Filozofická fakulta Univerzity Palackého

Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

Mismatching of case on relative and interrogative pronouns
who(ever) **and** *whom(ever)*

(Bachelor Thesis)

Olomouc 2016   **Magdaléna Žaloudíková**

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Nesoulad pádových forem vztažných a tázacích zájmen
who(ever) **a** *whom(ever)*

(Bakalářská práce)

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Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem bakalářskou práci na téma: „Mismatching of case on relative and interrogative pronouns *who(ever)* and *whom(ever)*" vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího bakalářské práce a uvedla jsem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

V Olomouci dne 13.12.2016   Podpis ………………………

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1.   Introduction

This thesis focuses on the relative and interrogative pronouns *who* and *whom* and their usage by native speakers of English. There is a general opinion that *who* corresponds to nominative forms of 3sg personal pronouns such as *she* or *he* and *whom* being an accusative form same as *her* or *him.* I will argue that although these forms are superficially similar, they do not follow the same case-assigning mechanism and therefore should not be treated in the same way.

The thesis is divided into two main parts, the first being theoretical and the second empirical. In the first chapter of the theoretical part I will define the field of research, provide definitions of relative and interrogative pronouns in English and discuss the types of clauses where they can be found. Although English is a language which does not have a rich case morphology and a case distinction can be found only on pronouns, a case is a key feature in the issue this thesis deals with therefore it is necessary to discuss the structural case which is morphologically expressed in English.

The second chapter provides the reader with a diachronic overview of case on pronouns beginning from Old English. The aim of this is to show that the claim about *who/whom* following the same case-assigning mechanism as personal pronouns, namely 3sg, is wrong and that not only the origins of those pronouns differ but also the changes in their paradigms were not the same. In this chapter I also give an overview of the development of relative and interrogative pronouns.

The last theoretical part deals directly with the problem of using *who* and *whom.* Before getting to the heart of the matter a free relative clause will be discussed; this type is treated separately because it does not behave as other relative clauses but rather as an NP and can be found only in present day English. The next section will focus on how the usage of *who* and *whom* is presented in the literature, especially in traditional grammars which sometimes treat *who/whom* and 3sg pronouns the same way. However, as I stated earlier they do not fall together and I will support my argument by demonstrating that they cannot be substituted in some instances. Lasnik and Sobin (2002) propose a rule which

covers the occurrence of *whom* in sentences such as in (1) and this rule will be discussed in a detail.

(1) *I met a girl whom I though was a famous actress.*

They introduce the concept of 'catchers and slippers' which I will mention as the last section of the theoretical part and apply this on the data obtained through a survey.

There is a claim that the accusative *whom* tends to disappear and because younger generations are always the initiators of linguistic changes I will be focusing on the usage of *who* and *whom* by different generations. For this purpose a questionnaire was designed and distributed among native speakers of English.

The sentences used in the questionnaire served as models for a corpus research which was carried out in order to find how the frequency of *who(ever)* and *whom(ever)* differs in written and spoken corpora and how frequent the constructions used in the questionnaire are. The results and analyses of both studies the will then be presented.

It is expected that the use of *whom* will be higher among the older participants rather than younger and that the accusative form will not be frequent in questions. Regarding the corpus research *whom(ever)* is expected to be found after a preposition more often that *who(ever)*. In general the accusative is more likely to appear in the written corpora.

2. Definition of the field of research

The main focus of this thesis is on relative and interrogative pronouns *who* and *whom*, therefore it is necessary to give a definition of them. These pronouns do not occur in a language as isolated items but in clauses and have certain functions within those clauses. Even though they might seem same on the surface level, they differ mainly in their functions. These differences together with types of relative and interrogative clauses will be discussed below. Pronouns are the only category which expresses a case in English and a case plays important role in the choice between *who* and *whom*. That is why the last section is dedicated to this topic.

2.1. Definition of relative pronouns

Even though relative and interrogative pronouns in English are very similar not only in a form but also in what they refer to, for example, both relative and interrogative pronouns *who* refer to a personal subject; their functions are very different and they differ in terms of Binding Theory. Each relative pronoun which is introducing a subordinate relative clause must have its antecedent in a preceding clause which is a part of the same sentence. This is not true for interrogatives.

From an orthographical point of view can be relative pronouns divided into two groups:

- *wh*-pronouns: *who, whom, whose, which, what*
- *that,* zero

There is another possible division of relative pronouns and that is on the basis of nature of their antecedents. They can be either personal or impersonal as shown below.

- Personal: *who, whom, whose, that,* "gap"
- Impersonal: *which, whose, what, that,* "gap"

2.1.1. Types of relative clauses

Relative clauses as well as relative pronouns resemble interrogatives, *wh-*questions in particular. However, relative clauses unlike interrogatives give information which is related to the preceding part of the sentence. Adopting Traugott's (1992) terms there are restrictive and non-restrictive relatives in English but these are not the only types of relative clauses, two additional types are proposed by Huddleston and Pullum (2002), namely clefts and fused relatives.

Comrie (1981, 140) says that "the general principle of English relative clause formation is that the relative pronoun must occur clause-initially, or at least as part of the clause-initial noun or prepositional phrase." In the example (2) there is an independent clause where the direct object *the man* follows the verb. However, when this clause becomes a subordinate relative clause the pronoun occurs in the initial position as in (3). Relative clause formation in English resembles the formation of an interrogative clause in a sense that a *wh-*word movement is involved and the *wh-* word is moved from its normal position in the clause to clause-initial position.

(2) *I saw the man yesterday.*   (Comrie 1981, 140)

(3) *The man whom I saw yesterday felt today.*   (Comrie 1981, 140)

Traugott (1992, 223) introduces two types of relative clauses, one of them is a restrictive type which should delimit the potential referents of an antecedent DP in the main clause such as (4). This embedded relative clause excludes other friends who do not live in San Francisco.

(4) *I gave the necklace to my friend who lives in San Francisco.*

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1034-1035) give further division of this type of restrictive clause which is in their terms called "integrated relative clause". This clause can be found in constructions where it modifies other kind of head such as in (5) where the relative clause modifies a superlative adjective or in (6) where the relative clause is a modifier to an interrogative preposition.

(5) *He is now the fastest he's ever been.*

(6) *Where can we eat that isn't too expensive?*

Second type given by Traugott (1992, 223) is called appositive, non-restrictive respectively. This relative clause gives additional information about the antecedent as demonstrated in (7) where *who lives in San Francisco* is an added piece of information about the antecedent DP.

(7) *I gave the necklace to my friend, who lives in San Francisco.*

There are several other differences between restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses in English, they differ orthographically because non-restrictive clauses have to be separated from the main clause by a comma while restrictive clause cannot. This orthographical difference is mirrored in intonation; non-restrictive clause being pronounced after a slight pause. Restrictive relative clauses can be syntactically classified as post-modifiers of an antecedent DP. However, as we can see in (7) the non-restrictive relative clause does not modify the DP. Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1353-1354) propose that these clauses should not be treated as syntactic constituents and should be separated from a syntactic tree structure but related to the DP by a different device as in

(8).

(8)
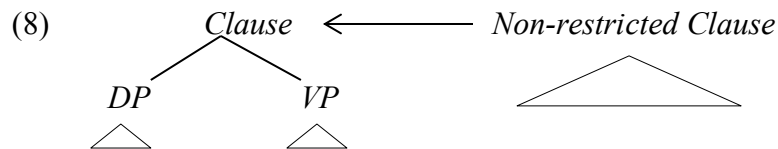
Another difference is in an initial pronoun restriction, a restrictive clause can be introduced by any relative pronoun including a 'gap', however non-restrictive clauses require *wh*-relatives, clauses introduced by *that* can be found too, but they are very rare and omission of a relative pronoun would mean an ungrammaticality of a sentence as shown in (9).

(9) **I gave the necklace to my friend, lives in San Francisco.*

Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1035-1036) mention two other types of relative clause the first of which is called a cleft relative clause and "it divides the more elementary construction into two parts, one of which is foregrounded and the other backgrounded." In (10b) *John* is foregrounded while *wanted Sam as a driver* is backgrounded.

(10) a) *John wanted Sam as a driver.*
    b) *It was John who wanted Sam as a driver.*

The second type given by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) is a fused relative clause which is seen as the most complex relative construction. These sentences contain only of *wh*-word, not *that* or "gap".

(11) a) *It would mean abandoning that which we hold most dear.*

    b) *It would mean abandoning what we hold most dear.*

(Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1036)

Compare the sentence in (11a) which has an antecedent *that* and a relative clause introduced by a relative pronoun *which* with the fused construction in (11b). In the second sentence the *wh*-word *what* corresponds to *that* and *which* at the same time, therefore it is impossible to identify an antecedent and relative clause. That is why these constructions carry the name fused.

