

The assertive existential non-standard 1sg.

The lower-case variant of the 1sg (“*i*”, in English is non-standard) is increasingly common in all forms of online discussion. My ongoing research into the non-standard 1sg uses linguistics and statistics to show that the inclusion of the novel form is both conscious and meaningful — that it has emerged through evolutionary necessity to rectify the paucity of the English language that is both devoid of speech levels, and has only one 1sg (as opposed to, for example, Japanese containing eight) which, in excitable mediums such as social media, can be cleverly used to offset possible reactions to personal statement whether it be love or hate, simple expression of opinion, use of slurs, or need for deniability.

When one encounters an *i* in computer mediated communications, one is looking at the sign corresponding to a modified version of the first person subject pronoun that itself refers to a variant of a definite referent. In short, that *i* refers not to *me* the author, but to a version of me that is not fully identifiable as *I*. Thus it will be discussed that some uses of *i* are tantamount to an indefinite. Although previous textometric and prosodic analyses of the variant contribute to a better understanding of the environmental particularities of its deployment, this paper hopes to provide necessary and insightful grammatical inquiry.

First I will present an analysis of the non-standard 1sg via the prism of definiteness, contrasting it with the standard 1sg as a definite pronominal syntactic and semantic value, and looking at deictic and anaphoric possibilities. Then I will use the cross linguistic example of subject doubling in French wherein *Moi* is used as a tonic personal pronoun that is deployed to reinforce the subject pronoun when in juxtaposition with *Je*, in order to reveal whether one may approach the standard 1sg in terms of tonicity.

Finally I will demonstrate how these findings can support those of existing corpus analysis research into the pragmatic implementation of the lowercase 1sg.

References

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