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## PRONOUNS AS SUBJECTS

ABDIKHAMIDULLO AZIMOV, SITORA SHODIYEVA

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### Abstract

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#### Keywords:

*an operator, the subject of the sentence, universal pronoun, structures*

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*The paper considers the theoretical evidence of teaching lexical items and semantic groups for Pronouns. Almost every sentence can be divided into certain components which are called parts of the sentence. Parts of the sentence are usually classified into main and secondary. Every English sentence but the one-member and the imperative one must have a subject.*

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#### Author correspondence:

**ABDIKHAMIDULLO AZIMOV**

Manager of the Chair of "English in faculties", Karshi State University, Uzbekistan

**SITORA SHODIYEVA**

An English language teacher at school #6, Kukdala, Uzbekistan

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Almost every sentence can be divided into certain components which are called parts of the sentence. Parts of the sentence are usually classified into main and secondary. Every English sentence but the one-member and the imperative one must have a subject. The subject is one of the two main parts of the sentence. The most important feature of the subject in English is that in declarative sentences it normally comes immediately before the predicate, whereas in questions its position is immediately after an operator. It means that in English sentences any word or words which occur in these positions are to be treated as **the subject** of the sentence.<sup>1</sup> And pronouns can also serve as subjects of the sentence.

1. Indefinite pronouns (*somebody, someone, something, anybody, and anything*); universal pronouns (*everybody, everyone, everything, and each*); negative pronouns (*nobody, no one, neither* etc.) have a singular predicate:

*There was **nothing** to attract our attention.*

***Nobody** has come except him.*

***Everyone** thinks he has the answer.*

However, the negative pronoun none may have a singular or a plural verb-predicate, it depends whether one-person is meant or more than one:

***None of us** understands/ understand it.*

2. Interrogative pronouns who, what have a singular verb-predicate.

***Who** is this man?*

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<sup>1</sup>Кобрина Н.А. Корнеева Е.А. "Грамматика английского языка" С-Петербург 1999.

*What is there?*

If the question refers to more than one-person a plural may be used:

*Who are with him?*

*Who have agreed to?*

3. If the subject is expressed by a relative pronoun (*who, which, that*) the verb-predicate agrees with its antecedent:

*It is I who am wrong.*

*It is you who are wrong.*

*You are the one who is wrong.*

*I don't know the boys who live next door.*

*Shish Kebab is one of those dishes which have to be locked outdoors.*

1. The universal pronoun *both* has a plural predicate:

*Which of these are yours?*

*Both are mine.*

Ilyish claimed that the predicate agrees in number with the subject: when the subject is in the singular, the predicate is bound to be in the singular, and when the subject is in the plural, the predicate is bound to be in the plural as well. However, this statement is very doubtful. This is specially confirmed by sentences confirmed by sentences confirmed by sentences like, "My family are early risers", where the plural number in the link verb shows the plurality of the acting persons, though the subject noun is in the singular. Besides it should be noted that this question of concord or no concord is one that belongs to the level of phrases, not to that of the sentence and its part. Thus, there seems to be no valid reason for thinking that the predicate in any way depends on the subject.

Kobrina<sup>2</sup> expresses the followings about the agreement of predicate with homogenous subjects.

A plural verb-predicate is used in the following cases:

1. With homogenous subjects connected by *and*.

*Sun and Mary are my friends.*

Note: However with structures where coordinated nouns refer to are thing or person a singular verb predicate is used.

*Bread and butter is not enough for breakfast (one object is meant)*

*Bacon and eggs makes a traditional English breakfast (one dish is meant).*

If the article is repeated, the reference is to two persons or objects and the butter are on the table. (Two separate objects are meant).<sup>3</sup>

*The painter and the decorator are here. (Two people are meant).*

2. With homogenous subjects connected by *both ... and ...*

*Both the bread and the butter are fresh.*

*Both the teacher and the students have come.*

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<sup>2</sup>Ilyish "The Structure of Modern English Leningrad 1971.P. 200.

<sup>3</sup>N.A. Kobrina.An English Grammar Peterburg 1999 p 243.

3. With homogenous subjects connected by the conjunctions **not only...but also, either...or... ,...or ... , neither... nor ...** the verb-predicate agrees with the nearest noun subject. (This is so called "proximity rule").

*Either my parents or my sister is at home.*

*Neither you nor I am right.*

*Neitherhenor I am right.*

*Not only my parents but also my brother knows about it.*

*Is Tom or Mary eager to meet you at the station?*

4. With homogenous subjects connected by the conjunctions **as well as, as well, rather than, as much as, more than** the verb predicate agrees with the first one.

