

Writing Protocols for Columbia Evangelical Seminary

Punctuation, Grammar,
and Academic Style

Lecture # 2 The Parts of Speech and Some Other Things to Know

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Two texts required for this class:

1. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition, by Kate L. Turabian.
2. *Working With Words: A Handbook for Media Writers and Editors*, 5th edition, by Brian S. Brooks, James L. Pinson, Jean Gaddy Wilson.

Introduction

In this lecture we will be talking about the Parts of Speech. Now, there is something that you should know. Not everyone agrees on all things when it comes to English grammar. It would be much easier if English grammar were an exact science, but it's not, and we have to work within the flexibility of the various opinions. However, this set of lectures is to show you what CES requires from its students.

Note: *Don't forget your vocabulary list assignment. Build your own grammar vocabulary list. Each time you come to a new grammar term, put it on your list with its proper definition.*

The Eight Parts of Speech

The eight parts of speech are commonly seen as: **nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections.**

1. The Noun

A noun is the *name* of a person, place, or thing. So, the noun names things. Thus, the noun is a *what* word.

Let's look at a few examples of nouns:

Proper Nouns: Nouns are used as names for unique individuals, events, or places. You must capitalize the first letter of *proper* nouns.

For example, we capitalize the first letter of the months, January, February, March. We also capitalize the first letter of the days of the week, e.g., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Names of people are capitalized, for example, Jesus, Moses, and Paul.

Common Nouns: Common nouns can be thought of as generic nouns. We do not capitalize the first letter of common nouns.

For example the words *man* and *woman* are common nouns. Thus, we do not capitalize the first letter in these words. However, the names of these two individuals are proper nouns, e.g., Brad and Marianne. As proper nouns, they require the upper case of the first letters.

One noun that people often have trouble with is the word "gospel." Should it be capitalized? Yes, and no depending on the context.

When the word is referring to one of the four Gospels, i.e., Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, then it is a proper noun and must be capitalized.

If, however, the word is referring to the good news that comes through Jesus Christ, then it is a common noun, and it is not capitalized.

Example: The Gospel of Mark reveals the gospel.

Some other words that students often mistake for proper nouns:

-church unless referring to a specific church within the church's name, e.g., the First Baptist Church, it should not have the upper case "C."

-theology unless part of a proper noun, e.g., Doctor of Sacred Theology, it should not have the upper case "T."

-biblical unless it is part of a proper noun, e.g., Doctor of Biblical Studies, it should not have the upper case "B."

- he, him, his when referring to God. We all know that God is to be honored, and many people put the first letter of personal pronouns referring to God in upper case to

honor God. However, in academic papers, do not use the upper case for pronouns referring to God.

Examples: “God, in his wisdom, sent his Son to die for man’s sins.” “Jesus let himself be crucified so as to redeem mankind.”

There have been some writers who have taken this to such extremes that every reference to any attribute of God has a beginning upper case letter. Some such examples that I have seen are: “the Face of God”; “the Hand of God”; “the Eyes of God”; “the Anger of God”; and so on.

Interestingly, just as students will often want to use the upper case in pronouns referring to God because they think that they are “showing respect” to God by so doing, some students also attempt to use a lower case “s” on the name Satan (or a lower case “d” for Devil) so as not to show Satan respect. Let me clearly state that in no way is it showing *disrespect to God* or *respect to Satan* to use correct spellings. It is simply an academic writing style, not a personal statement about one’s theology.

To make noun capitalization even more complicated, we do not capitalize directions like north or south. So, we would write, “Dave traveled south.” However, once he got there, we would say, “Dave lives in the South.” So, even though we do not capitalize directions, we do capitalize those same words when we refer to them as locations or specific regions: West Coast, Northwest, and so on.

So, how do you know when to capitalize in English? Answer: Buy a good dictionary and *look it up*. A very good one-volume dictionary is *The American Heritage Dictionary of The English Language*, (the 4th edition is out at the time of this writing—usual price about \$45). Some people might think that \$45 is too much to pay for a dictionary, but how much would you pay to be accurate in your writing? How much is your writing or editing worth? There are also many good dictionaries that you can tap into on the Internet.

