my friend and me (not I) to the function.

5. The correct order of Pronouns and their persons must be maintained.

Example:

You and I shall go there.

My mother and I consulted the doctor.

6. Double possessives may be used correctly.

Example:

Nozim is a friend of mine.

We have a book of yours.

7. After a preposition and the verb, the Pronoun must be in the objective case.

Example:

Nobody but Aziz helped me. (not I)

She loves none but me. (not I)

8. Reflexive Pronouns should never be used as subjects or objects.

Example:

Ulugbek and myself edited a film yesterday. (wrong)

Ulugbek and I edited a film yesterday. (right)

Reflexive Pronouns may be used after prepositions.

Example:

He looked after himself

He quarrelled among themselves.[6]

In conclusion, this paper examined exhaustively, the English Pronouns and some background issues concerning its usage. It identified and discussed with copious illustrations; ten types of Pronouns in English which included: the personal, possessive, interrogative, demonstrative, reflexive, indefinite, reciprocal, distributive and relative Pronouns etc. The study again establishes a down-to-earth approach in analyzing the parsing process of the English Pronouns.

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