PRONOUN

A pronoun is a word you use instead of a noun in a sentence. In the first group of sentences below, nouns are used in certain positions. In the next four sentences, the nouns are replaced by pronouns. Bala becomes *he*. Binta becomes *she*. The ducklings become *they*. Mother and father become *they*.

The nouns in the sentences are underlined.

1a. Bala went to the stream

2a. Binta went with Bala

3a. Bala and Binta fed the ducklings

4a. Mother and father watched Bala and Binta

The nouns above can be replaced by pronouns.

1b. He went to the stream

2b. She went with him

3b. They fed them

4b. They watched them

Pronouns: Person, Number, Gender, Case

Since a pronoun is used instead of a noun, it must be in the same number, person, gender and case as the noun it replaces. Like nouns, pronouns can be singular (one) or plural (more than one).

Examples

Chika gave a book to Amina

He gave it to her.

Singular	**Plural**
I, me	We, us
You,	You
He/she/it/her/him	They them

First person: I am talking (singular);

We are talking (plural)

Second person: you are talking (singular and plural)

Third person: He/she is talking (singular)

They are talking (plural)

Note. First person refers to the person or persons speaking, second person refers to the person(s) you are speaking to. Third person refers to the person(s) or thing(s) spoken about.

The boys gave a book to the girls

They gave it to them

Chika/He is singular and third person; the gender is masculine.

A book/it is singular and third person; the gender is *neuter*.

Amina/her is singular and third person; the gender is feminine.

The boys/they is plural and third person; the gender is masculine.

The girls/them is plural and third person; the gender is feminine.

You can use a pronoun to replace a noun in the subject or object position. Case therefore refers to using a pronoun as the subject or object of the sentence, or to show who owns something (in other words, to show possession). There are three cases in English – the subjective

case, the objective case and the possessive case. Pronouns have various forms, depending on their case.

Subjective Case	Objective Case	Possessive Case
I	Me	My/mine
We	Us	Our/ours
You	You	Your/yours
He	Him	His
She	Her	Her/hers
They	Them	Their/theirs
It	It	Its
Who	Whom	Whose

TYPES OF PRONOUNS

Like nouns, pronouns are of various types.

Personal Pronouns: are the pronouns you use in place of persons' names. They include: I, me, we, us, you, he, him, she, her, they, them, he/she/they/we saw him/her/them/it.

Interrogative Pronouns: are the pronouns you use for asking questions. They include: who, which, what, whose, who. Example: who are you?

Demonstrative Pronouns: are the pronouns you use to show which person, place or thing you are referring to. They include: this, that, these, those. Example: That is my house.

Indefinite Pronouns: are the pronouns that do not refer to a particular person or thing. Some are singular; some are plural. Singular indefinite pronouns include: anyone, anybody, each, either, neither, someone, somebody, something, another, one, little, less, much. For instance, much is expected from children. Plural indefinite pronouns include: both, several, few, fewer, many, any, some, two, three, four, etc. For instance, several were taken.

Reflexive Pronouns: are the pronouns you use when the action done by the subject turns back upon itself. Reflexive pronouns are formed by adding *–self* or *–selves* to the personal pronouns, such as my, your, him,

her, it. Reflexive pronouns include: myself, himself, herself, itself, themselves, and ourselves. For instance, I bought the oranges myself.

Reciprocal Pronouns: are the pronouns you use to show a two way relationship between two or more people. English has two reciprocal pronouns — *each other* and *one another*. For instance, Fattie and Musa love each other.

Relative Pronouns: are pronouns you use to introduce some clauses which relate to a noun mentioned earlier. Examples: who, whom, that, whoever, whose, which. For instance, I saw Nonso and Tayo who were playing on the field. *Who* replaces the nouns, Nons and Tayo, therefore it is a pronoun. Who is a relative pronoun because it relates to the nouns, Nonso and Tayo mentioned earlier.