2. The Pronoun (takes the place of a noun)

Pronouns take the place of nouns.

a. Personal pronouns: I, me, my, mine, you, your, yours, he, him, his, she, her, hers, they, their, theirs, we, us, our, ours.

b. Relative pronouns: who, that, which, what.

c. Indefinite pronouns: few, several, one, someone, everyone.

d. Demonstrative pronouns: this, that, those, these.

e. Reflexive pronouns: myself, yourself, himself, herself, themselves. Since these are *reflexive*, you would not use them in a sentence by themselves. Reflexive pronouns must refer back to the subject of the sentence because the reflexive use *reinforces* the subject. That means there must be a subject to which the reflexive refers back.

Example: "I hurt myself." What does the reflexive "myself" in this sentence refer back to? The "I." The reflexive *must* have a subject to refer back to, or it should not be used at all.

For example, you would not say, "Bob and myself attended the crusade." Why? Because, the reflexive "myself" in this sentence has no "I" to refer back to.

If the word "myself" is used in a sentence, that same sentence *must* have the word "I" in it for the reflexive pronoun "myself" to refer back to.

Example: "I will go to the crusade myself." Thus, "myself" refers back to (i.e., is reflexive of) the personal pronoun "I."

f. Intensive pronouns: When a reflexive pronoun is used immediately after the subject to which it refers, it is called an intensive pronoun.

Examples: "*I myself* will fix the car." "*You yourself* said that the seminar started at noon."

g. Interrogative pronouns: Who, what. Interrogative pronouns introduce a question. (The word interrogate means "to examine by questioning formally or officially"; thus we get the word "interrogative" meaning *to ask*.)

The Properties of Nouns and Pronouns

a. **Nouns and pronouns have gender.** Masculine, Feminine, Neuter. He, she, it.

b. **Nouns and pronouns have number.** Singular = Christian, church. Plural = Christians, churches.

Now, you must be very careful because some words are tricky. To make some nouns plural, all you do is add the "s," but some words take the addition of "es."

Still, some words are singular *and* plural as they are: *Deer* and *sheep* can be used either as singular or as plural. The word *fruit* is also tricky because it can be used as either singular or plural, or it can be changed to *fruits* in the plural (personally, I don't like *fruits* for the plural).

How about the word *data*? *Data* is plural. So, you would not say, "The *data* is conclusive." You would say, "The *data* are conclusive." *Data* is plural, and *datum* is singular.

Media is plural. So, one should not say (at least for grammatical purposes), “The liberal media *is* to blame.” Correct grammar would be: “The liberal media *are* to blame.” Media is plural, and medium is singular.

The term “media” includes all forms of news: radio, television, newspapers, and more. This is why the term media is plural. What is a medium of the media? It would be one aspect of the media. For instance *newspapers* are one aspect of the media, thus it is a medium. *Radio* is a medium. *Television news* is a medium. However, all together they are the media.

Note, however, when you are writing or talking about those people who are thought to have the power to communicate with the spirits of the dead or with agents of another world or dimension (also called psychics), then mediums is plural, and medium is singular.

Example: “The media reported on a convention for psychics, and 430 self-proclaimed mediums attended.”

Criteria is plural, and *criterion* is singular. “The criteria for the job position were a master’s degree, three-year’s experience, and a working knowledge of computer processing.” However, in the singular, it would be something like this: “The only criterion for the job is a master’s degree.”

Index is singular and *indices* is plural. Again, you must have a good dictionary to which you may refer when you are in doubt about these things.

Thesis is singular and *theses* is plural.

The pronoun must always agree in number with the antecedent to which it refers.

An **antecedent** is what we call the noun that comes before the pronoun to which the pronoun refers, as understood by the context.

Example: “The teacher asked **the children** if **they** were ready for the exam.” The pronoun is *they* and the antecedent is *the children*.

Example of wrong: I bought a new *car*, and *they* looks good in my driveway

Example of correct: I bought a new *car*, and *it* looks good in my driveway.

But, wait, it gets tougher . . .

Example: The *group* is having *their* meeting this Friday.

Is this correct? No, it is wrong.

Example: The *group* is having *its* meeting this Friday.

This is correct. Notice the singular verb “is” in the last two sentences. If the noun (the **antecedent**) takes a singular verb, it must also have a singular pronoun.

