Pronouns

Developed from an original idea by New Zealand born psychologist David Grove[1] , pronoun work is a key area in IEMT when working with issues of identity.

Pronouns[2,3] are words that are used in place of a noun or noun phrase. In linguistics, pronouns are classified based on the person, number, gender, and case of the noun they replace. Here are some examples of pronouns in English, along with their corresponding classifications:

- Person: First person (I, we), second person (you), third person (he, she, it, they)
- Number: Singular (I, you, he, she, it), plural (we, you, they)
- Gender: Masculine (he, him), feminine (she, her), neuter (it)
- Case: Subjective (I, you, he, she, it, we, they), objective (me, you, him, her, it, us, them), possessive (mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs)

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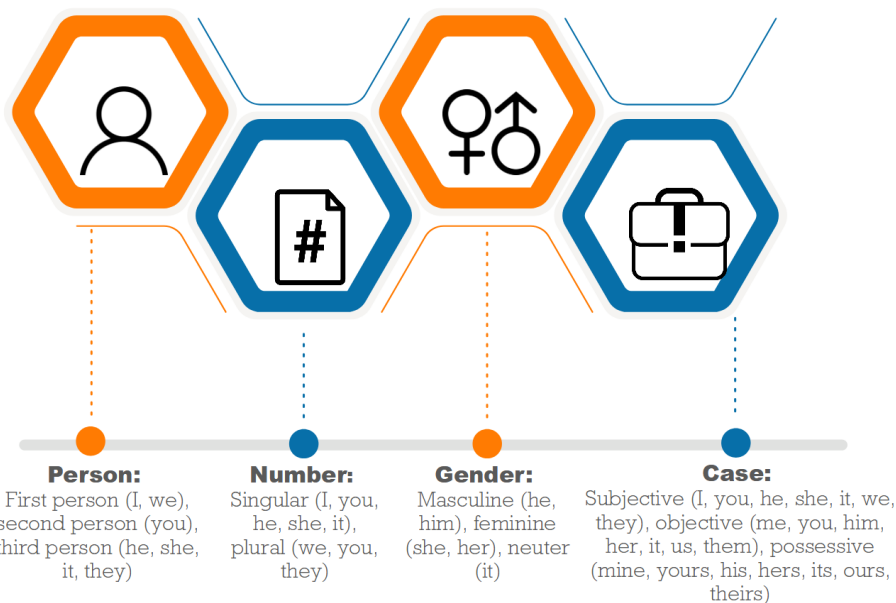
Here are some examples of how these pronouns can be used in sentences:

- First person singular: I am going to the store.
- Second person singular: You are going to the store.
- Third person singular masculine: He is going to the store.
- Third person singular feminine: She is going to the store.
- Third person singular neuter: It is going to the store.
- First person plural: We are going to the store.
- Second person plural: You are going to the store.
- Third person plural: They are going to the store.

It's worth noting that some languages have more complex systems of pronouns, with more distinctions based on person, number, gender, and case. Additionally, some languages, such as

gender-neutral languages, do not have gender-specific pronouns.

Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns are used to refer back to the subject of a clause or sentence and include words such as "myself," "yourself," "himself," "herself," "itself," "ourselves," and "themselves."

Here are some examples of reflexive pronouns:

- I hurt myself while I was playing soccer. (Reflects back to the subject "I")
- You can do it yourself. (Reflects back to the subject "you")
- He washed himself before going to bed. (Reflects back to the subject "he")
- She cut herself while chopping vegetables. (Reflects back to the subject "she")
- It broke itself when it fell off the table. (Reflects back to the subject "it")
- We did it ourselves. (Reflects back to the subject "we")
- They helped themselves to some food. (Reflects back to the subject "they")

Relative pronouns are used to introduce clauses that modify nouns or pronouns and include words such as "who," "whom," "whose," "that," and "which."

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Here are some examples of relative pronouns:

- The woman who lives next door is very nice. (Modifies the noun "woman")
- The man whom I met at the store was very helpful. (Modifies the noun "man")
- The cat whose tail was injured has recovered. (Modifies the noun "cat")
- The book that I read was very interesting. (Modifies the noun "book")
- The car which I bought was very expensive. (Modifies the noun "car")

Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstrative pronouns are used to point out specific people, places, things, or ideas and include words such as "this," "that," "these," and "those."