2.2. Definition of interrogative pronouns

As mentioned earlier interrogative and relative pronouns in English are very similar to each other not only in a form but also in what they refer to, meaning personal or impersonal reference, however, there are some differences in the latter which will be discussed below. While relative pronouns are referring to their antecedent which is a part of the same sentence, interrogative pronouns do not have an antecedent, compare (12a) where the relative pronoun *which* refers to the preceding DP, whereas in (12b) there is no such DP which *who* could refer to. However, there is a group of interrogatives called definite interrogatives, which will be also discussed, and these pronouns require an antecedent being present in a context.

(12) a) *I saw the car which has been stolen.*
    b) *Who bought you these flowers?*

It is necessary to present *wh*-words which do not belong to the category of pronouns but have the same function such as *where, when, why* and *how.*

Interrogatives can be divided into two groups depending on animacy of what they refer to. Within those two groups, there is further subdivision based on the

definiteness. The first group includes pronouns referring to persons, in (13a) the reference is indefinite but in (13b) there is a definite pronoun and the respondent has to choose from the given options which will be given in the context.

(13) a) *Who is your favourite singer?*
　　 b) *Which is your favourite singer?*

The same subdivision can be found in the second group which includes interrogatives not referring to persons. As in the previous group the interrogative pronoun in (14a) is an indefinite one whereas the one in (14b) is definite and some options from which the respondent can choose must be presented in the context.

(14) a) *What is the name is your dog?*
　　 b) *Which do you prefer?*

Note that the interrogative pronoun *which* in (13b) has a personal reference, this would not be possible for its relative counterpart.

2.2.1.　Types of interrogative clauses

Adopting Jespersen's (1935) classification, it can be said that there are two types of questions in English and their distinction depends on the expected response. The first type is a *yes-no* question in his terms known as *nexus*-question and the second one is a *wh*-question which Jespersen using a symbol for a variable calls an *x*-question (Jespersen, 1935, 303). Quirk et al. (1985, 806) propose another type of question which Jespersen does not treat as a separate type but as an equivalent of *wh*-questions and that is an alternative question.

Yes-no questions are from the phonological point of view characterised by raising intonation. These questions are formed by a process of an inversion as in (15b) where the auxiliary *has* takes the initial position in the clause. If there is no auxiliary present, a *do*-support is required.

(15) a) *Mary has left the room*
　　 b) *Has Mary left the room?*

On the phonological level can *wh*-questions be classified as those which have a falling intonation. There is a good reason for calling those *x*-question as Jespersen (1935, 303) does as "x" can represent any phrase which can be

questioned using the verb which is in a declarative sentence. In (16) "x" can stand for any of the three DPs.

(16) *She bought her brother a new iPhone.*

Formation of these questions can remind of a formation of *yes-no* questions in a sense that it involves an inversion of the first auxiliary and the subject and if no auxiliary is present then *do*-support is needed as well. However, there is another movement involved and that is a movement of a *wh*-element and the *wh*-word is taking an initial position in the *wh*-element. There is an exception to this rule when there is a preposition which is a part of the *wh*-element, then the preposition can stand either in the first position leaving the *wh*-word in the second place or in the clause final, then the *wh*-word takes the initial position. If a *wh*-element stands for a subject then there is an exception to the rule of subject and auxiliary inversion because the rule of *wh*-word initial position overrides the rule of inversion (Quirk et al. 1985, 817-819).

The third type of interrogative clauses presented by Quirk et al. (1985, 806) is an alternative question. A reply to this kind of question contains one of the options presented in the question. This type of question has a rising intonation on the first option presented and falling intonation on the second as it is indicated in (17).

(17) *Is it raining ↗ or snowing ↘ ?*

As was mentioned earlier Jespersen (1935) treats this type of questions as equivalents of *wh*-questions because we can question the weather by using a *wh*-question with an interrogative element *what*.

2.3. Case in English

The word *case* originates from Latin *casus* which is a loan translation from Greek *ptosis* both meaning fall(ing) and can be interpreted as "falling away from an assumed standard form" (Blake 1994, 19).

Haspelmath (2009) interprets case as an inflectional category-system which behaves as any other inflectional category-system such as number, aspect, gender, etc.; he proposes that "the term *case* does not always mean 'inflectional category-

system expressing dependency relations'. It can also refer to these relations themselves" Haspelmath (2009, 507). Here he follows Fillmore (1968) who points out the importance of semantic roles for languages which do not have a rich case morphology, for example English. This relation between case and θ-roles is called a non-structural case in a standard case theory but will not be discussed in this thesis since it is not relevant. Second type which "is licensed in syntax by a head that stands either in a Spec-head or a local c-command relationship to the DP" is called structural case (Woolford 2006, 301). Van Kemenade (1987, 67) gives the following rules for licensing a structural case in English:

(18) a) DP is nominative if governed by AGR

b) DP is objective if governed by V or P

These rules can be demonstrated on the following examples. The subject *Jane* in (19a) is licensed with nominative by the rule (18a) and is assigned a θ-role 'agent' by the verb, the complement *Marc* receives an accusative case under (18b) and is assigned a θ-role of 'patient' (if we interpret it as he is the one who underwent the act of kissing and was affected by it, not as the one who received the kiss). In (19b) the subject of the passive sentence receives a nominative case under (18a), but is assigned the θ-role of a 'patient'. This shows that a case and θ-roles are dissociated. The dissociation can be seen more clearly when the nouns are replaced by their pro-forms. Arguments which have a structural case must change their case to the case which is licensed to the position they move into (Woodford 2006, 117-118). In (20c) the pronoun preserved the case which it was licensed under (18b) which results in ungrammaticality.

(19) a) *Jane kissed Marc.*

b) *Marc was kissed (by Jane).*

(20) a) *She kissed him.*

b) *He was kissed (by her).*

c) **Him was kissed (by her).*

In present day English unlike in Old English a structural case is the only case which is morphologically expressed, however Quinn (2002, 9) mentions

"a tendency to avoid lexical case marking in favour of structural case assignment is already present in late Old English."

3.   Historical development of relative and interrogative pronouns

3.1. History of case on pronouns

Compared with present day English (PDE) is Old English (OE) much richer in terms of inflectional morphology. There were three inflectional categories on nouns: gender, number and case, three inflectional categories were found on verbs as well. Another category which underwent inflection were adjectives which agreed with the noun they modified in number, case and gender, however, they were inflected on a syntactic basis and belonged ether to 'weak' or 'strong' declension since they followed the same pattern as nouns. Pronouns in OE did not form a homogenous category but all were inflected for case and number, some for gender as will be shown later (Hogg 1992, 122-141).

Hogg (1992, 142) divides pronouns in OE into two types, 'personal pronoun' including the first and second personal pronouns and 'impersonal pronouns' including demonstratives, possessives, interrogatives, indefinites and the third person personal pronoun.

If we look at what Hogg calls personal pronoun's paradigms we can see the even during the OE period the pronouns underwent changes. A certain level of syncretism can already be seen as the accusative and dative forms in later OE became identical.

Early OE	1sg	2sg	1pl	2pl
NOM	*Ic*	*Þu*	*We*	*Ge*
ACC	*Mec*	*Þec*	*Usic*	*Eowic*
GEN	*Min*	*Þin*	*Ure*	*Eower*
DAT	*Me*	*Þe*	*Us*	*Eow*

Figure 1. Declension of 1st and 2nd personal pronouns in early OE
(Quinn 2002, 13

Later OE	1sg	2sg	1pl	2pl
NOM	*Ic*	*Þu*	*We*	*Ge*
ACC	***Me***	***Þe***	***Us***	***Eow***
GEN	*Min*	*Þin*	*Ure*	*Eower*
DAT	***Me***	***Þe***	***Us***	***Eow***

Figure 2. Declension of 1st and 2nd personal pronouns in later OE
(Quinn 2002, 13)

There is a syncretism between genitive and dative on 3rd person feminine pronoun and also neuter and plural pronouns do not show a distinction between nominative and accusative. If we compare inflectional endings of all 3rd person personal pronouns with endings of demonstratives which can be found in section 3.2.1 we will find that they are identical.

3rd person	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
NOM	*He*	*Heo*	***Hit***	***Hi(e)***
ACC	*Hine*	*Hi(e)*	***Hit***	***Hi(e)***
GEN	*His*	***Hi(e)re***	*His*	*Hi(e)ra*
DAT	*Him*	***Hi(e)re***	*Him*	*Him*

Figure 3. Declension of 3rd personal pronouns in OE   (Quinn 2002, 12)

Paradigms of interrogatives and demonstrative will not be discussed here as there is a separate section dedicated to them.

