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الدراسات العليا

مادة علم الصرف والنحو

ا.م. ميثاق خميس خلف

Pronouns

Pronouns share several characteristics, most of which are absent from nouns. It is best to see pronouns as comprising a varied class of closed-class words with nominal function. By 'nominal' here we mean 'noun-like' or, more frequently, 'like a noun phrase'.

Semantically, a pronoun may be a 'pro-form' in any of the three senses illustrated in the following example: *'Margot longed for a bicycle, and at last (C)somebody gave (B) her (A) a brand new one.'*

(A) It may substitute for some word or phrase (as *one* may substitute for a noun, and therefore be a 'pronoun' in a quite literal sense).

(B) It may signal, as personal pronouns like *her* do, that reference is being made to something which is given or known within the linguistic or situational context.

(C) It may stand for a very general concept, so that its reference includes the reference of untold more specific noun phrases: *somebody,* for example, indicates a broad class of people including a *girl, a man, a secretary,* etc.

Syntactically, most pronouns function like noun phrases rather than nouns. They combine in only a limited way with determiners and modifiers. We can say, indeed, that most pronouns, being intrinsically either definite or indefinite, incorporate their own determiner. Contrast:
- *the men*   - *a tall man*
- **the they*   - **a tall he*
In addition, some pronouns have morphological characteristics that nouns do not have:

a. CASE: here is a contrast between subjective and objective cases: *I/me, she/her, who/whom,* etc.
b. PERSON: There is a contrast between lst, 2nd, and 3rd persons: *I/ you / she,* etc.
c. GENDER: There are overt grammatical contrasts between (i) personal and non-personal gender; and between (ii) masculine and feminine gender: *He/she/it,* etc.
d. NUMBER: There are morphologically unrelated number forms, as in *I/we, He/ they,* as opposed to the typical regular formation of noun plurals: *girl/ girls,* etc.

Subclasses of pronouns

1- Central pronouns: Personal, possessive, and reflexive pronouns may be called the CENTRAL PRONOUNS, since they share those features we have mentioned as being particularly characteristic of pronouns, *viz* contrast of person, gender, and subjective/objective case. The central pronouns have in common the distinctions of person (Ist, 2nd, and 3rd), gender (masculine, feminine, and nonpersonal), and number (singular and plural). Although these central pronouns fulfil different syntactic functions, they have obvious morphological resemblances.

2- Reciprocal pronouns: The RECIPROCAL PRONOUNS *each other* and *one another* are related to the reflexive pronouns in that they can be said to express a 'two-way reflexive relationship'). Yet there are important differences between reflexive and reciprocal pronouns. Compare:

REFLEXIVE PRONOUN	RECIPROCAL PRONOUN
Adam and Eve blamed *themselves*.	Adam and Eve blamed *each other*.
['Adam blamed himself,	['Adam blamed Eve,
and Eve blamed herself.']	and Eve blamed Adam.']

3- **Relative pronouns** Introduce relative clauses, *eg:* The book *which* you ordered last month has arrived. In this example the relative pronoun *which* introduces the relative clause *which you ordered last month.* Relative pronouns differ from personal pronouns in that the element which contains or comprises the relative pronoun is always placed at the beginning of the clause, whether it is subject, complement, adverbial, postmodifier, prepositional complement, or object. Relative pronouns resemble personal pronouns in that they have coreference to an antecedent.

Unlike personal pronouns, relative pronouns have the double role of referring to the antecedent (which determines gender selection, *eg: who/ which)* and of functioning as all of, or part of, an element in the relative clause (which determines the case form for those items that have case distinction, *eg: who/ whom)*

4- **Interrogative pronouns** These are formally identical with the wh-series of relative pronouns. but have a different function. They correspond closely to interrogative determiners and we shall discuss the use of both types of interrogative word together, ie the following items:

PRONOUN FUNCTION:	*who*	*whom*	*whose*	*what*	*which*
DETERMINATIVE FUNCTION:			*whose*	*what*	*which*

Who, whom, and whose are subjective, objective, and genitive case forms respectively, and have personal gender. The other interrogatives are not distinctive for case or gender. Note in particular that, unlike relative which, interrogative which can be used not only with nonpersonal but also with personal reference:

RELATIVE: The author { *who* / *which } is my favourite is . . .

INTERROGATIVE: { *Which* / *Who* } is your favourite author?

5- **Demonstrative pronouns:** The demonstrative pronouns *this, that, these,* and *those* exactly match the form of the four demonstrative determiners. With the demonstratives, as with the interrogatives, we shall find it convenient to consider together the uses of the determiners and of the pronouns. The demonstratives have number contrast in both determiners and pronouns:

	SINGULAR	PLURAL
'NEAR' REFERENCE	*this* (student)	*these* (students)
'DISTANT' REFERENCE	*that* (student)	*those* (students)

Like the definite article and the personal pronouns, demonstratives have definite meaning, and therefore their reference depends on the context shared by speaker/ writer and hearer/reader. Also, in the same way, their use may be considered under the headings of SITUATIONAL reference (reference to the extralinguistic situation), **ANAPHORIC** reference (coreference to an earlier part of the discourse), eg. (*I hear you disliked his latest novel. 1 read his first novel, and **that** was boring, too),* and **CATAPHORIC** reference (coreference to a later part of the discourse). Eg. (He told the story like ***this:*** 'Once upon a time . . .')

6- **Indefinite pronouns:** The remaining classes of pronouns are termed INDEFINITE: they lack the element of definiteness which is found in the personal, reflexive, possessive, and demonstrative pronouns, and to some extent also in the wh-pronouns.

The indefinite pronouns divide into two main categories according to their morphology and their syntactic behavior:

Positive pronouns: . The COMPOUND PRONOUNS are those which are composed of two morphemes, viz a determiner morpheme every-, some-, any-, or no-, and a nominal morpheme -one, -body, or -thing. The remaining indefinite pronouns belong to a category which we shall call OF-PRONOUNSb, ecause they can be followed by a partitive of-phrase: many (of), some (of),et c.

The pairs of pronouns with personal reference (eg: everybody, everyone) are equivalent in function and meaning but the pronouns in -one are regarded as more elegant than those in -body. All the compound pronouns are singular, and have concord with a singular verb even though notionally they may denote more than one thing or person:

$\left.\begin{array}{l}\textit{Everybody}\\\textit{Everyone}\end{array}\right\}$ over eighteen now has a vote.

I tried *everything* but *nothing* works.

$\left.\begin{array}{l}\textit{Somebody}\\\textit{Someone}\end{array}\right\}$ was telling me you've been to America.

Negative pronouns Corresponding to the negative determiners *no* and neither, the negative pronouns are the of-pronouns none and neither, and the compound pronouns nobody, no one, and nothing (cf 6.46). In addition,few and little, although not morphologically negative, are negative in meaning and in syntactic behaviour. Examples are:

I have received *no* urgent message(s).

None (of the students) $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{has}\\\text{have}\end{array}\right\}$ failed.

Neither $\left\{\begin{array}{l}\text{of the accusations}\\\text{accusation}\end{array}\right\}$ is true.

That's *none* of your business!

I said *nothing* about it.

$\left.\begin{array}{l}\textit{Nobody}\\\textit{No one}\end{array}\right\}$ has sent an apology so far.