Example: Every student must hand in *their* term paper by Friday. This is wrong

Example: Every student must hand in *his/her* term paper by Friday. Correct (*Every*

student is singular)

c. Nouns and pronouns have inflection. An inflection is just the alteration of the form of a word by adding letters or syllables to the end of a word or stem. This suffix serves to form a new word or to function as an inflectional ending, such as *-ness* in gentleness, *-ing* in walking, or *-s* in sits. Inflection takes the word fox and turns it into foxes.

Inflections can also change the form of the base of a word, as in “speak,” which is present tense, to the word “spoke,” which is past tense. Inflection indicates grammatical features such as number, person, mood, or tense. So, nouns and pronouns have *inflection*.

More examples:

he to *his* and *him*
she to *her* and *hers*
we to *us* and *our*

d. Nouns and pronouns have case. Three cases.

1. Subjective (aka nominative): The subjective case does two things. It points out the (a) *subject* and (b) the *predicate nominative*.

(a) subject: “*Jesus* stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town.”

(b) the predicate nominative: “*Jesus* is *Lord*.” “This is *he*.”

2. Objective: There are *three* uses of the objective case. It points out the (a) *direct object*, (b) *indirect object*, and (c) the *object of a preposition*.

(a) direct object: The ball hit *him* in the face.

(b) indirect object: Bob hit the ball to *him*.

(c) the object of a preposition: To *whom* shall I send the letter?

3. Possessive: There are *three* uses of the possessive case. It points out (a) possession (or ownership), (b) source, and (c) relationship.

(a) possession (ownership): “Bob’s bike.”

(b) source: “It was found at the river’s bottom.”

(c) relationship: “Bob’s wife.”

Compound Nouns and Pronouns and Case

When you have two or more nouns or pronouns in a sentence joined by a coordinating conjunction, they are called compound.

Example: “Jeff took my **wife** and **me** to dinner Friday night.” Thus, “**wife** and **me**” is compound.

Be careful to use the correct pronoun (i.e., in the correct case) when you have a compound noun. For example, some are in the habit of saying things like:

“Jeff took my **wife** and **I** to dinner Friday night.”

However, you can tell if this is correct or not by simply removing the first part of the compound and say it like this: “Jeff took **I** to dinner Friday night.” This doesn’t work. The pronoun should not be in the subjective case, but, rather, in this example, it should be in the objective case. It would be: “Jeff took **me** to dinner Friday night.” Thus, the correct compound way to write it is, “Jeff took my **wife** and **me** to dinner Friday night.”

3. The Adjective

Modifies a noun or a pronoun. The adjective is a *what-kind* of word. It describes a quality.

Examples: fast, loud, purple, pretty, dumb, smart, hilarious.

4. The Verb

Verbs denote an action or a state of being. There are two types of verbs: *transitive* and *intransitive*.

a. Transitive: A transitive verb takes an object.

Examples: “Moses struck.” Moses struck *what*? “Moses *struck* the rock.” Thus, something has to “receive” the action of the transitive verb.

b. Intransitive: An intransitive verb does not—in fact it *cannot*—take an object.

Examples: to be—and the variations of “to be”: *is, am, are, was, were, has been, shall be*. The intransitive verb is never followed by the objective case (i.e., an object).

Examples: “I will *be* late.” “The book *is* good.”
(*late* is an adverb) (*good* is an adjective)

5. The Adverb

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and sometimes other adverbs. They can also modify clauses and complete sentences.

The adverb answers the questions: how? when? why? where? Often adverbs end in “ly.” Be careful, however, because not all adverbs end in “ly.” (Sometimes *adjectives* end in “ly”: e.g., ugly, friendly.)

6. The Conjunction

a. Coordinating conjunctions: and, but, or, yet, for, nor, so. (Coordinating means of equal rank or order.) Coordinating Conjunctions

b. Subordinating conjunctions: after, although, as, because, before, even if, even though, if, since, though, till, unless, until, when, whereas, wherever, while (list not complete) (Subordinating means that they are not of equal rank.)

c. Correlative conjunctions: either-or, neither-nor.

Examples of sentences with correlative conjunctions: *Either* you *or* he may go. *Neither* you *nor* he may go. *Never mix these.*

Example of a bad mix: *Neither* you *or* he may go.