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns:

- That book is mine. (first person singular)
- Is this pen yours? (second person singular or plural)
- His car is very fast. (third person singular masculine)

- Hers is a little older. (third person singular feminine)
- Its paws are very soft. (third person singular, used for animals, objects, or abstract concepts)
- Our house is the one with the red roof. (first person plural)
- Their dog is very friendly. (third person plural)

Kinship Pronouns

Kinship pronouns are pronouns that are used to refer to family relationships. They are used to refer to a person's relatives or to describe the relationship between people who are related. Some examples of kinship pronouns include:

- "mother" (e.g. "My mother is coming to visit." - this refers to the speaker's mother)
- "father" (e.g. "My father works in an office." - this refers to the speaker's father)
- "sister" (e.g. "My sister is younger than me." - this refers to the speaker's sister)
- "brother" (e.g. "My brother is in college." - this refers to the speaker's brother)

Here are some more examples of kinship pronouns:

- "aunt" (e.g. "My aunt is coming to visit." - this refers to the speaker's aunt)
- "uncle" (e.g. "My uncle is a doctor." - this refers to the speaker's uncle)
- "cousin" (e.g. "My cousin lives in a different city." - this refers to the speaker's cousin)
- "grandmother" (e.g. "My grandmother is 80 years old." - this refers to the speaker's grandmother)

Kinship pronouns are used to refer to family relationships and are often used in combination with other words to describe the relationship (e.g. "My mother's sister" refers to the speaker's aunt).

Anaphoras and Antecedents

Pronouns are words that stand in for nouns or noun phrases. They can be used to refer back to a noun or noun phrase that has already been mentioned, and this use of pronouns is called anaphora.

For example:

- "John went to the store. He bought some milk." In this example, the pronoun "he" refers back to the noun "John" and is used anaphorically.

- "The cat chased its tail. It was so funny to watch." In this example, the pronoun "it" refers back to the noun phrase "the cat's tail" and is used anaphorically.

So, the use of pronouns often involves anaphora, where the meaning of the pronoun is dependent on an antecedent (the noun or noun phrase that the pronoun is referring to).

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns are pronouns that refer to non-specific persons or things. They do not refer to a specific person, place, or thing. Some examples of indefinite pronouns include:

- "all" (e.g. "All of the cookies are gone." - this could mean that all of the cookies in a specific group or all of the cookies in the world are gone)
- "any" (e.g. "Do you have any cookies?" - this could mean any cookies in a specific group or any cookies in the world)
- "none" (e.g. "None of the cookies are mine." - this could mean that none of the cookies in a specific group or none of the cookies in the world are the speaker's)
- "some" (e.g. "Can I have some cookies?" - this could mean some of the cookies in a specific group or some of the cookies in the world)

Here are some more examples of indefinite pronouns:

- "everyone" (e.g. "Everyone likes cookies.")
- "nobody" (e.g. "Nobody likes broccoli.")
- "something" (e.g. "I need something to eat.")
- "anything" (e.g. "Can I have anything to drink?")
- "nothing" (e.g. "I have nothing to wear.")

Indefinite pronouns are used to refer to a non-specific or unknown person or thing. They can be singular or plural, depending on the verb that follows them in the sentence.

Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns are pronouns that are used to ask questions. They are used to ask for specific information or to request something. Some examples of interrogative pronouns include:

- "who" (e.g. "Who is coming to the party?" - this asks for the identity of the person coming to the party)
- "whom" (e.g. "To whom are you writing?" - this asks for the identity of the person being written to)
- "whose" (e.g. "Whose car is this?" - this asks for the ownership of the car)
- "what" (e.g. "What do you want for dinner?" - this asks for the specific thing that is wanted for dinner)

Here are some more examples of interrogative pronouns:

- "which" (e.g. "Which movie do you want to see?" - this asks for the specific movie that is wanted to be seen)
- "when" (e.g. "When is the party?" - this asks for the specific time that the party is happening)
- "where" (e.g. "Where are you going?" - this asks for the specific location that the person is going to)

Interrogative pronouns are used to ask questions and are often found at the beginning of a question. They can be used alone or in conjunction with other words to form a question.

Honorifics

Honorifics are words or forms of address that are used to show respect or deference to someone, typically in the context of a language's grammatical system. Honorifics can be used in place of a

person's name or title, and they can convey a range of meanings, from simple politeness to deep respect or reverence.

In many languages, honorifics are expressed through different verb forms, nouns, or titles that are used to address or refer to someone. For example, in Japanese, there are several levels of honorifics, including:

- "San," a general honorific used for people of equal or lower status
- "Sama," a more formal honorific used for people of higher status or for a customer in a store
- "Dono," a very formal honorific used for people of very high status, such as a noble or a royalty
- In English, honorifics are less commonly used, but they can still be found in certain situations, such as when addressing someone with a title, such as "Dr." or "Professor," or when using terms of address, such as "Sir" or "Madam."

Here are some examples of how honorifics might be used in different languages:

- Japanese: "Sumimasen, Tanaka-san, doko desu ka?" (Excuse me, Mr. Tanaka, where are you?)
- Korean: "Annyeong haseyo, Choe-ssi." (Hello, Mr. Choe.)
- French: "Bonjour, Monsieur Dupont." (Hello, Mr. Dupont.)
- English: "Good morning, Dr. Smith." (Good morning, Dr. Smith.)

