

Usage of Pronouns

Latin MILC – W1, HT 2013

January 15, 2013

1 Demonstrative pronouns

1.1 Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns are not regularly needed in Latin, as ‘I’, ‘you’, etc., are expressed by means of verbal morphology. When they do occur, this is for purposes of emphasis. *Ego* will often occur statements relating to a person’s own experience vel sim; *tu* is sometimes used with a sense of indignance or accusation (i.e. ‘someone like you’).

- (1) *Praedia mea tu possides, ego aliena misericordia vivo.*
You have my estate, and I have to live off the mercy of others.
- (2) Or is it that you (dare) bring charges against a Praetor?
An tu praetorem accuses?

1.2 He/She/It & They

There are many ways of expressing the third person in Latin: *is, ea, id; hic, haec, hoc; iste, ista, istud; ille, illa, illud*. Which one you should use largely depends on the precise meaning of the sentence in question.

Is, ea, id is the most natural way of putting it - it has no further nuance. It’s also the usual counterpart to *qui, quae, quod*, so if in doubt, use this one.

- (3) The legate Caninus was in the city. He brought back our ships.
Oppido Caninus legatus praeerat. Is naves nostras reduxit.

The other three have spatial nuances, and are sometimes called proximal, medial and distal.

Hic refers to the person/object near the speaker/subject (proximal); in courts of law, it frequently refers to the client of an orator (if there is one).

Iste, on the other hand, designates someone close to the second person; at law, that is the defendant (who sat close to the jury); for that (and other) reason(s) it is also sometimes used in a derogatory sense.

Finally, *ille* refers to an uninvolved third party (distal).

- (4) *Eisdem oculis hic sapiens, de quo loquor, quibus iste vester, caelum terram mare intuebitur.*
This philosopher here, of whom I speak, will see heaven, earth and sea with the same eyes as yours there.
- (5) *Scitum est illud Catonis: melius de quibusdam acerbos inimicos mereri quam eos amicos, qui dulces videantur: illos verum saepe dicere, hos numquam.*
This saying of Cato is wise: that with some people, their most acrid enemies render them better service than these friends, who seem pleasant; the former always tell the truth, the latter never.

Note in the last example that ‘former’ and ‘latter’ are rendered by *ille* and *hic*, respectively.

When a demonstrative is the subject of a sentence with ‘to be’ as its main verb, it will in gender agree with the predicate.

- (6) *Ea demum est vera felicitas.*
This truly and verily is good fortune.

Don't be too generous in your usage of these pronouns - they don't neatly correspond to 'he/she/it', 'this' or 'that' in terms of usage. Point in case:

- (7) Our own children are dearer to us than those of our friends.
Nostris nobis liberi cariores sunt quam amicorum. || Liberi nostri amicorum liberis cariores sunt.

2 Reflexive & Emphatic Pronouns

Se, suus, sibi all only ever refer to the third person, specifically to the subject of the main clause (e.g. in the a.c.i. qua subject of the subordinate clause); as soon as any other person comes into it, use the appropriate personal pronoun.

In relative clauses in which a subordinate subject occurs *se, suus, sibi* usually refer to the subordinate subject. In all other subordinate clauses, they refer to the subject of the main clause - the subordinate subject is then rendered by *ipse*. This is not an absolute rule, though.

- (8) He objected to praise soldiers who had surrendered themselves and all that belonged to them to the enemy.
Milites, qui se suaque omnia hosti tradiderant, laudare noluit.
- (9) Cicero effecerat, ut Q. Curius consilia Catilinae sibi proderet.
Cicero had contrived that Q. Curius should betray to him (i.e. Cicero) the designs of Catiline.

Further, some useful phrases: *sua sponte* 'of his own accord'; *secum habere* 'to keep to one's self'; *inter se* 'each other':

- (10) They would look stealthily at each other.
Furtim inter se aspiciabant. (alternatively with alius alium)

Ipsa is used quite freely both on its own and in combination with other pronouns or nouns; it lends particular emphasis to the word it refers to. Keywords for using *ipse* are e.g. 'even', 'him-/her-/itself', 'own', 'that very'. Often, however, it is also added quite unemphatically for the purpose of clarity.

- (11) Goodness is desirable in itself and for its own sake.
Virtus per se et propter se ipsa expetenda est.
- (12) To you I wrote by my very own hand.
Tibi mea ipsius manu scripsi.

3 Indefinite Pronouns

3.1 Negative context

As so often, quite how to say 'any' in Latin will depend on context. After *si, nisi, num, ne, quo, quanto*, use *quis* (noun) or *qui* (adjective).

- (13) Does anybody feel anger towards infants?
Num quis irascitur infantibus?

After negative expressions (e.g. *nec, vix*) and verbs of denying, forbidding and preventing or a questions implying a negative, you can also use *quisquam* (noun) or *ullus* (adjective) for more expressive indefiniteness.

- (14) *Negant se cuiusquam imperio esse obtemperaturos.*
They refuse to obey anyone's command.
- (15) The law forbids that anything should belong to anyone who refuses to obey the laws.
Vetat lex ullam rem esse cuiusquam, qui legibus parere nolit.