7. The Preposition

The preposition shows relationship. There are more than 100 prepositions in English. We use certain prepositions more frequently. I read once that the prepositions **of**, **to**, and **in** are among the ten most frequently used words in English. Here is a short list of some of the more common one-word prepositions. Many of these prepositions have more than one meaning. Please refer to a dictionary for precise meaning and usage: about, above, among, around, before, beneath, between, down, for, from, in, of, on, over, through, to, under, up, and with.

The preposition is always followed by the objective case (i.e., an object).

Example: “Jesus hung on the cross.” *Jesus* is the subject. *On* is the preposition. *Cross* is the object (that Jesus hung on).

Often people have a difficult time knowing when to use “who” or “whom.” Just remember that if the word you are searching for comes after a preposition, it is always “whom.” Examples: *about whom; above whom; before whom; between whom; for whom; from whom; with whom.*

So, you’d say, *Who said what to whom.* And, *Who hit whom?* The object of the preposition (and the object of the verb) is always in the objective case, and the pronoun “whom” is always in the objective case. (“Who” is always in the subjective case.)

Never End a Sentence with a Preposition?

For many years, grammarians taught that, “*You should never end a sentence with a preposition.*” This rule came about in the 18th century when the first grammars of English followed the Latin. In Latin, apparently, it is important not to end a sentence with a preposition. However, sometimes in English a sentence is less awkward if you end it with a preposition than if you don’t.

Concerning the idea that you should never end a sentence with a preposition, Winston Churchill is reported to have said: “*That is the kind of nonsense up with which I will not put.*” Very awkward.

Churchill made his point by showing how awkward this sentence would be if he did not end it with a preposition. The sentence would have been better if he had said, “That is the kind of nonsense that I will not put up with.”

What You Should Know About the *Never-end-a-sentence-with-a-Preposition* Rule

Probably the most important aspect about this rule, in my estimation, is to know that it exists, and to know that some people think that it is important. If you know that it exists, and you are writing a paper, article, or whatever for someone (or some group) that you know holds this rule as a “sacred-cow” of grammar, then you’ll be wise to conform to the rule for their sake (not for the sake of good English). So, although, I am not adamant about this rule, it often sounds better not to *end a sentence with a preposition* but, it is only a *preference* and not a “real” rule.

Perhaps “the rule” should be written this way: As long as it does not lead to awkward, stilted sentences, then avoid *ending a sentence with a preposition*. Last point: don’t be surprised if your professors still **red mark** as incorrect sentences that end in prepositions. Old habits are hard to break. So, if you can avoid ending the sentence in a preposition without making the sentence awkward, then do so. If, however, the sentence is better with the preposition at the end of the sentence, then go ahead and end it with the preposition.¹ Just know that some diehard traditionalists think that ending a sentence with a preposition is anathema.

8. The Interjection

Interjections are uncommon in formal academic writing, except in direct quotations. In brief, the interjection is an odd word because it often stands alone. Interjections express emotion or surprise. Often, they are followed by exclamation marks.

Examples: Ouch! Hello! Hurray! Oh no! Ha!

Examples in sentences:

Ouch, that hurt!

Oh no, I forgot my wife’s birthday!

Hey! Stop that!

Wow! I won the lottery!

¹For more discussion on this topic, see my Coffee Talk, “Never End a Sentence with a Preposition! Oh Really?” at <http://www.columbiaseminary.edu/coffeetalk/050.html>.

Again, interjections showing emotional outbursts are not generally acceptable in academic writing except when you are quoting someone who has used it. Two reasons why they are not generally acceptable is (1) academic papers are not the place to show emotional outbursts; they are rather to be logical arguments on a certain topic, and (2) exclamation points are also not generally acceptable in academic papers because they also show emotional outbursts.

Some Other Things to Know

The Article

Some grammarians list the article as a separate *part of speech*; others see it as an adjective. We will not list it here as a part of speech, but we will simply follow the custom of seeing it as an adjective.

Two Forms of the Article

a. Indefinite article: *a* and *an* (floatable “n”). The floatable “n” is used to help pronunciation.

b. Definite article: *the*

When to use “a” or “an”

Use the indefinite article “a” before words in which the first *sound* is a consonant, a sounded “h,” or a long “u.”