Non-Binary Pronouns

Non-binary people are individuals who do not identify as exclusively male or female, and may instead identify as a gender that is outside of the gender binary (male/female). Many non-binary people use pronouns that reflect their gender identity, rather than the pronouns traditionally associated with the sex assigned to them at birth (e.g., "he" and "she").

There are a number of pronouns that non-binary people may use to refer to themselves, including:

- They/them/their: These pronouns are often used by non-binary people who do not feel that "he" or "she" accurately reflect their gender identity. They are also commonly used as gender-neutral singular pronouns in English. For example: "I'm going to the store. Can you come with me, because I don't want to go alone? They're going to be there, too."

- Ze/hir/hirs: These pronouns are often used by non-binary people who do not feel that "he" or "she" accurately reflect their gender identity. They are also commonly used as gender-neutral singular pronouns in English. For example: "I'm going to the store. Can you come with me, because I don't want to go alone? Ze's going to be there, too."

- Xe/xem/xyr: These pronouns are often used by non-binary people who do not feel that "he" or "she" accurately reflect their gender identity. They are also commonly used as gender-neutral singular pronouns in English. For example: "I'm going to the store. Can you come with me, because I don't want to go alone? Xe's going to be there, too."

"The Secret Life of Pronouns"

"The Secret Life of Pronouns"(James W. Pennebaker, 2011)[4] is a book by James W. Pennebaker[5] that explores the role of pronouns in language and how they can reveal insights into people's thoughts,

feelings, and relationships.

> The smallest, most commonly used, most forgettable words serve as windows into our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. The ways people use pronouns, articles, and other everyday words are linked to their personality, honesty, social skills, and intentions. *James W. Pennebaker*

In the book, Pennebaker argues that pronouns are more than just simple words that we use to refer to ourselves and others; they are also indicators of our social relationships and emotional states. By analyzing the use of pronouns in written or spoken language, it is possible to gain insight into a person's personality, emotions, and social connections.

Here are a few quotes from the book that provide a sense of its main arguments:

- "Pronouns are a window into the self."

- "The pronouns people use reflect their sense of self and their social relationships."

- "Pronouns can reveal how we think about ourselves and others, how we view the world, and how we feel about ourselves and those around us."

One example of how pronouns can reveal insights into people's thoughts and feelings comes from Pennebaker's analysis of the language used by U.S. presidents in their inaugural addresses. He found that presidents who used more first-person singular pronouns (e.g., "I," "me," "my") tended to be more successful in office, while those who used more first-person plural pronouns (e.g., "we," "us," "our") were less successful. This suggests that the use of first-person singular pronouns may be associated with a sense of confidence and self-assurance, while the use of first-person plural pronouns may be associated with a desire to build consensus or seek support from others.

Overall, "The Secret Life of Pronouns" is a fascinating exploration of the role of pronouns in language and how they can provide insights into the thoughts, feelings, and relationships of the people who use them.

Tools

analyzewords helps reveal your personality by looking at how you use words. It is based on good scientific research connecting word use to who people are. So go to town - enter your Twitter name or the handles of friends, lovers, or Hollywood celebrities to learn about their emotions, social styles, and the ways they think.

http://secretlifeofpronouns.com/exercise/Bottle/ Everyone sees the world in slightly different ways. In this exercise, you will be asked to describe a relatively simple picture for about 5 minutes. After doing this, the computer will analyze your writings and point to how you view the picture compared to others.

More exercises from his website: Exercises

Video
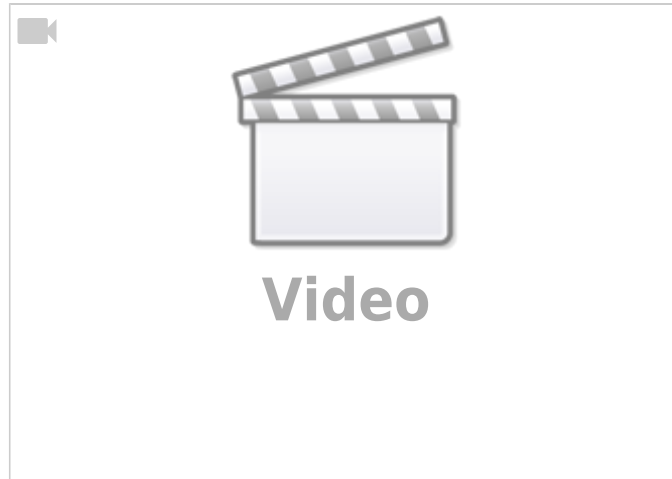
[1] David Grove Clean LanguageWikipedia

[2] PronounWikipedia

[3] English pronounsWikipedia

[4] "The Secret Life of Pronouns"secretlifeofpronouns.com

[5] James W. PennebakerWikipedia

1. ˆ James W. Pennebaker, 2011. *The Secret Life of Pronouns: What Our Words Say About Us..* Bloomsbury Publishing, ISBN 978-1-60819-480-3.