

**ANALYSIS THE USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUN IN "THE SIGN OF  
FOUR" NOVEL BY SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE**Annisrina Fajri Nugraheni<sup>1)</sup>, Lilia Indriani<sup>2)</sup>

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**Abstract**

The study's objectives are to know what kinds of personal pronoun used in the novel and know which personal pronoun has the highest distribution. This article focuses on the personal pronoun. Frank (1972: 19) states that personal pronouns are divided into five, namely subjective pronouns, objective pronouns, possessive pronouns, possessive adjective pronouns, and reflexive pronouns. The function of a personal pronoun is to identify or refer to someone or the gender of that person. In writing, this can help readers understand the storyline more easily, to whom it is pointing, and the gender of the person without needing to tell him. This research is qualitative research designed in a descriptive study. The source of data is from the novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, "Sherlock Holmes: The Sign of Four." The writer will analyze the use of the personal pronoun in the novel. It is found that the use of the personal pronoun in a novel is varies depending on the function.

**Keywords:** Corpus Analysis, Personal Pronoun, Novel

**Introduction**

Language is a system people use to communicate with one another for various reasons, including persuasion, information, or entertainment (Ziggitto, 2016). Globalization and internationalization of higher education set every student's requirements to master their English skills with academic goals. Academic writing norms and the practical ability to produce academic texts are necessary for the country. They were leaving our grammar and lexical truth to the rhetoric preferences of Anglo-Saxon academic culture, which includes, among other things, the expression of the text structure of the writer's attitude, which, according to Wingate (2012), the focal point of the argument is expressing the writer's attitude. Each writer has a writing style. Some writers prefer to use a personal pronoun as the third person in their writing. However, some writers use personal pronouns by adjusting the contents of their writings.

The use of the pronoun is essential in writing. Using a gender-neutral pronoun does not label or associate the person being discussed or told with a particular gender. Therefore, the use of the pronoun is important to know what gender of the person described. It also makes it more manageable for readers to understand the storyline. According to Kolln and Robert (2012: 290), "personal pronouns are pronouns that we usually use when pronouns come to our mind; usually it is used according to person, number, and letters." Build upon the theory, personal pronouns replace nouns, and they are recognized based on the person (first, second, and third person). Then, it can be seen by numbers, whether it is singular or plural. Lastly, the case can be seen, whether they are subjective, objective, possessive, or reflexive. Besides, personal pronouns are needed to avoid repeated words when writing paragraphs or text. Personal pronouns seem to be simple in writing, but a slight error in using them will significantly affect writing. Also, the use of proper personal pronouns needed in writing. The use of personal's pronouns in writing texts is one of the crucial things that must be considered. Moreover, personal's pronouns provide text cohesion and avoid the same words repeated.

Many experts explain the definition of writing. According to Hyland (2003: 3), "writing is seeing the context, whether on the page or on the computer, with coherent wording, clauses, and sentences, and the system's rules change the structure." This means that word-groups and sentences in a paper should be well-organized and logically written, particularly in terms of phrase structure. So, there are rules in producing sentences that must be mastered in writing. Besides, Nunan (2003: 88) defines "writing is a process and a product." The author can produce good writing by going through several steps in compiling his writing. Some steps that the author imagines organize, concept, edit, read, and reread. These steps are a writing process that can guide the writer to make a paper. After the writer goes through this process, they will get good writing as a product in writing. This idea is in line with Sokolik and Olson in Linse (2005: 98), stating, "writing is a combination of process and product, and the concept that writing is a process is beneficial for young writers." This process refers to gathering ideas and working with them until they are presented so that the reader can understand. The process is essential when writers write because students cannot produce suitable writing forms if they do not do the writing process well.

The use of first-person pronouns is the most specific principle for changing from formality and objectivity. According to Hyland & Jiang (2017), for the period 1965 to 2015, the frequency of first-person use rose 45%. This research area is referred to as 'self-mention' and papers describing first- person pronouns, plural first-person pronouns (both reader-exclusive and reader-inclusive), and self- reference words as author or writer, and sometimes even third-person pronouns to refer to the work of a previously published author. In this study, the writer will count the number of personal pronouns used in the book "Sherlock Holmes - The Sign of Four" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in each chapter and compare them to know which personal pronoun mostly use in the chapter and which personal pronoun mostly use in the novel.

### Methodology

This research is qualitative research designed in descriptive research. According to Ary et al. (2010: 29), "qualitative researchers try to understand phenomena by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it into variables." This concerns the existing conditions or relationships, opinions held, processes taking place, proven effects, or developing trends and not about numerical data analysis. This is also supported by Gay and Airasian (2000: 275), "a descriptive study determines and illustrates what happens." This means that qualitative research only focuses on describing phenomena. Based on problems in the background, researchers analyzed and explained personal pronouns in the novel "Sherlock Holmes - The Sign of Four" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The writer also analyzed first- person, second-person, and third-person in personal pronouns in the novel.

This study's data source is the entire contents of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel entitled "Sherlock Holmes - The Sign of Four." This novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle consists of 12 chapters, 130 pages, and 30,500 words. For this research, the writer used printed books published by Indoliterasi in 2020.