Examples: *a peach; a dog; a defect; a painting; a man; a boy; a girl; a cabinet; a helper; a heroic rescue; a united nation; a union; a history book.*

Add the floatable “n” before words in which the first *sound* is a *vowel sound*, except long “u,” and before words beginning with silent “h.”

Examples: *an apple; an envelope; an owner; an hour; an unnecessary word.*

Often people have problems knowing whether to use an “a” or “an” when listing their abbreviated master’s degree titles. For instance, should it be “an M.Div.” or “a M.Div.”?

Sometimes people see the abbreviated form but still pronounce the whole word in their mind, and this causes confusion. Thus, one might place the “a” before the *M.Div.* if in their mind they are saying, “*Master of Divinity.*”

However, when it is abbreviated, it is to be pronounced in its abbreviated form. So, “M.Div.” is pronounced as “Em-div.” Note the short “e” sound as you pronounce the “M.” Thus, when it is abbreviated, it should be “*an M.Div.*” (“an Em-div.”). But, when it

is not abbreviated, it is “*a* Master of Divinity.” (Same with any other master’s degrees, e.g., an M.A., and M.S., etc.)

The articles *a* (or *an*) and *the* should be repeated when referring to two separate persons or objects, but it should not be repeated when referring to only one person or object.

Examples: The company employs *a* graphics designer and *a* computer programmer. (two persons)

The company employs *a* graphics designer and computer programmer. (one person)

Either *a* man or *a* woman may apply.

For sale: *a* maple and *a* mahogany desk. (this sentence is speaking of two desks)

For sale: *a* maple and mahogany desk. (this sentence is speaking of one desk, made from two kinds of wood)

But when two or more nouns refer to the same person, the article should not be repeated.

Examples: Jesus is *a* prophet, priest, and king.

Robert Morris became well known as *a* pastor and professor.

The Verbals: Participles, Gerunds, and Infinitives

The term *verbal* indicates that a word is based on a verb and therefore expresses action or a state of being. There are three types of verbals: Participles, Gerunds, and Infinitives.

a. Participles: The participle is a verbal adjective. Participles are words that combine characteristics of verbs with those of adjectives.

Example: “The flying squirrel jumped from tree to tree.” Your first thought may be that *flying* is a verb. However, in this phrase, *flying* describes (modifies) squirrel. So it acts as an adjective (a verbal adjective) which is called a participle. The term *verbal* indicates that the participle is based on a verb and therefore expresses action or a state of being, but it is not a verb.

Example: *The caring man received an award.* Some might think that the word *caring* is a verb. It’s not (not in this sentence). It is a participle (acting as an adjective) that modifies *man*.

Note: If a participial phrase begins the sentence, then, the participial phrase *must* be followed by a comma.

Example: “Walking fifteen miles, he finally found the car.” (Note well that *walking* in this sentence is not the verb. The participle *walking*, combined with the words “fifteen miles,” serves to modify the pronoun *he*.)

The verb of this sentence is “found.” Thus, in this sentence, “Walking fifteen miles” is a participial phrase that begins the sentence, and it must have a comma after it.

b. Gerunds: A gerund is a verbal noun. Gerunds end in “ing” and function as nouns.

Example: “Everyone liked Mike’s *singing*.” Notice that *singing* in this sentence is not the verb; liked is the verb. *Singing* is acting as a noun (it is a verbal noun, i.e., a gerund).

Remember, a noun is the name of a person, place, or thing. And, *singing* in our example sentence is the *thing* that the people liked. The term *verbal* indicates that a gerund is based on a verb and therefore expresses action or a state of being.

Since a gerund functions as a noun, it occupies some positions in a sentence that a noun would ordinarily occupy. For example: subject, direct object, and object of the preposition.

Gerund as subject: *Napping* is my favorite pastime.

Gerund as direct object: They liked Mike’s *singing*.

Gerund as object of the preposition: The judge fined him for *lying*.

If a *gerundive phrase* begins the sentence, it is *never* followed by a comma. When the gerund acts as a noun and is the subject of the sentence, it is not followed by the comma. Why? The subject of the sentence should never be separated from its verb by a comma.