Although there was a syncretism in accusative and dative on 1st and 2nd personal pronouns in OE there were verbs which required either accusative or dative objects. Verbal morphology underwent changes in Middle English (ME) and the accusative – dative distinction was lost which resulted in pronouns having only three distinct case forms. The pronouns which did not show syncretism on accusative and dative pronouns in OE usually retained the dative form (Fisher et al. 2004, Lass 1992). Possessive forms of personal pronouns were functioning rather as adjectives than pronouns; in OE a verb could assign a genitive case to its object, this was not possible in ME. This resulted in genitives becoming 'possessive adjectives'. By the end of the 12th century and beginning of the 13th century a new type of genitive with suffix *-(e)s,* as in as in *our(e)s, ȝou(e)s,* etc.

arose in the northern parts of England. The usage of these forms was same as in PDE that is in constructions without the possessed DP following the genitive form (Lass 1992, 119-120).

	1sg	2sg	1pl	2pl
NOM	*I*	*Þū*	*Wē*	*ȝē*
ACC	*Mē*	*Þē*	*Us*	*ȝou*
GEN	*Mī(n)*	*Þī(n)*	*Our(es)*	*ȝou(es)*

Figure 4. Declension of 1st and 2nd personal pronouns in ME
(Lass 1992, 120-121)

The 3rd person personal pronouns showed a great deal of change during the ME period. There were phonological changes in 3sg feminine, although the linguists are not sure what the process was, the OE form *heo* resulted in several forms which were used in different areas. The plural forms were entirely replaced by a Scandinavian paradigm in the Northeast and gradually seemed to be spreading to the South, there were several variants but during the generation following Chaucer the Scandinavian form *th-* took over all of them and by the end of ME it became a standard (Lass 1992, 118-121, Quinn 2002, 16-17, Alego 2010, 131-132). The neuter accusative form took over dative and as Baugh and Cable (2002, 227) point out the /h/ was dropped in unstressed positions and the neuter form became *it*, the possessive form remained still *his* which was the same form as masculine genitive.

3rd person	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
NOM	*Hē*	*Shē, Hō*	*(H)it*	*They, Thai*
ACC	*Him, Hine*	*Her(e)*	*(H)it*	*Them, Thaim*
GEN	*His*	*Her(e)*	*His*	*Their(e), Theirs*

Figure 5. Declension of 3rd personal pronouns in ME (Alego 2010, 131)

Alego (2010, 132) points out that the OE demonstrative pronouns which functioned as relatives as well as demonstratives were reduced to *the, that* and *thǭ* being a plural form and these were becoming restricted to demonstrative function in ME, except for *that* which functioned as a relativiser.

There were two more changes which happened in Early Modern English (EME), after these changes took place the pronouns' forms remained same. The First of these changes mentioned by Baugh and Cable (2002, 226-229), is a loss of the 2sg form *thou*. In OE *thou* and *ye* were two distinct forms of number the former being singular. In the 13th century the use of these forms had changed as *thou* expressed a sense of intimacy and *you* was connected with status. During the two following centuries the singular form vanished from the language and only *you* remained. In the 14th century there was a phonological change which resulted in a syncretism of accusative and nominative forms of *you.*

The last change which happened to paradigms of personal pronouns was a development of a genitive form of 3sg neuter *its*. Baugh and Cable (2002, 227-228) discuss that the loos of grammatical gender resulted in a need for a distinct form of possessive since neuter and masculine both had the same form *his*. In the late 16th century there was a first occurrence if *its* but at that time it was seen rather colloquial and only in the 17th century the genitive form became to be used (Lass 1999, 147-148).

3.2. Relative and interrogative pronouns in Old English

3.2.1. Relative pronouns

Relative and interrogative pronouns which are in PDE cannot be found in OE, at least not all of them. Hogg (2002, 97) points out that there is neither *who* nor *that* pronoun which would function as a relative pronoun. However, two complementisers can be found in OE, the first he calls a relative particle *þē*, which is indeclinable, and the second one is a demonstrative pronoun *se* Hogg (1994, 143).

Demonstrative *se*	Masculine	Feminine	Neuter	Plural
NOM	*Se*	*Seo*	*Þæt*	*Þa*
ACC	*Þone*	*Þa*	*Þæt*	*Þa*
GEN	*Þæs*	*Þære*	*Þæs*	*Þara*
DAT	*Þæm*	*Þære*	*Þæm*	*Þæm*

Figure 6. Declension of the demonstrative *se* in OE   (Allen 1995, 165)

Demonstratives, like 3rd personal pronouns, show a certain amount of syncretism, namely in feminine, neuter and plural forms.

Alego (2005, 101) proposes that the particle *Þē* served usually as a relative pronoun but since this particle is indeclinable a compound demonstrative + particle was used as relative too. Hogg (2002, 97) adds another reason for the creation of this compound and that is if a demonstrative was used on its own it could cause a confusion as it could be interpreted as a simple demonstrative and not as relative.

Fisher et al. (2004, 58-59) discuss that the relativiser does not have to always agree in a case with its antecedent if, for example, the verb takes an accusative object. This can be seen in (21) where the antecedent *Gode* is in dative, whereas the pronoun compound *Þone Þe* has an accusative case which is required by the verb *gelyfdon*.

(21) *Þæt heo ne woldon heora Gode   hyran Þone Þe heo gelyfdon*

    that they not wanted their God-DAT obey who- ACC they believed

    'that they did not want to obey their God, in whom they believed'

(Fischer et al. 2004, 58)

Traugott (1992, 225) points out that when the pronoun *se* takes the same case as its antecedent, it must always be followed by the indeclinable particle *Þe*.

3.2.2. *Interrogative pronouns*

Although *who* in PDE does not have its relative form in OE, interrogative *who* does. This interrogative pronoun *hwā* had only a singular number and distinguished between two genders because there was one form for both

masculine and feminine gender and a separate neuter gender form. The neuter form corresponds to *what*. We can see another sign of syncretism not only that feminine and masculine pronouns have the same form but also on dative and instrumental of masculine/feminine pronoun and nominative and accusative on neuter.

Interrogative *hwā*	Masculine/ Feminine	Neuter
NOM	*Hwā*	***Hwæt***
ACC	*Hwone*	***Hwæt***
GEN	*Hwæs*	*Hwæs*
DAT	***Hwǣm, Hwām***	*Hwǣm, Hwām*
INS	***Hwǣm, Hwām***	*Hwȳ*

Figure 7. Declension of the interrogative *hwā* in OE   (Alego 2005, 100)

In OE unlike in PDE a dual number could be found however, it disappeared during the 13th century (Mustanoja 1960, 125). Since there was a dual number there were also interrogatives such as *hwæđer* meaning 'which of two' and *hwilc* meaning 'which of many'. (Alego 2005, 101)

The types of interrogative clauses in OE correspond with the types in PDE, both *yes-no* interrogatives and *wh*-questions can be found in OE (Traugott 1992, 265).

Even a formation of questions in OE does not differ much from PDE. There is also a subject-verb inversion but in PDE the inversion is restricted to auxiliaries which is not true for OE where any verb can be inverted therefore no *do*-support is needed. In content questions the interrogative element such as *hwā* 'who', *hwæt* 'what', *hwelc* 'which', *whær* 'where', *hwaenne* 'when' *hwy* 'why' is fronted and followed by the subject-verb inversion, except when the interrogative element stands for subject. When the interrogative element is a part of a PP then the element is fronted together with the preposition because P-stranding is not allowed in OE (Fisher et al. 2004, 53-54).

3.3. Relative and interrogative pronouns in Middle English

3.3.1. Relative pronouns

As it was mentioned above the demonstratives which functioned as relatives in OE were restricted to a demonstrative function in ME. The only exception was a pronoun *that* which in the 13th century was the only relativiser to be found. Unlike PDE's *that* it was used in non-restrictive as well as restrictive clauses. In the early period of ME pronouns *who* and *what* were used as interrogatives as it was in OE but from the 13th century *who* had a function of an indefinite relative meaning 'whoever'. This is the result of a development of interrogative pronouns into relatives which is based on the use of interrogatives in indirect questions. From the 14th century the *wh*-words became more frequent, the relative pronoun *that* could not been preceded by a preposition and this led to the need for a new pronoun which allowed that. In the late ME there was not only the indeclinable relative *that* but also *who, what*, whose declension can be seen below, and indeclinable *which*. However, *who* was not used as mere relativiser until the 16th century, but this is not true for its accusative and genitive forms (Alego 2010, 133, Fischer 1992, 295-300).

