

Me or I?

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These words are horribly confused by English speakers, including educated native speakers (los hablantes nativos).

First, the rules. “I” is a subject pronoun (as is “yo” in Spanish). So when someone knocks on your door, for example, you ask “who is it” (¿quien es?). Here are some correct replies:

- It is I.
- It is Ricardo.

Simple, is it not? Many English speakers would have said “*it is me*”. This is plainly wrong. Would you have said “me” or “es me” en español. No, of course not.

“Me” in English is an indirect object pronoun as in these examples:

- Mrs. Theresa May gave a book to me. The subject is Mrs May, the verb “gave”, and the indirect object “me” and the direct object “book”.
- Mr. Morales gave me a furious look (...me lanzó una mirada furiosa). Again, the subject is Mr. Morales, the verb gave, the direct object “furious look” and the indirect object “me”. Simple grammar rules.

So why is the error so endemic (endémico) with English speakers? Three reasons: bad teaching of grammar in the schools, the failure to correct the mistakes by parents and schools, unthinking minds (mentes irreflexivas).

The result is that the habit is so ingrained (tan arraigado) that it is sometimes difficult to change. You may also have heard “it is me” used so many times by

supposedly educated English native speakers that you think it must be right.

So, now you can teach a little grammar to an English speaker!