3.2 Positive context

‘Any’ in the sense of ‘anything you please’, i.e. roughly ‘everything’ is best expressed as *quavis* or *quilibet*.

(16) *Mihi quidvis satis est.*

Anything is enough for me.

(17) We ought to encounter any danger for our country, our parents, and our friends.

Quodlibet pro patria, parentibus, amicis adire periculum oportet.

For ‘some’, a host of expressions may be used: *aliqui(s)*, *quispiam*, *nescio quis*, *nonnulli*. A few notes on these: *quispiam* is used quite infrequently; *nonnulli* (lit. ‘not no-one’) usually means ‘a few’; *nescio quis* is often used as a petrified form, i.e. as though it were a single pronoun; *quidam* is best used in cases where ‘a certain someone’ might be found in English.

(18) Good people are somehow or other rather sluggish.

Boni sunt nescio quomodo tardiores.

(19) There existed in that man almost a divine force of character.

Erat in eo viro divina quaedam ingenii vis.

(20) *Disertos cognovi nonnullos, eloquentem neminem.*

I have met with several clever speakers, but not a single man of eloquence.

4 Varia

idem ‘the same’ – for ‘the same as’ use *idem qui*; the pronoun is further used to join two similar or contrastive statements.

(21) *Quicquid honestum est, idem est utile.*

Whatever is right, is also expedient.

(22) Antonius accuses me, and at the same time/nonetheless praises me.

Accusat me Antonius, idem laudat.

Alius ‘other’ – has a host of meanings: repeated for ‘some...some...others’; meaning ‘different/various’; when occurring in different cases in one sentence ‘each other’.

(23) *Tum alii Romam versus, in Etruriam alii, alii in Campaniam, domum reliqui dilabuntur.*

Thereupon they disperse, some towards Rome, some to Etruria, others to Campania, the rest homewards.

(24) *Hi omnes alius alia rationa rempublicam auxerunt.*

All of these by different methods promoted the interests of the nation.

(25) Thereupon all of us began to look at each other.

Tum omnes alius alium intuebamur.

Quisque ‘each/any/every’ – always follows after the word which it most closely belongs to. Frequently used with superlatives, e.g. *optimus quisque* ‘every good man’; also used with ordinal numerals to signify ‘every x-th’, e.g. *quinto quoque anno* ‘every five years’.

(26) The Romans returned home, each with their booty.

Romani domum, cum sua quisque praeda, redeunt.

(27) *Milites, quem quisque viderat, trucidabant.*

The soldiers would butcher whomever any of them saw.

Uterque and *alter*, ‘both (of the two)’ and ‘one/the other (of the two)’ – the former looks at both as separate individuals together (*ambo* refers to them as a pair); used with the genitive of pronouns, e.g. *horum uterque* ‘both of these’.

(28) *Qui utrumque probat, ambobus debet uti.*

He how approves of each of them separately, is bound to use them both together.

5 Assignment

5.1 Commentary

Write a grammatical commentary on **3 sentences** of the following passage of Cornelius Nepos' *Hannibal*, ch. 1 – no need to translate.

Hannibal, Hamilcaris filius, Carthaginiensis. Si verum est, quod nemo dubitat, ut populus Romanus omnes gentes virtute superarit, non est infitiandum Hannibalem tanto praestitisse ceteros imperatores prudentia, quanto populus Romanus antecedit fortitudine cunctas nationes. Nam quotienscumque cum eo congressus est in Italia, semper discessit superior. Quod nisi domi civium suorum invidia debilitatus esset, Romanos videtur superare potuisse. Sed multorum obtrectatio devicit unius virtutem. Hic autem velut hereditate relictum odium paternum erga Romanos sic conservavit, ut prius animam quam id deposuerit, qui quidem, cum patria pulsus esset et alienarum opum indigeret, numquam destiterit animo bellare cum Romanis.

5.2 Translate into Latin

Please translate this as a piece of continuous prose.

On discovering these things the chiefs of Britain, who had come up after the battle was fought to perform those conditions which Caesar had imposed, held a conference, when they perceived that cavalry, and ships, and corn were wanting to the Romans, and discovered the small number of our soldiers from the small extent of the camp (which, too, was on this account more limited than ordinary because Caesar had conveyed over his legions without baggage), and thought that the best plan was to renew the war, and cut off our men from corn and provisions and protract the affair till winter; because they felt confident that, if they were vanquished or cut off from a return, no one would afterwards pass over into Britain for the purpose of making war. Therefore, again entering into a conspiracy, they began to depart from the camp by degrees and secretly bring up their people from the country parts. But Caesar, although he had not as yet discovered their measures, yet, both from what had occurred to his ships, and from the circumstance that they had neglected to give the promised hostages, suspected that the thing would come to pass which really did happen.

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Please hand in your assignment by Friday 6pm, either by email to robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk, or by pigeon post to *Robin Meyer, Wolfson College, Linton Rd.*