Relative *who* & *what*	Masculine, Feminine	Neuter
NOM	*Who*	*What*
ACC	*Whom*	*What*
GEN	*Whos*	*Whos*

Figure 8. Declension of the relative *who* & *what* in ME   (Alego 2010, 133)

3.3.2. Interrogative pronouns

Since interrogative and relative pronouns have the same form, there is no phonological or morphological difference between relative and interrogative *who* and *what*.

Lass (1992, 122) mentions that "the old instrumental *whȳ*, while pronominal in origin (= 'for what?'), is syntactically adverbial, and in Middle English is an indeclinable autonomous word.'

Formation of questions in ME had not changed much since OE, still subject-verb inversion was not restricted only to auxiliaries but lexical verbs were inverted too. There is a difference between OE and ME in terms of preposition stranding. When the interrogative element was part of a PP in OE the preposition had to be fronted together with the element. When a *wh*-word was part of a PP in ME a preposition did not have to be pied-piped but could be stranded.

4. Pronouns who(ever) and whom(ever) in Present-day English

4.1. Free relative clauses

The relative clauses which are introduced by *who* or *whom* were discussed in section 2.1.1 where I described restrictive and non-restrictive clauses together with cleft relative clause and fused relative clause. The last type will be discussed further in this section.

When discussing relative clauses many authors mention only the restrictive and non-restrictive types and only a few mention free relatives. Huddleston and Pullum (2002) call this type a fused relative, Quirk et al. (1985) nominal relative clause, it can be also called independent or free relative clause. I adopt the term free relative because as will be shown below *who* and *whom* are not bound to their antecedent when occurring as compounds *whoever* and *whomever,* in fact there is no antecedent they could be bound to in these sentences. This type is treated separately because the sentences can be interpreted as DPs modified by relative clauses as will be shown below.

Quirk et al. (1985, 1059) divide free relatives into two groups depending on the meaning *wh*-element expresses. In the first group we can find *wh*-element with a specific meaning, these are those which do not have a suffix *–ever* this would include example (11b) which is repeated here as (22).

(22) *It would mean abandoning what we hold most dear.*   (Huddleston and Pullum (2002, 1036)

This type has already been discussed earlier therefore will not be analysed any further in this section.

The second group is a general one with a non-specific meaning which is formally indicated by a suffix *–ever* as shown in (23) where *whomever* refers to any person. When *who, whom* and *which* are used with a non-specific meaning, they "are restricted to occurrence with a small semantic class of verbs (*chose, like, please, want, wish*)" (Quirk et al. 1985, 1057).

(23) *Mark is free to date whomever he wants to.*

As we could see in the section 3.3.1 the pronoun *who* was not used as a mere relative until the 16th century. However, it was used as an indefinite relative meaning 'whoever' from the 13th until the 16th century when it became a relative pronoun.

It was stated earlier that the free relatives can be interpreted as DPs modified by relative clauses in (24a) the compound can be paraphrased as in (24b).

 (24) a) *Whoever broke the window should pay for it.*
    b) *The person who broke the window should pay for it.*

Bresnan and Grimshaw (1978) give another argument to support the claim that free relatives are in fact DPs and that is subcategorization. The verb *buy* requires a DP as its complement and as can be seen in (25) the free relative *whatever* meets the requirement.

(25) *I will buy whatever you want me to.*

The compounds *whoever* and *whomever* follow the same case assigning mechanisms as the relative and interrogative pronoun *who* and *whom*, which will be discussed in detail in section 4.3.

4.2. Review of literature

Pronouns *who* and *whom* are in some traditional grammars compared to personal pronouns in order to explain that *who* bears a nominative and *whom* an accusative case. In the following section I will make it clear that although these pronouns might be superficially similar, they are not.

There is some literature on grammar of English which does not mention the distinction between *who* and *whom* at all. Many authors discuss this distinction for example Murphy (2012) notes that it is possible to use *whom* when it is an object of a verb and "you can also use *whom* with a preposition (*to whom, from whom, with whom, etc.*)" (Murphy 2012, 188). Further on when he explains the use of *whom* as an object of a preposition he gives a set of examples which leads to a fallacious argument that *whom* is used where object forms of 3rd personal pronouns are as in (26).

(26) a) *Helen has three brothers. All of them are married.*

  b) *Helen has three brothers, all of whom are married.*

It is true that the relative pronoun occurs in the same position as 3pl and both pronouns are assigned an accusative case by the preceding preposition but this does not mean that they follow the same case-assigning mechanism. In many instances *whom* does not appear where an accusative form of a personal pronoun does and appears where a nominative form cannot be used.

None of the traditional grammars explains the usage of *whom* in sentences such as in (27). Hewings (1999) mentions this construction but only to demonstrate that "whom is very formal" (Hewings 1999, 140).

(27) *He met a girl whom he thought was the famous basketball player.*

In this sentence there is no verb or preposition which would precede the pronoun and assign the accusative case and yet the relative pronoun is in accusative. The case assigning mechanism of this type will be discussed in detail later.

4.2.1. *Whom and personal pronouns*

As it was stated earlier in some instances *whom* does not appear where it would be expected if it followed the same case assigning mechanism as personal pronouns. When a personal pronoun functions as a predicate nominal it stands in accusative as in (28) but when questioning the nominal part of the predicate a nominative form must be used otherwise the sentence is ungrammatical as in (29).

(28) *Who broke the window?*

   It was me.

(29) **Whom was it?*

The sentence in (27) is another is another example which supports the claim about *whom* not following the same case assigning mechanism because *whom* is a subject which is separated from its predicate by another clause. Usually it is not possible to have an accusative form of a personal pronoun in a position of subject. There are some exceptions to this rule, namely when a subject is conjoined or if there is an appositive to a subject. Personal pronouns are in accusative also when

they are subjects of understood predicates or predicate nominals and the last possibility to have a subject in accusative is when it is used as first person accusative (Emonds 1986, 96).

It is worth noticing that the common form of personal pronouns following copula is accusative and the hypercorrection is towards nominative. However, in case of *who/whom* the common form seems to be *who* and the hypercorrection is towards *whom.*

4.3. Discussion of rules

It is assumed that there is a general knowledge of the use of *whom* as an object of a verb or a preposition which assign a case feature to *whom.* Lasnik and Sobin (2000) argue that *whom* does not follow the normal case checking system because "when an element already case checked … within a normal derivation is moved further, its case is preserved. … If post-verbal or post-prepositional *whom* were checked within a normal derivation, then *wh*-moved *whom* would be possible with a preserved ACC case" (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 353). As can be seen in (30b) the case was checked by the case assigning verb but when the *wh*-element was moved and its case was preserved, it resulted in ungrammaticality of the sentence.

(30) a) *It was whom?*

     b) **Whom was it?*

One could simply say that *whom* cannot be used because it stands in the position where only *who* can be found, since a subject is questioned in this sentence. That would be true but there are other constructions such as (31) where *whom* fails to appear and these cannot be explained like (30b). That is why Lasnik and Sobin (2000) propose "The Basic *whom* Rule' which is shown in (32).

(31) **Whom for?*

(32) The Basic *whom* Rule

    If: [V/P] who-   -m

            [ACC] [ACC]

    1   2   3

    Then: check ACC on 3.

As can be seen in (32) *whom* is divided into two parts and each carries its own accusative case. Lasnik and Sobin (2000) argue that the accusative case on *who-* is checked within the normal case checking system and the case on *-m* by a grammatical virus which "is a rule which checks a feature that the grammatical system cannot otherwise check" (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 349). This rule is also very sensitive to the distribution of elements and can be applied only to elements which are fixed in order. In (31) the morpheme *who-* was assigned accusative by the preposition *for* but then subsequently moved and this movement prevented the morpheme *–m* from having checked its accusative by a grammatical virus. The same explanation can be applied on (30b) where the case assigning head *was* checks the accusative on *who-* but the accusative on *–m* cannot be checked because of the movement. This rule also allows sentences like (33) where accusative case on *who-* is checked within the normal case system and accusative on *–m* can be checked by a grammatical virus since it remains in situ.

(33) *With whom did you go to the race last night?*

Rule (32) explains sentences like (31) but fails to explain the occurrence of *whom* in sentences like (34) and ungrammaticality of (35). Another sentence which cannot be explained by rule (32) is a sentence (27) which is repeated here as (36).

(34) *Whom did you meet?*

(35) **Whom met John?*

(36) *He met a girl whom he thought was a famous basketball player.*

Jespersen (1935) gives a possible explanation to sentence (36) as he states that the clause *whom was a famous basketball player* is an object of *though* and *whom* is in accusative because it the clause is dependent and if nominative *who* was used there would be two subjects in one clause. However this explanation would not

cover a sentence in (34), therefore Lasnik and Sobin (2000, 359) propose "The Extended *whom* Rule" which is demonstrated in (37).

