

**Anne Keown**

When people speak to one another, they categorize their relationship linguistically. In many languages, this categorization is reflected by means of the pronominal system. For example, there are at least eighteen different ways to say “you were” in Polish, with each construction (here, pronoun and past tense verb) encoding factors concerning the addressee (such as gender, number, perceived status, and so on.) This fact is quite significant when one considers that in other Slavic languages there are generally considerably fewer options that could be considered the equivalent of this one English phrase. In categorizing addressees, I propose that Poles use embodied knowledge of the world around them. I suggest that this complex system of address has developed in Polish due to the prominence of space and size in structuring pronoun use in the addressing function. Polish speakers conceptualize relationships (and assign pronouns accordingly) in terms of physical orientation and distance. I will evidence supporting this claim from both the semantics of the pronouns themselves as well as from the physical actions of speakers in the movie *Człowiek z marmuru*.