

Chapter 8 Respectfully Replacing Nouns: The Pronoun

Additional paper or project ideas

1. Review the article by Aarts (1994) on *who* and *whom*. Then, examine the use of *who* and *whom* in five pieces of local news coverage and five pieces of national news coverage. Is there a difference in how *who* and *whom* is used? Describe the patterns you found and share them with your peers. See Aarts, F. (1994). Relative who and whom: Prescriptive rules and linguistic reality. *American Speech*, 69(1), 71–79.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/455950>.
2. The pronoun *they*. Conduct a small study on people's attitudes toward singular *they* by asking them to rate the acceptability of the following sentences. Ask at least 10 people to participate. You may want to collect demographic information such as age, educational attainment, and so on. Analyze your results and share them with a peer.
 - a. If a student has questions about the topic, they can come to the professor's office hours.
 - b. I went to see my doctor the other day. They prescribed a new medication.
 - c. Taylor invited their friends over for dinner.
 - d. After Taylor invited Tom, they went to the movies.
 - e. After I gave my talk, an audience member asked their question right away.
3. Review the section on the values of pronouns above. Then, pick a text of your choice. It could be something you've written yourself or some other text about a subject you're interested in. It should be at least one page in length. Then, highlight all pronouns you can find. What kind of work do these pronouns do? How do they help the reader understand the text? Share your findings with your peers.