(37) The Extended *whom* Rule

    If: who -m   … NP, where

          [ACC]

      1   2   3

    a) 3 is the nearest subject NP to 2, and

    b) '…' does not contain a V which has 1–2 (a single word 'whom') as its subject

    Then: check ACC on 2

As can be seen *whom* is also broken into two morphemes but in this case *who-* carries unspecified case, either nominative or accusative and *–m* has its own accusative case. According to Lasnik and Sobin (2000) "The Extended *whom* Rule" carries out a simple operation:

> It looks between *whom* and the first subject NP to its right for a verb (which may or may not be present) to which *whom* bears some subject relation … ; if it finds no such verb, it licenses *whom* by checking its ACC Case. Element 3 of the rule, the subject NP nearest to *whom,* strongly limits the search space. The rule cannot look past it, and consequently, the search space is quite small. … The verb mentioned in condition b … must in a general sense be a theta role assigner rather than an auxiliary verb. (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 359)

Whom in (34) is separated from a theta-role-assigning verb *meet* by an auxiliary *did* and the DP which is the subject of the auxiliary therefore the accusative on *–m* can be checked. On the other hand *whom* in (35) stands next to a theta-role-assigning verb *met* to which it bears a subject relation and there is an absence of element 3 thus the accusative cannot be checked on *–m.* Finally the rule (37) explains the occurrence of *whom* in sentences such as (36), although *who-* carries nominative case which is assigned to it by a theta-role-assigning verb *was,* it is separated from the verb by a DP which allows checking accusative case of *–m.*

4.4. Slippers and catchers

For the purpose of the empirical part of this thesis it is necessary to introduce the concept of slippers and catchers. These terms were used by Lasnik and Sobin (2000) who claim that slippers are "utterances which might easily slip by without being noticed, having some reasonable degree of naturalness about them" and catchers are defined as "utterances which would like to catch in someone's ear as a mistake or as very unnatural, even if they follow prescriptive norms" (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 356).

(38) *I met a man whom I thought was a lunatic.* (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 356)

(39) *Whom was it?* (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 356)

The sentence in (38) is an example of a sentence classified as a slipper and (39) is a catcher. Sentences with the same structure were used in a questionnaire and the results will be discussed in section 6.

5.   Research introduction

5.1. Hypothesis

Klima (1964) divides English into four formal styles claims that the usage of post-verbal and post-prepositional *whom* cannot be found in the two less formal styles. One of the more formal styles which he considers to be a variety of standard colloquial English includes post-verbal and post-prepositional *whom* but does not include fronted *whom* which can be found in the most formal style that he refers to as elegant of literary English.

The aim of the research is to find out if *whom* either fronted or following a preposition or verb is natural to the native speakers of English or if they prefer nominative *who*. I will focus on how the acceptability of *whom* differs with respect to the age of speakers. It is expected that there will be a tendency to use nominative *who* both as a fronted element in questions and as a complementiser especially among younger speakers. Another expectation is that Klima's claim about the presence of post-verbal and post-prepositional *whom* in standard colloquial English will be confirmed and the occurrence of the fronted *whom* will not be very frequent.

Second part of the research will focus on corpora, namely on the occurrence of *whom* in spoken and written varieties of British and American English. I will focus on the same structures which were used in the questionnaire. It is expected that the frequency of *whom* will be higher in written corpora than in spoken corpora and also that *whom/whomever* will be more frequent after a preposition than *who/whoever*.

5.2. Methodology

The research was based on two sources of data, first of them were the data gained using a questionnaire which was filled by native speakers of English and the second source were data obtained from corpora.

5.2.1. Questionnaire research

5.2.1.1.   Creation of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed in the following way: in the first section respondents were asked to indicate demographic information including age, sex, region and level of education. There were three parts where the participants were asked to either choose the most/ least natural option or to formulate questions or to assign a number of preference to each sentence depending on their own intuition. Carden (1976, 8) points out that "if the informant hears similar constructions in quick succession, his remembered response to the previous sentence influences his response to the current one." Although I asked respondents to choose the option which would sound most natural to them and they were told that the purpose of the questionnaire is not to test their knowledge of grammar, fillers were used in order to divert their attention away.

Part One consisted of 12 sentences, in each of those sentences there were parts which were left out and the participants were asked to choose from the given options the ones they are most likely to use as well as the least likely ones, in some sentences there were three options, therefore a column labelled "likely" was added as shown in Figure 9. It was possible to indicate more than one answer. Four sentences out of 12 focused on a distinction between *who, whoever* and *whom, whomever*, three on nominative/ accusative case on personal pronouns *I* and *Me*, the rest were fillers which I was not interested in at all. Most of the sentences were formulated by me but there were three sentences which were already attested, these are those in (40), (41) and (42).

(40) *We feed children whom we think are hungry.*   (Jespersen 1935, 349)

(41) *I met a man whom I thought was a lunatic.*   (Jespersen 1935, 349)

(42) *Whom did you say would be at the party?*   (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 357)

7. We feed children _____ we think are hungry. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Who	⬭	⬭	⬭
Whom	⬭	⬭	⬭
That	⬭	⬭	⬭

Figure 9. Example of question in Part One

In Part Two there were ten sentences and I asked the respondents to question the capitalised part of the sentence using the words *what, where, why, who* and *whom* following the example (43). There were equal numbers of fillers and sentences with *who* and *whom* distinction.

(43) *His sister likes SKIING.*

   What does his sister like?

The last part, Part Three, was a scale question section which consisted of 18 sentences. As Figure 10 shows the participants were asked to assign the number of preference depending on their intuition. Sentences (44) and (45) were two attested sentences used in this section, the rest was made up by me. The purpose of using this type of question was to find out how acceptable the sentences with *whom(ever)* are to the native speakers. The sentences indicated as five or lower are classified as catchers and those marked six and higher are slippers.

(44) *This is the person whom I am told is responsible.*   (Whitford 1937, 566)

(45) *People ask me to dinner, people whom I feel ought to hate me.*
                                       (Lasnik and Sobin 2000, 356)

40. The owner is free to choose whomever he likes to work for him. *
Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯		Most Natural

Figure 10. Example of a scale question

During the process of creation of the questionnaire I had the first version which was filled in by two people and then some changes were made. Part One was the same in both versions but in Part Two the original sentence (46) was replaced by (47) because the respondents were questioning the cost of the trip but not what they were getting ready for.

(46) *We paid £40 FOR OUR TRIP TO EDINBURGH.*

(47) *We were getting ready for OUR TRIP TO EDINBURGH.*

Another change was made in (48) because this sentence was too complex and it was easier for the informants to question a phrase rather than the whole clause. This sentence was replaced by (49).

(48) *She could not go out with us last night BECAUSE SHE LOOKED AFTER HER YOUNGER BROTHER.*

(49) *She could not go out with us because of HER BROTHER.*

Sentence (50) was used instead of (51) because the participants were asking about the destination not about the mean of transport even though they were told to question the capitalised part of the sentence.

(50) *She had to go there by TRAIN.*

(51) *She went to Paris BY TRAIN.*

In sentence (52) the complex DP was replaced by a simpler one in (53) in order to avoid sentences questioning the name of the book.

(52) *Daniel wrote AN INTERESTING REVIEW OF OLIVER TWIST.*

(53) *Daniel wrote AN INTERESTING ARTICLE.*

The last sentence which was changed in this section was (54) which was replace by (55) for the same reasons as sentence in (48).

(54) *Steve complained all the time BECAUSE HE WAS TIRED.*

(55) *Steve complained all the time because of THE DELAY*

There were no changes which needed to be done in the last section of the questionnaire.

5.2.1.2.   Distribution of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was in an electronical form and I created a special website for this purpose. The link was sent to the native speakers of English who filled the questionnaire online. Most of the respondents were UK residents however there were participants from the USA or Australia too. I also asked a friend of mine to send the link to his co-workers who are older than 40 in order to have an equal number of responses from younger and older people.

5.2.2. Corpus research

5.2.2.1.   Presentation of the corpora used

The second part of the research was based on the data obtained from the spoken as well as the written sections of *The Corpus of Contemporary American English* and *The British National Corpus*.