Example: “Walking is good exercise for everyone.”

c. Infinitives: “to verb.” The infinitive is the combination of the word “to” with any verb stem.

Examples: *to run, to jump, to eat, to talk, to swim.*

For a long time, grammars and grammarians taught that, “You should never split an infinitive.” This rule came about in the 18th century when the first grammars of English followed the Latin. In Latin, infinitives are one word, so it is impossible to split them. Greek, like Latin, provides us an example of a one-word infinitive: *luein* (lew-ane), which means “to loose.” So, it might be helpful if you would think of the infinitive as one word.

For example, to run might be thought of as *torun*. To write could be thought of as *towrite*. When thought of in this fashion, it will help you not to split (*tosplit*) the infinitive. However, this rule never to split the infinitive is just about dead. Nonetheless, there are many traditionalists who still see the split infinitive as an error. So, your writing and education may appear “suspect” if you split your infinitives.

Examples of split infinitives:

"To really swim fast, wear fins."

Here the infinitive *to swim* is split by the word "really."

"To better understand the Bible, take some classes in exegesis."
Here the infinitive *to understand* is split by the word "better."

However, why do we have this rule? As you can plainly see, the infinitive is not one word in English as it is in some other languages. As stated above, we imported this rule from the Latin. (We did the same with the old, *now defunct* rule of never ending a sentence in a preposition.) So, what does this rule have to do with English? Nothing. But, old habits are hard *to break*. I myself only *recently* abandoned this "rule." I even wrote an article about it.²

It is obvious that splitting the infinitive with, for example, the intensifier "really" does not convolute the syntax to an unrecognizable point. In other words, you can understand the phrase, "to really run fast" (split infinitive) and "to run really fast" (not split). The intensifier used here that splits the infinitive does not ruin the meaning of the sentence.

What You Should Know About the *Never-Split-An-Infinitive Rule*

Probably the most important aspect about this rule, in my estimation, is to know that it exists, and to know that some people think that it is important. If you know that it exists, and you are writing a paper, article, or whatever for someone (or some group) that you know holds this rule as a "sacred-cow" of grammar, then you'll be wise to conform to the rule for their sake (not for the sake of good English). So, although, I am not adamant about this rule, it often sounds better not to split the infinitive, but, it's only a *preference* and not a "real" rule.

Perhaps "the rule" should be written this way: As long as it does not lead to awkward, stilted sentences, then avoid splitting infinitives. Last point: don't be surprised if your professors still **red mark** your split infinitives for a while longer. Old habits are hard to break.³

Case #1. Subjective (aka Nominative) Case

The two main things that the Subjective case does: First, it *identifies the subject*, and second, it *identifies the predicate nominative*.

a. The Subjective (also called Nominative) case points out the *subject* of the sentence.

Example: "Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town."

²See "Another Rule Bites the Dust" at <http://www.columbiaseminary.edu/coffeetalk/066.html>

³For more discussion on the Never-Split-An-Infinitive Rule, see my Coffee Talk, "Another Rule Bites the Dust" at <http://www.columbiaseminary.edu/coffeetalk/066.html>.

In this sentence, *Jesus* is in the *subjective case* because he is the subject of the sentence (the subject is the person or thing doing the action of the verb). So, when a noun or a pronoun is the subject of the sentence, it is said to be in the subjective (or nominative) case.

b. The Subjective (or Nominative) case points out the *predicate nominative*. We must now learn what a *predicate nominative* is. First it is important to know what the term *predicate* means. Predicate is one of the two main constituents of a sentence, modifying the subject. Thus it *predicates* or *tells something about* the subject.

Example: “was God” is the predicate in the sentence “The Word was God.”

Note: In this sentence the predicate tells us what “the Word” is. Thus, it predicated to us (or told us) something about the Word.

A *predicate nominative* is a noun or a pronoun that follows the intransitive verb, i.e., the linking verb, such as the word *is*, or one of its inflections (*is, are, be, am, was, were*).

When a noun or a pronoun follows a linking verb, that noun or a pronoun is called a *predicate nominative*. It tells us something about the subject of the sentence, but the predicate nominative remains in the subjective (or nominative) case (thus the name *predicate nominative*.)

