



# THE POLITICS OF PRONOUNS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE: THE CASE OF POLITICAL SPEECHES



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# TYPES OF PRONOUNS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- A. Personal pronouns
- B. Possessive pronouns
- C. Reflexive pronouns
- D. Reciprocal pronouns
- D. Demonstrative pronouns
- E. Interrogative pronouns
- F. Relative pronouns
- H. Indefinite pronouns
- I. Distributive pronouns


number	person	gender	personal pronouns	
			subject	object
singular	1st	male/female	I	me
	2nd	male/female	you	you
	3rd	male	he	him
		female	she	her
		neuter	it	it
		1st	male/female	we





# GENDER AWARENESS




Pronouns like "he," "she," and "they" have long been a fundamental part of English grammar. Yet, in the 21st century, their role has expanded beyond linguistic utility to a symbol of identity and respect. 

Early English featured pronouns largely reflecting a binary understanding of gender: "he" and "she" for individuals, and "it" for objects. However, even in historical texts, you can find evidence of singular "they" being used when a person's gender was unknown—a practice that remains common today.

The Industrial Revolution and Victorian norms further solidified binary pronoun usage, mirroring rigid gender roles of the time.

This linguistic evolution reflects the growing recognition of nonbinary and gender-diverse identities, but it hasn't been without controversy.

The politics of pronouns is deeply intertwined with social movements. LGBTQ+ advocacy groups have been instrumental in pushing for wider recognition of gender diversity. 





# PERSONAL PRONOUNS AND THEIR USE IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

- In Sociolinguistics, ‘we’ acts as a useful linguistics mediator between the speaker and the addressee showing the polite interaction of self and another as a result of modesty or sympathy.
- In Psychology, Egocentrism is the characteristics of regarding oneself as one’s opinions or interests as most important. An egocentric person has no theory of mind, cannot put himself/ herself in other people’s shoes, and believes everyone sees what he/she sees. The interaction of speech is egocentric in the sense that the speaker casts himself/herself in the role of ego and relates everything to their viewpoint.



# PERSONAL PRONOUNS AND POLITICS

- Imagine a politician delivering a rousing speech. They say, “I promise change,” and then add, “Together, we can achieve it.” The shift from “I” to “we” is deliberate, designed to balance leadership with inclusion. Pronouns, though small, carry immense rhetorical weight. They determine whether a leader appears relatable, authoritative, or divisive.
- The strategic use of personal pronouns like “I,” “you,” and “we” allows politicians to modulate their tone and approach. “I” often signals accountability and leadership, while “we” fosters inclusivity. “You” engages the audience directly, making the speech feel conversational.



## PRONOUNS AND POLITICAL SPEECHES

- In political speeches, politicians use personal pronouns to impart an intended message. The presentation of “selves” through the usage of first-person personal pronouns reflects how politicians’ reality is constructed in discourse. Pronouns may also signal relationships between individual entities (“selves”) and members of different groups.

# THE DISCOURSE OF PRONOUNS

Another literary discourse has been formalized i.e. when 'I' speaking to another as a 'you' is the habit of talking to oneself, of the self as both speaker and addressee. This often happens in interior monologue or free direct thought in modern fiction as the soliloquy in drama.

From fostering collective identity to distinguishing friend from foe, pronouns have always been more than grammatical tools. As the world becomes more attuned to language's nuances, analyzing pronouns in political speeches offers valuable insights into leaders' intentions and their impact on society.

This can be truly confirmed through Bush's speeches in terms when he speaks as I and We:

I recently received a touching letter that says a lot about the state of America in these difficult times, a letter from a fourth grade girl with a father in the military.

We see our national character in rescuers working past exhaustion, in long lines of blood donors, in thousands of citizens who have asked to work and serve in any way possible





## ANALYSIS OF Donald Trump's last inauguration speech:

Through his speech, Donald Trump uses the personal pronouns to show that he is already present and active in front of the audience or the listener. Additionally, without being named, it has already been known that “We” refers to the speaker and the audiences, citizens of the United States. Moreover, the variants of Deictic “We” such as “us” and “our” are proportionally employed. This is proved by the extract below:

*“We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people.”*





# The Power of “We” in Political Speeches

“We” is perhaps the most potent pronoun in a politician’s vocabulary. It conveys unity and shared purpose, especially in times of crisis or celebration. Barack Obama’s speeches frequently utilized “we” to inspire hope and collective action, as seen in his iconic “Yes We Can” slogan.

However, overusing “we” can dilute accountability, making it unclear who holds responsibility for specific actions. Striking the right balance is key to maintaining credibility while inspiring collective action.



# CONCLUSION

Pronouns, though small in size, carry immense weight in the realm of politics and communication. In political speeches, they serve as powerful tools to inspire unity, assert leadership, and even draw lines of division. Leaders wield them strategically, balancing personal responsibility with collective identity, as seen in the use of “I” and “we.”

Over time, the politics of pronouns has expanded beyond rhetorical strategy to encompass broader societal debates about identity, inclusion, and representation. The growing focus on gender-neutral and inclusive pronouns reflects a shift toward acknowledging and respecting diverse identities.