"*The Corpus of Contemporary American English* (COCA) is the largest freely-available corpus of English, and the only large and balanced corpus of American English. … [it] contains more than 520 million words of text (20 million words each year 1990-2015) and it is equally divided among spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts."[1]

"*The British National Corpus* (BNC) is a 100 million word collection of samples of written and spoken language from a wide range of sources, designed to represent a wide cross-section of British English from the later part of the 20th

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[1] http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/

century, both spoken and written." The written part represents 90 % of the corpus and the written 10 % of BNC.[2]

There is a difference between the origins of spoken data of the two corpora. COCA's data are based on conversations from TV shows and radio programmes, while the transcriptions in BNC are those of informal conversations, formal business meetings and radio programmes.

5.2.2.2. *Collecting data*

When collecting the data from the corpora I was interested in the same constructions which were used in the questionnaire, therefore the queries were based on the ten sentences which contained either pronoun *who(ever)* or *whom(ever)*. I wanted to see which pronouns are preferred in various constructions. Three out of ten sentences had the same structure which resulted in seven constructions being examined. The used corpora differ in volume therefore it was necessary to get a relative frequency thus each number of tokens given as a result of the query was divided by a total number of words which were in the corpus. When the tokens occurred in COCA written corpus the number was divided by 424,397,289 when found in COCA spoken corpus, it was divided by 109,391,643. The tokens which occurred in BNC written corpus were divided by 86,299,736 and the tokens found in BNC spoken corpora were divided by 9,963,663. Before presenting the individual queries it is necessary to introduce the corpus query language for those who are not familiar with it.

Tag	CQL
Any noun	[nn*]
Any verb	[v*]
Any pronoun	[p*]
Any determiner	[d*]
Any article	[at*]
Any preposition	[i*]
Lexical verb	[vv*]

---

[2]http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml

Lemma be	[vb*]
Lemma do	[vd*]

Figure 11. Corpus Query Language

The first structure to be examined was the one in (56) and for this construction there were eight distinct queries for each of the pronouns *who, whom, that* as can be seen in Figure 12. There were two categories which could precede the pronouns, namely nouns or pronouns the two categories had to also follow the relative pronoun however a singular form of a countable noun has to be preceded by a determiner, therefore there were more than one query for a noun which followed the pronoun. Each of the queries was searched for four times, twice in COCA (spoken and written) and twice in BNC (spoken and written).

(56) *We feed children who/ whom/ that we think are hungry.*

[nn]who/ whom/ that [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [p*] [vv*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [p*] [vv*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
[p]who/ whom/ that [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*

Figure 12 Samples of queries

The next query was based on the sentence in (57). The pronoun had to be followed by *do,* a pronoun or a noun, which again had to be preceded by a determiner if being singular countable, a lexical verb had to follow the DP and then any verb followed. All of the queries started with a full stop in order to have an interrogative pronoun standing in the initial position not a relative in an embedded clause. Figure 13 shows the individual queries.

(57) *Who/ Whom did you say will be at the party?*

. who/ whom [vd] [p*] [vv*] [v*]*
. who/ whom [vd] [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*

. *who/ whom [vd*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*
. *who/ whom [vd*] [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*

Figure 13 Sample of queries

The set of queries which is shown in Figure 14 was based on the sentence (58). The pronoun *whoever/ whomever* had to be preceded by a lexical verb and followed by either pronoun or a noun which had three individual queries.

(58) *You can bring whoever/ whomever you like.*

[vv] whoever/ whomever [p*] [vv*]*
[vv] whoever/ whomever [nn*] [vv*]*
[vv] whoever/ whomever [at*] [nn*] [vv*]*
[vv] whoever/ whomever [d*] [nn*] [vv*]*

Figure 14 Sample of queries

Queries in Figure 15 were patterned on sentence in (59), so the free relative had to follow a preposition and had to be followed by a verb.

(59) *We sent a package to whoever needs it.*

[i*] whoever [v*]
[i*] whomever [v*]

Figure 15 Sample of queries

The next query which was based on the model sentence (60) was very short as there was only a choice between *who* and *whom*. The pronoun had to be preceded by any preposition and had to be in the final position in the sentence which is indicated by a full stop following it.

(60) *Mary showed something to someone, but I don't know exactly what to whom.*

[i*] whom .
[i*] who .

Figure 16 Sample of queries

The structure of sentence (61) is very similar to (56) however in (61) the pronoun which is following *whom* is followed by an auxiliary *be* and only after the auxiliary there is a lexical verb as can be seen in the Figure 17.

(61) *This is the person whom I am told is responsible.*

[nn] who/ whom/ that [p*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [p*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [at*] [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[p] who/ whom/ that [d*] [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [at*] [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [d*] [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*
[nn] who/ whom/ that [nn*] [vb*] [v*] [v*]*

Figure 17 Sample of queries

The last query was patterned on sentence (62) and it started with a full stop, so the pronoun together with a pied-piped preposition were in the initial position followed by a verb as you can see in Figure 18.

(62) *For whom did you buy these flowers?*
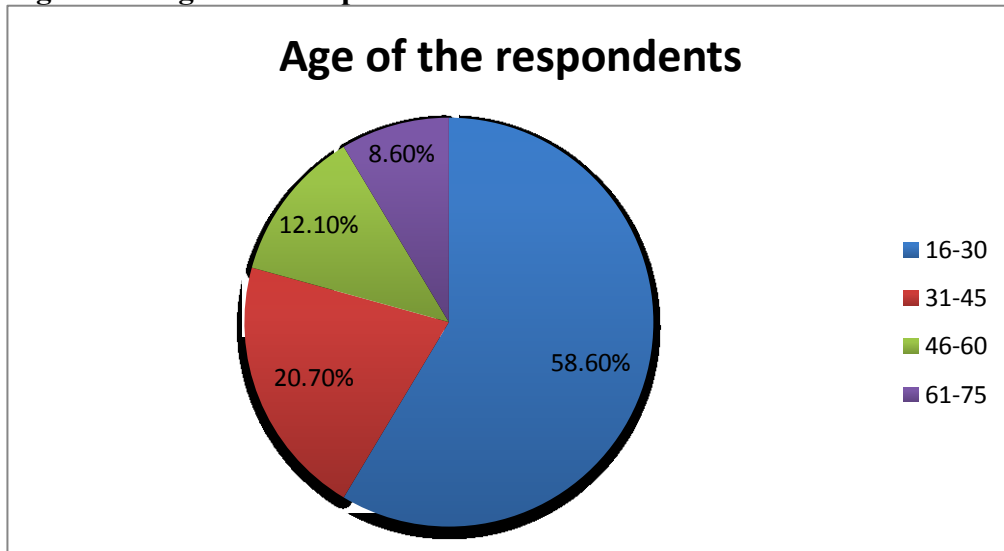
. [i*] whom [v*]
. [i*] who [v*]

Figure 18 Sample of queries

6.   Questionnaire results and data analysis

As I said in Chapter 5.2 the questionnaire was distributed among the native speakers of English, and was filled in by 58 respondents. In the Figure 19 you can see the age of respondents, all of them were between 16 and 75 years.

Figure 19. Age of the respondents

There was a slightly higher number of male informants, concretely 55.20 % were males and 44.80 % were females. Almost three quarters of the respondents were people with higher education, 24 % indicated that secondary is their highest completed level of education and one person has indicated primary education as their highest completed. In the Figure 20 you can see that a significant number of participants spent their life in North East of England.

Figure 20 Region where the respondents spent most of their life
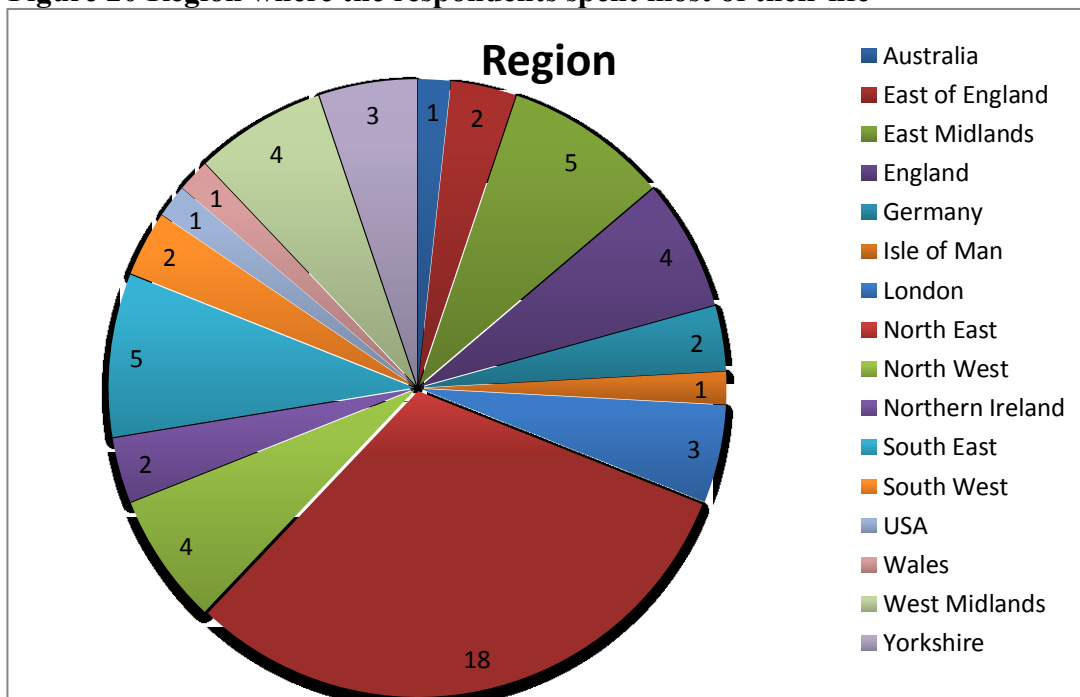
The first sentence which dealt with relative pronouns was the one in (63), there is a blank space where a relative should be because the participants were asked to choose a relative from the given options.