In the sentence, “Jesus is Lord,” *Lord* is the predicate nominative. *Lord* tells us something about *Jesus*. So, the noun *Lord* is the predicate nominative.

Thus, if I answer the phone and someone says, “Is Rick there?” I would not say, “This is me.” Why? The word *me* is in the objective case. The noun or pronoun following the linking verb “is” must always be in the *nominative* (or subjective) case.

The personal, third person, masculine pronoun that is in the subjective case is “he.” Therefore, I would answer, “This is he.”

Recap: The noun or pronoun that follows the linking verb is called the predicate nominative.

Case #2. Objective Case

There are three uses of the objective case:

a. As the *direct object*.

Example: “I hit him.” *Him* is in the objective case because it is the direct object of the verb *hit*.

b. As the *indirect object*.

Example: “I hit the ball to him.” *Him* is in the objective case in this sentence because it is the indirect object of the verb *hit* (and *ball* is the direct object).

c. As the *object of a preposition*.

Example: “I said that it was just between *him* and *me*.” Both *him* and *me* are in the objective case, because they are objects of the preposition *between*. Thus, it is never correct to say, “Just between he and I.” Why? Because, the pronouns *he* and *I* are in the subjective case, and the object of a preposition must always be in the objective case.

Another example: “I was just thinking of her.” The pronoun *her* is in the objective case, and it is used here because it is the object of the preposition *of*. Thus, we would not say, “I was just thinking of she.”

Case #3. Possessive (aka Genitive) Case

This means that the word shows *possession, source, or relationship*. You express the possessive case, generally, by adding an apostrophe and the letter “s.”

Genitive of possession: “That is Bob’s car.” Bob owns (or possesses) the car.

Genitive of source: “The wrecked ship was lifted from the river’s bottom.”

Genitive of relationship: “Sue is Rick’s wife.” *Rick* is in the possessive case because Sue is his in a *relationship* sense.

When a name already ends in an “s,” you still add an apostrophe and the letter “s” to put it into the possessive case. Please take the time to turn to this topic in *Turabian*.

Example: That is Bob Jones’s car.

However, there are two notable exceptions to this rule: the names of Jesus and Moses. You do not add the apostrophe *and the letter “s”* to show possession on the names of Jesus or Moses; you add only the apostrophe.

Examples: Jesus’ disciples preached the gospel. Moses’ rod turned into a snake.

Making Plural Possessives—Add “s” Apostrophe

To make a word *plural possessive*, you place the apostrophe after the letter “s.”

Example of singular possessive: “That is the dog’s food.” This is one dog.

Example of plural possessive: “That is the dogs’ food.” This is more than one dog.

Simple Plural

How do you make a word (or name) plural without making it possessive? Typically, you simply add an “s” at the end. *Book* becomes *books*. *Table* becomes *tables*. *Car* becomes *cars*, and *computer* is *computers*. Too often, people think that as soon as you add the “s” at the end of a word, then it must include the apostrophe. Simple plural is just the addition of the “s,” and only when you wish to indicate possessive do you add the *apostrophe* and the “s.”

An interesting side note about simple plurals is that often when people write a family's name in the plural, they mistakenly turn it into a possessive.

Example of wrong: "The Walston's went on vacation to Disneyland."

Example of correct: "The Walstons went on vacation to Disneyland."

This sentence is attempting to show that multiple family members named Walston went to Disneyland.

I often see the family names on signs on people's homes or the family name on a nameplate on the front door, and almost every time, they mess up the family's last name by placing an *apostrophe* "s" at the end instead of just the "s."

Just the other day, my wife and I were talking a walk in a local neighborhood, and I saw a sign on one house that read, "The Smith's." I have seen many others including "The Johnson's" and "The Peterson's."

When there is an *apostrophe* "s," the name is not pluralized; rather, it makes it singular possessive. On these nameplates, the family's names should be in *simple plural*. Thus, it should be, "The Smiths." "The Johnsons." "The Petersons." And, so on.

Pronouns Have Person (1st, 2nd, and 3rd Person)

Pronouns can be in *first person*, *second person*, or *third person*.

First person is when one is referring to one's self.

Example: *I* went to the store.