"The Sign of Four" is a crime, mystery, and detective fiction novel written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, initially published in February 1890 by Lippincott's Monthly Magazine and Spencer Blackett (for the book edition). This novel is the second novel from the Sherlock Holmes series, preceded by "Sherlock Holmes: A Study in Scarlet."

### Findings and Discussion

There are several pronouns. Frank (1972:20) classifies pronouns into seven types; personal, relative, interrogative, reflexive, demonstrative expletive, and indefinite. Personal pronouns will be the subject of this research. Personal pronouns are also divided into smaller parts; they are divided into five parts, according to Frank (1972:19). They are subjective, objective, possessive, possessive adjectives, and reflexive pronouns. In this study, researchers only focused on personal pronouns as a subject or subjective pronoun. Where subjective pronoun divided into seven, namely I, you, they, we, he, she, and it.

After analyzing the data, the writer has answered research questions or has found the results of this study. The first research is about the percentage of the use of the personal pronoun in the novel "Sherlock Holmes – The Sign of Four." The results of this research are attached below:

Table 1. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 1

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 98         | 2.68%        |
| You              | 54         | 1.48%        |
| They             | 4          | 0.11%        |
| We               | 0          | 0.00%        |
| He               | 46         | 1.26%        |
| She              | 1          | 0.03%        |
| It               | 54         | 1.48%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>257</b> | <b>7.04%</b> |

Table 2. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 2

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 58         | 1.59%        |
| You              | 27         | 0.74%        |
| They             | 6          | 0.16%        |
| We               | 5          | 0.14%        |
| He               | 21         | 0.58%        |
| She              | 20         | 0.55%        |
| It               | 12         | 0.33%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>149</b> | <b>4.08%</b> |

Table 3. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 3

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 29         | 0.79%        |
| You              | 12         | 0.33%        |
| They             | 2          | 0.05%        |
| We               | 18         | 0.49%        |
| He               | 21         | 0.58%        |
| She              | 9          | 0.25%        |
| It               | 30         | 0.82%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>121</b> | <b>3.31%</b> |

Table 4. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 4

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 108        | 2.96%        |
| You              | 43         | 1.18%        |
| They             | 1          | 0.03%        |
| We               | 39         | 1.07%        |
| He               | 97         | 2.66%        |
| She              | 4          | 0.11%        |
| It               | 48         | 1.31%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>340</b> | <b>9.31%</b> |

Table 5. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 5

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 61         | 1.67%        |
| You              | 36         | 0.99%        |
| They             | 3          | 0.08%        |
| We               | 23         | 0.63%        |
| He               | 32         | 0.88%        |
| She              | 9          | 0.25%        |
| It               | 54         | 1.48%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>218</b> | <b>5.97%</b> |

Table 6. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 6

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 76         | 2.08%        |
| You              | 58         | 1.59%        |
| They             | 3          | 0.08%        |
| We               | 17         | 0.47%        |
| He               | 52         | 1.42%        |
| She              | 1          | 0.03%        |
| It               | 48         | 1.31%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>255</b> | <b>6.98%</b> |

Table 7. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 7

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 67         | 1.83%        |
| You              | 37         | 1.01%        |
| They             | 12         | 0.33%        |
| We               | 26         | 0.71%        |
| He               | 65         | 1.78%        |
| She              | 14         | 0.38%        |
| It               | 60         | 1.64%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>281</b> | <b>7.69%</b> |

Table 8. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 8

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 80         | 2.19%        |
| You              | 42         | 1.15%        |
| They             | 24         | 0.66%        |
| We               | 29         | 0.79%        |
| He               | 38         | 1.04%        |
| She              | 6          | 0.16%        |
| It               | 45         | 1.23%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>264</b> | <b>7.23%</b> |

Table 9. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 9

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 151        | 4.13%        |
| You              | 57         | 1.56%        |
| They             | 4          | 0.11%        |
| We               | 18         | 0.49%        |
| He               | 60         | 1.64%        |
| She              | 6          | 0.16%        |
| It               | 58         | 1.59%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>354</b> | <b>9.69%</b> |

Table 10. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 10

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 62         | 1.70%        |
| You              | 10         | 0.27%        |
| They             | 21         | 0.58%        |
| We               | 59         | 1.62%        |
| He               | 46         | 1.26%        |
| She              | 12         | 0.33%        |
| It               | 52         | 1.42%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>262</b> | <b>7.17%</b> |

Table 11. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 11

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent      |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| I                | 88         | 2.14%        |
| You              | 42         | 1.15%        |
| They             | 3          | 0.08%        |
| We               | 15         | 0.41%        |
| He               | 19         | 0.52%        |
| She              | 24         | 0.66%        |
| It               | 57         | 1.56%        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>248</b> | <b>6.79%</b> |

Table 12. The number uses of the personal pronoun in chapter 12

| Personal Pronoun | Count      | Percent       |
|------------------|------------|---------------|
| I                | 335        | 9.17%         |
| You              | 120        | 3.29%         |
| They             | 41         | 1.12%         |
| We               | 97         | 2.66%         |
| He               | 141        | 3.86%         |
| She              | 4          | 0.11%         |
| It               | 165        | 4.52%         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>     | <b>903</b> | <b>24.73%</b> |

The table above is the first research results on the use of pronouns in this novel. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel entitled "Sherlock Holmes – The Sign of Four" consists of 12 chapters. The tables explain the use of personal pronouns in each chapter in one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novels. There are different results in each chapter. The author uses the personal pronoun "I"; in the first chapter, the author uses it ninety-eight times. In the second chapter, the author uses it fifty-eight times. In the third chapter, the author uses it twenty-nine times. Furthermore, in the fourth chapter, the author uses it one hundred and eight times, and so forth with the use of other personal pronouns in each chapter.