(63) *We feed children ___ we think are hungry.*

As can be seen in Figure 21 only five respondents chose *whom* as the relativiser they are most likely to use.

Pronoun	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Who	37	16	6
Whom	5	18	34
That	20	21	16

Figure 21. Results of *We feed children ___ we think are hungry.*

In this part of the questionnaire there was a sentence which had an identical structure as can be seen in (64) and the respondents had to follow the same instructions.

(64) *I met a man ___ I thought was a lunatic.*

Pronoun	Most likely	Likely	Least Likely
Who	37	19	2
Whom	7	12	39
That	19	25	14

Figure 22. Results of *I met a man ___ I thought was a lunatic.*

If we compare those two results we will see that the numbers are very similar and one could predict that people would use the same pronoun in both sentences but if we look at the answers separately, there are only three respondents who picked *whom* as the most likely option in both questions. Two of them were younger than 30 and one was older than 61. Individual responses also show that younger people avoid the personal relative and prefer the indeclinable *that,* six informants under 30 chose *that* in both sentences and 13 of them indicated *that* as the most likely option at least once. The older speakers, especially those aged 61 and more prefer the relative pronoun *who* as there were only three occurrences of *that* in their responses. In the third part of the questionnaire there was another sentence which has the same structure as (63) and (64) and the respondents were asked to choose a number of preference. Number one was least natural and number ten most natural. This sentence is shown in (65).

(65) *This is the person whom I am told is responsible.*

33 respondents indicated a number higher than five which can be classified as a slipper and 25 of them would find this a catcher. Seven of the informants who chose *whom* at least once in the previous sentences picked a number higher than five. 18 out of 25 who indicated this sentence as a catcher were aged 16-30 and more than a half chose the indeclinable pronoun *that* as the most likely option at least once in the two previous questions. However most of the respondents over 60 were among those 25 participants to whom the sentence (65) sounded unnatural. Therefore the acceptability is a matter of individual choice.

In the last section of the questionnaire there was a sentence which was not identical with the three sentences above but was similar as can be seen in (66).

(66) *People ask me to dinner, people whom I feel ought to hate me.*

If we compare the number of respondents who indicated the sentence in (65) as a catcher with the number of participants picking the sentence in (66) as a catcher we will see a significant increase as 41 respondents chose a number lower than five. Lasnik and Sobin (2000) classify the sentence (66) as a slipper but the results clearly show that this sentence is a catcher since less than one third of the speakers indicated a number higher than five. There was only one respondent who chose number ten and the 16 other participants chose six, seven or eight. It was expected that *whom* will be accepted by older participants but the respondents who indicated the sentence (66) as a slipper were mostly aged 16– 30 and 31– 45,only two participants aged 46– 60 picked a number higher than five.

There were two sentences which contained *whom* following a preposition. Both of the sentences were in the scale question part. The pronoun in the first sentence was in a final position as can be seen in the example (67) and the pronoun in the second section was in an initial position together with a pied-piped preposition as shown in (68).

(67) *Mary showed something to someone, but I don't know exactly what to whom.*

(68) *For whom did you buy these flowers?*

The results show that people are more likely to accept *whom* which is fronted together with the pied-piped preposition rather than *whom* which is in the final position following a preposition. One quarter of the respondents indicated the fronted *whom* as a catcher but the sentence with *whom* in the final position was indicated as a catcher by a half of the participants and among those there were 18 participants aged between 16 and 30 which is more than a half of all respondents of this age. The participants aged 31 and more seem to be accepting *whom* in the final position more than the younger respondents since a half of the participants in each group (31–45, 46–60, 61–75) indicated the sentence (67) as a catcher.

Regarding fronted *whom* there were 15 participants who chose a number lower than five however number one was not picked at all. The youngest group of participants found *whom* as part of the fronted element more natural than *whom* in sentence (67) because only nine out of 34 marked this sentence as less natural.

The group of respondents which found this construction most natural was the group 61– 75.

The sentence in (68) had a connection to Part Two of the questionnaire where the participants were given a clause and were asked to question the capitalised part. The first sentence was the one showed in the example (69).

(69) *She went to the theatre with HER BOYFRIEND.*

36 respondents used a construction with a preposition stranding and nominative *who.* Informants aged 46– 60 used *who* and a stranded preposition most often, it was used by three quarters of them, among other groups there were only halves of the numbers of participants who used *who* and a stranded preposition. Accusative *whom* with a preposition stranded was used by three participants who showed a frequent use of *whom* in other constructions, especially questions, two of the participants were younger than 30 and one was older than 60. The second most frequent construction used was *whom* with a pied-piped preposition, two informants out of six who used this construction used it all five sentences. Two used *whom* with a pied-piped preposition in two more sentences and two only once. There was one participant who was between 31 and 45 years but the rest was younger than 30. 13 responses could not be used for analysis because the informants did not question the capitalised part of the sentence. As expected nominative *who* is the most frequent pronoun used but when *whom* is used, it is used mostly by participants younger than 30, some of whom showed a frequent use of accusative *whom*.

The second sentence where the participants were asked to question an indirect object was the one in (70).

(70) *She bought a new phone for HER SISTER.*

Although questioning the indirect object, 31 participants chose the nominative form *who* and stranded the preposition. The results show the same number of occurrence of *whom* as in the previous question however *whom* together with a pied-piped preposition was found five times and *whom* with a preposition stranded four times. In the case of the former use of *whom* apart from the two participants mentioned earlier there was one participant who used the same

construction also when questioning the sentence in (73) and two who used nominative *who* and a stranded preposition in all others sentences. *Whom* together with a stranded preposition was used by the three participants who used it when questioning sentence (69) and one respondent who frequently used *whom* in questions. The results show that participants older than 60 are more likely to use *whom* when questioning a DP which follows the preposition *for* rather than DP which follows *with*. On the contrary participants younger than 30 are more likely to use nominative *who* and a stranded preposition in this case. This sentence can be also compared to (68) and it can be seen that the oldest group of participants not only shows the highest acceptability of *whom* following the preposition *for* but also shows active use of *whom* when the preposition *for* is present. 18 sentences could not be used for further analysis.

(71) *He got this present from HIS PARENTS.*

When questioning the capitalised part of (71) 24 participants decided to use *who* and a stranded preposition. Ten respondents transformed the sentence and questioned subject as shown in (72), six of the ten respondents did this transformation when questioning *you* in (73) too. This transformation was most common among participants aged 31– 45 and 16– 30.

(72) *Who gave/bought him the present?*

A pied-piped preposition *from* followed by *whom* was used by five informants, four of whom were younger than 30 and one was older than 60. There were three responses given by the youngest participants where *whom* was used in the initial position and the preposition *from* was stranded. Although the usage of *whom* was most frequent among younger participants, the majority of them decided to use *who* either with a stranded preposition or as subject. Participants older than 30 do not show almost any use of *whom* in this context. 14 of the responses were not analysed.

(73) *The obligation to finish the work lies on YOU.*

The sentence in (73) was penultimate in Part Two but the questions which the respondents gave as answers were most variable. However 17 of the responses had to be left out. Only one quarter (15) of all participants decided to use *who*

together with a stranded preposition. There were 11 informants who transformed the sentence as in the previous question and used subject *who* thus their answers were like (74). This transformation was most common among two younger groups of participants as the previous question but only six of them used it in both cases.