I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, and ours are all first person, personal pronouns because each of them are *references by the speaker to himself* (or his group); so, they refer back to the speaker.

Second person is when one is speaking directly to someone else.

Example: *You* ought to go to the store.

You, your, and yours are all second person, personal pronouns because they are *speaking directly to someone*.

Third person is when one is speaking about someone.

Example: *He* went to the store.

He, him, his, she, her, hers, they, them, their, theirs, it, and its are all third person, personal pronouns because they are *speaking about someone (or something) else*. (One of my students called this the third person "the gossip person" because it is when you are talking *about* someone.)

Do Not Shift Persons

When writing, do not shift persons. Inexperienced writers often shift persons and thereby confuse the reader, making it hard to understand to whom the writer is referring.

Example of shifting persons (taken from a student's paper):

"There are three dimensions within every man's sphere of influence. Where you work, where you live, and where you play. Together they form the basis for all of our contacts with other humans."

Let's look closer at this sentence:

"There are three dimensions within every **man's [3rd person]** sphere of influence. Where **you [2nd person]** work, where **you [2nd person]** live, and where **you [2nd person]** play. Together they form the basis for all of **our [1st person]** contacts with other humans."

Ok, is the writer here talking about other people (men), or is he talking to you, or is he talking about himself?

How to correct in **third person** throughout (use only third person in academic writing)

"There are three dimensions within every **man's** sphere of influence. Where **he** works, where **he** lives, and where **he** plays. Together they form the basis for all of **his** contacts with other humans."

How to correct in **second person** throughout.

"There are three dimensions within **your** sphere of influence. Where **you** work, where **you** live, and where **you** play. Together they form the basis for all of **your** contacts with other humans."

How to correct in **first person** throughout.

"There are three dimensions within **my** sphere of influence. Where **I** work, where **I** live, and where **I** play. Together they form the basis for all of **my** contacts with other humans."

(Note: In academic writing, you should not use first or second person pronouns. Write only in third person.)

Personal Pronouns and Their Cases

Gender	Number	Person	Subjective	Objective	Possessive	
					adjective	pronoun
masc and fem	Singular	1st	I	me	my	mine
masc and fem	Sing or Plural	2nd	you	you	your	yours
masculine	Singular	3rd	he	him	his	his
feminine	Singular	3rd	she	her	her	hers
neuter	Singular	3rd	it	it	its	its
masc and fem	Plural	1st	we	us	our	ours
masc, fem, neut	Plural	3rd	they	them	their	theirs
masc and fem	Sing or Plural	2nd--3rd	who	whom	whose	whose

When to use who and whom

If a pronoun ends with an “m,” it is always in the objective case. (Note, him, them, and whom.)

Correct: “Of whom are you speaking?”

The way we normally talk: “Who are you taking about?”

The way we should talk: “Whom are you taking about?” Or, “About whom are you talking?”

Circle the correct pronouns:

“Who or Whom are you speaking about?”

“Who or Whom robbed the bank?”

“You painted the house for who or whom?”

“Who or whom shall I say is calling?”

Lecture 2, Exercise

Exercise: Underline *each questionable* pronoun. If a pronoun is used incorrectly, correct it, and write in the blank the case that it should be in.

Example: Certainly, I know as much as him does. **“He” = Subjective Case**

1. I wouldn't put up with it if I was him _____
2. He shot at Frank and I while we were hunting! _____
3. She took mom and I to work. _____
4. Whom shall I say is calling? _____
5. He drove my wife and I to the mall. _____
6. It was her who stole third base! _____
7. Frank knew who's it was. _____
8. Who are you taking with you? _____
9. Is that car your's? _____
10. The faculty is having their meeting. _____
11. That is her. _____
12. Frank and myself were there. _____
13. Everyone is doing their thing. _____
14. Isn't that their's? _____
15. Jane and her did it. _____
16. Arizona is known for it's sunsets. _____
17. Mark, Bob, and myself were the first ones on the scene. _____
18. She yelled at who? _____
19. Whom shot Frank? _____
20. Me and him jumped off the cliff! _____
21. Frank and me left before 9 pm. _____
22. Do you want to go to dinner with my wife and I? _____
23. The staff is holding their annual meeting in March. _____
24. This secret is just between you and I. _____
25. It was him! _____