The use of personal pronouns in this novel is also found in dialogues and outside the dialogue of "Sherlock Holmes – The Sign of Four." The use of the personal pronoun in this novel follows the author's needs and desires, thus creating different amounts. The number of personal pronouns used in chapter 3 was the lowest, with 3.31%, followed by chapter 2 at 4.08%. The difference between the number of personal pronouns in chapter 3 and chapter 2 is 0.77%. Meanwhile, chapter 12 had the highest percentage of personal pronouns, with 24.73%, followed by chapter 9 with 9.69%. The difference in the number of personal pronouns used in chapter 12 and chapter 9 is quite significant, reaching 15.03%. This is 19.6 times higher than the difference in the number of personal pronouns between chapter 3 and chapter 2.

The second research is about using first-person pronouns, second-person, and third-person pronouns. Personal pronouns are part of a pronoun that is associated primarily with a particular person; a first person as (I, we), a second person as (you), or third person as (they, he, she, it). Personal pronouns may also take different forms depending on the number (usually singular or

plural) and case. Thus, personal pronouns are not limited to people only but also refer to animals and things. According to Kolln and Robert (2012:290), "personal pronouns are the ones we usually think of when the word pronoun comes to mind, we generally label them based on the person, number, and case." The following are the results of the use of the first-person pronouns, second-person pronouns, and overall third-person pronouns as a whole of the novel "Sherlock Holmes – The Sign of Four":

Table 13. The number of uses first person, second person and third person in the novel

|               |      | Count       | Percent       |
|---------------|------|-------------|---------------|
| First Person  | I    | 1216        | 33.30%        |
|               | We   | 346         | 9.47%         |
| <b>Total</b>  |      | <b>1562</b> | <b>42.77%</b> |
| Second Person | You  | 538         | 14.73%        |
| <b>Total</b>  |      | <b>538</b>  | <b>14.73%</b> |
| Third Person  | They | 124         | 3.40%         |
|               | He   | 638         | 17.47%        |
|               | She  | 107         | 2.93%         |
|               | It   | 683         | 18.70%        |
| <b>Total</b>  |      | <b>1552</b> | <b>42.50%</b> |

According to Hyland & Jiang (2017), for the period 1965 to 2015, the frequency of first-person use rose 45%. This research area is referred to as 'self-mention' and papers describing first-person pronouns, plural first-person pronouns (both reader-exclusive and reader-inclusive), and self-reference words author or researchers, and sometimes even third-person pronouns to refer to the work of a previously published author. The use of first-person pronouns in this novel is one thousand five hundred sixty-two, with a percentage of 42.77% of the 12 chapters in this novel. A first-person here is divided into two, "I" and "we." With the number of personal pronouns, "I" one thousand two hundred sixteen and "we" three hundred forty-seven. The percentage of each word is 33.30% and 9.47%. The use of second-person pronouns in this novel is five hundred thirty-eight with a percentage of 14.73%. The last is third-person pronouns, which is one thousand five hundred and fifty-two, with a 42.50% percentage. The third person's pronoun here divided into four, namely, they, he, she, and it. With the number "they" one hundred and twenty-four, "he" six hundred thirty-eight, "she" which is the lowest number in the third person one hundred and seven, and "it" six hundred eighty-three. It can be concluded that the use of first-person more than the second person and third person while the third person occupies the second position with a percentage that is too much, which is 42.50%. Moreover, the least is the second person with the number of uses of the word "you" as much as five hundred thirty-eight times.

## Conclusions

In this research, the writer took two cases, namely to find out the number of uses of the personal pronoun in the novel "Sherlock Holmes – The Sign of Four" and the second is to find out the use of the first person, second person and third person in this novel. The first study concluded that the use of the personal pronoun in this novel is different in each chapter. This difference adjusts to the author and the needs of the writer. There are diverse differences in the frequency of personal pronoun usage in each chapter in this novel. As explained in the example, the number of personal

pronouns used in chapter 2 and chapter 3 was the lowest with 0.77%, while chapter 12 and chapter 9 had the most significant difference with 15.03%.

The second study is on the use of the first person, second person, and third person in this novel. It can be concluded that the use of the first person is most widely used then, the second is the third person, and the last is the second person. As has been explained by Hyland and Jiang, the use of first-person pronouns is usually the most widely used first person. Alternatively, the author usually uses third-person pronouns in their writing; however, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle uses first-person.

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