*My parents, as well as my sister, are teachers.*

*My sisters are teachers.*

*My sister, as well as my parents, is a teacher.*

*The manager, as well as / rather than / more than / as much as the members of the board is responsible for the present situation.*

Kobrina<sup>4</sup> also implied on notional agreement. In modern English agreement there may be a conflict between form and meaning. It refers first of all to subjects expressed by nouns of multitude, which may denote plurality being singular in form. In such Cases the principle of observed and there appears the so called national agreement.

When the choice of the number is based on the fact whether the group of beings is considered as one whole or, as a collection of individuals taken separately.

Thus the nouns of multitude (*band board, crew, committee, crowd, company, clergy, cattle, family, gang, group, guard, gentry, infantry, jury, militia, police, poultry, team*) may have both a plural verb-predicate and a singular one a single invaded body or a group of separate individuals.

*A new government has been formed.*

*The government have me to go so I am leaving.*

*The congregation was small.*

*It was now nearly eleven o'clock and the congregation were arriving.*

*The crowd was enormous.*

*The crowd were silent.*

Subject expressed by nouns denoting measure weight time etc. have a singular verb-predicate when the statement is made about the whole amount, not about the discrete units.

*Ten years is a long time.*

*Another five minutes goes by.*

*A million dollars is a lot of money.*

Notional agreement is also observed with subjects expressed by word groups including nouns of quantity *a/the number of... a/the majority of... (a) part of... the bulk of... a variety of...* These admit of either a singular or a plural verb-predicate.

*The number of pages in this book isn't large.*

*It was Sunday and a number of people were walking about.*

<sup>4</sup>.Кобрина Н.А. Корнеева Е.А."Грамматика английского языка" С-Петербург 1999.

Subjects expressed by such invariable plural nouns as *goods, contents, riches, clothes, wages, saves*, have a plural-verb.

*His wages were only 15 shillings a week.*

*I asked her what the contents were about.*

*His clothes were shabby.*

*The goods were delivered on time.*

Subjects expressed by such invariable singular nouns as *hair, money gate, information, funeral, progress, advice* have a singular verb-predicate. These are called “singulariatantum”, as they have no plural.

*Her hair is beautiful.*

*The money is mine.*

*The gate is open.*

Subjects expressed by invariable nouns ending in-s( “plurialiantum”) and denoting an indivisible nation or thing have a singular verb predicate *measles, mumps, billiards, dominoes, hews, headquarters, works*.

*No new works that has been built in our district is very large.*

Though nouns in-ics which are names of sciences and other abstract notions have a singular agreement when used in their abstract sense; they may have a plural verb-predicate when denoting qualities, practical applications, different activities etc.

Thus these nouns may be followed by either a singular or a plural verb.

*Statistics is a rather modern branch of mathematics.*

*These statistics show death per 1. 000 of population.*

*Statistics on this subject are available.*

*Tactics is one of the subjects studied in military academies.*

*Your tactics are obvious. Please don't insult my intelligence.*

*Politics is a risky profession.*

*Politics have always interested me.*

*What are your politics?*

*Ceramics is my hobby.*

Subject expressed by substantivized adjectives denoting groups of people (*the blind, the mute, the old, the poor, the rich* etc.) always take the plural verb-predicate.

*He didn't look an important personage, but the eminent rarely do.*

Kaushansky<sup>5</sup> said that if the subject is expressed by a word-group consisting of two nouns connected by the preposition with or the expression together with, the predicate verb is in the singular.

a) It should be noted that these word groups are very seldom found in English.

*A woman with a child on the third floor is screaming and waving her free hand frantically (Dreiser).*

*An engine with a number of trucks was creeping up spluttering and snorting, halting and knocking (Lindsay).*

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<sup>5</sup>Kaushanskiy A Grammar of the English language Moskva 2008,p 291

b) If two or more homogenous subjects are expressed by infinitives the predicate is in the singular.

*To labor in peace and devote her labor and her life to her poor son, was all the widow sought (Dickens).*

*To leave the quiet court, to gain the strand, to hail a belated handsome was the work of a moment (Thurston).*

According to Mark Newson's<sup>6</sup> point of view besides its privileged position in the sentence the subject also plays an important role in a number of different form depending on properties of the subject:

a) *I/you eat breakfast at 6.30.*

b) *We/they eat breakfast at 8.*

c) *He/she eats breakfast at 9.*

When the subject refers to either the speaker or the addressee, what we called first and second person, the finite verb in present tense shows no overt morphology, the same is true when the subject is plural.

However when the subject is third person and singular the present tense verb inflects with an `s` The morpheme not only shows the tense therefore, but also the nature of the subject: that is the thirst person singular. This phenomenon is known as agreement we say that the verb agrees with the subject. Agreement is a relationship that holds between the subject and the subject and the finite verb.

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<sup>6</sup>Mark Newson Basic English synthese 2006 p 68.