(74) *Who is obliged to finish the work?*

There was the highest number of occurrences of *whom* in the responses, concretely 12, *whom* following a pied-piped preposition was found nine times and *whom* with a stranded preposition three times. Groups of participants aged 31– 45 and 46– 60 did not show any use of *whom* in their responses but the oldest group on the other hand was most likely to use *whom* in questions and there was also relatively high number of participants aged 16– 30 who used *whom*. A possessive form *whose*, which was not listed as a possible question word, was used twice by informants who are 31– 45 years old.

(75) *They were fighting against THEIR ENEMIES.*

Sentence (75) was the last task where the respondents were asked to question the capitalised part. There was the lowest number of responses which had to be excluded, concretely 11. However there was also the highest number of *who* used, 42 respondents altogether. 35 of them used *who* and a stranded preposition and seven used *who* without a preposition. Three quarters of all informants aged 16– 30 and 31–45 decided to use *who* and so did more than a half of the two older groups. This task also showed the lowest usage of *whom* as there was only one occurrence of *whom* following a pied-piped preposition and four occurrences of *whom* and a stranded preposition. All these were used by the youngest participants.

(76) ___ *did you say would be at the party?*

The last use of an interrogative pronoun to be analysed here is shown in (76), this sentence was in Part One where the participants were asked to choose from the given options the one they are most likely to use and the one they are least likely to use.

Pronoun	Most Likely	Least Likely
Who	56	2
Whom	3	55

Figure 23. Results of ___ *did you say would be at the party?*

As can be seen in the Figure 23 only three participants would use *whom* as an interrogative pronoun, one of them chose both options as most likely. All three respondents were aged 16– 30 and two of them used *whom* in questions which they formulated in Part Two.

The questionnaire contained three sentences with a free relative pronoun. The sentence (77), which was in Part One of the questionnaire, had a similar structure to (78) therefore these two sentences are analysed together. The third sentence with a free relative pronoun was a part of the scale question section as (78) and will be discussed below.

(77) *You can bring ___ you like.*

(78) *The owner is free to choose whomever he likes to work for him.*

Pronoun	Most Likely	Least Likely
Whoever	50	8
Whomever	11	47

Figure 24. Results of *You can bring ___ you like.*

Figure 24 shows that eight informants would prefer *whomever* over *whoever* and that three respondents would choose both options. Nine of the participants who prefer *whomever* indicated the sentence (78) as a slipper and two chose a number lower than five. This sentence was classified as a slipper by 42 participants altogether. The high number of informants indicating *whomever* as more natural shows that people are more likely to accept an accusative form of a free relative *whomever* rather than an accusative form a of relative *whom*.

 (79) *We send the package to whoever needs it.*

Although the participants were more likely to accept the accusative free relative, the nominative form is still most natural. 44 respondents indicated the sentence (79) as a slipper and those who indicated it as a catcher did not choose a number

lower than three. We can see that even though a free relative follows a preposition and therefore it should be accusative checked within a normal case system people prefer nominative. The individual responses show interesting results as *whoever* following a preposition was found unnatural mostly by participants aged 31- 45 and 46- 60 and they did not show any use of *whom* at all. There were six informants aged 16- 30 among those who indicated the sentence (79) as a catcher and five of them used *whom* after a preposition which explains their choice.

In the hypothesis I stated that the older participants are expected to be using *whom* more often than the younger participants. The results show that the hypothesis was wrong, not completely but partially.

When the respondents were given options and they had to choose the most natural option the youngest group avoided the distinction between *who* and *whom* or by choosing the indeclinable pronoun *that*. This is reflected in acceptability of (80) because the participants aged 16- 30 found this sentence less natural than the rest of the respondents who did not show such a high tendency of using *that*.

(80) *This is the person whom I am told is responsible.*

When *whom* was used after a preposition in the final position a half of the participants 16- 30 did not find it natural however participants older than 31 did. This confirms the hypothesis however when *whom* was used together with a pied-piped preposition as an interrogative element in the initial position the acceptability had risen. Therefore it must be concluded that the acceptability varies depending on the position in the sentence.

Part Two brought interesting and unexpected results. As it was mentioned earlier, the use of *whom* by younger participants was expected to be low. The results deny the hypothesis as there were at least four respondents aged 16- 30 who used *whom* in each questions. *Whom* was used by participants older than 60 at least once in each sentence but the informants 31- 45 and 46- 60 a little use of interrogative *whom*. In Part One there was a sentence (81) and the respondents were asked to choose an interrogative pronoun, *whom* was picked only three times and each time by a person younger than 30.

(81) ___ *did you say would be at the party?*

It seems that the free relative pronoun *whomever* is likely to be used more than *whom*. It cannot be said if there is any difference of acceptability depending on the age because both the youngest and the oldest group of participants showed a relatively high acceptability/ use of the accusative form.

It was also stated in the hypothesis that the use of *whom* might depend on the level of education. Three quarters of the participants indicated that the highest completed level of education is University education. When looking at the responses given by those whose completed level of education is lower than University they do not use *whom* less often than participants who have completed University. Most of them were 16- 30 years old and there is a high probability that they are still studying.

7.   Corpus results and analysis

In this section I will present and analyse the data obtained from the corpora. As was said in the previous chapter written and spoken sections of Corpus of Contemporary American English and British National Corpus were used. There is a significant difference in number of results since COCA has a five times bigger database than BNC.

7.1. COCA

The first set of queries gave me 10 923 tokens altogether but the tokens which contained a pronoun *that* were not used for further analysis, there were also sentences which did not quite meet the criteria and had to be excluded. The final number was 616 tokens.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[nn] whom [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	14	$3,29^{-8}$	2	$1,82^{-8}$
[nn] who [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	38	$8,95^{-8}$	19	$17,3^{--8}$
[nn] whom [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	8	$1,88^{-8}$	3	$2,74^{-8}$
[nn] who [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	19	$4,47^{-8}$	7	$6,39^{-8}$
[nn] whom [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	1	$0,91^{-8}$
[nn] who [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	7	$1,64^{-8}$	4	$3,65^{-8}$
[nn] whom [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	78	$18,3^{-8}$	30	$27,4^{-8}$
[nn] who [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	109	$25,6^{-8}$	123	$11,2^{-7}$
[p] whom [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	5	$1,17^{-8}$	2	$1,82^{-8}$
[p] who [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	101	$23,7^{-8}$	35	$31,9^{-8}$
[p] whom [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	0	0	0	0
[p] who [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	0	0
[p] whom [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	0	0	0	0
[p] who [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	3	$2,74^{-8}$
[p] whom [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	0	0	0	0
[p] who [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	0	0	1	$0,91^{-8}$

Figure 25. Overview of the results in COCA

Figure 25 shows that the accusative form is most likely to occur after a noun and before a pronoun followed by a lexical verb and so is the nominative form. The pronoun *whom* tends to be used when the lexical verb expresses some action as in (82) whereas the pronoun *who* occurs mostly when the lexical verb following the personal pronoun is expressing state of mind such as *think, believe, etc.* as shown in (83). Of course it is possible to find *whom* preceding those verbs too and *who* preceding action verbs.

(82) *... Portuguese married couples **whom** I interviewed had worked as servants...* [COCA: 1992: ACAD: AnthropoIQ]

(83) *... I met this guy **who** I thought was absolutely adorable.* [COCA: 2011: MAG: Cosmopolitan]

When comparing the numbers of *whom* in written and in spoken corpora, it might seem at first glance that *whom* is much more used in written register. However, when taking into consideration its relevant frequency, it seems that the difference is not that big in some context *whom* is used more frequently in spoken register than in written.

The next set of queries was almost identical with the previous set however instead of a lexical verb in the penultimate position there was an auxiliary *be.* There were 25 tokens altogether and only two of them contained *whom* and were found in the written corpus. This set of queries will not be analysed because it does not provide enough data.

However, the set of queries where the pronouns followed a preposition showed 434 tokens. The number of tokens containing *whom* after a preposition was much higher both in written and spoken corpora as can be seen in Figure 26. The results confirm the hypothesis that *whom* after a preposition will be more frequent than *who.* The preposition *to* was the most frequent preposition preceding the pronoun *whom* in both corpora. The pronoun *who* was most often preceded by *with* as shown in (84). The relative frequencies show that there is not any significant difference between spoken and written corpora in terms of using *whom* after a preposition but there are significant differences between *who* and *whom* both in written and spoken corpora.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[i] whom .*	315	$7,45^{-7}$	74	$6,76^{-7}$
[i] who .*	30	$7,06^{-8}$	15	$1,37^{-7}$

Figure 26. Overview of the results in COCA

(84) *I know who's sleeping with **who**.* [COCA: 2012: FIC: TheatreForum]

The second set of queries which contained *who/whom* after a preposition provided 92 tokens. This time the pronoun was in the second position in the sentence following a pied-piped preposition as shown in (85). The results in Figure 27show that as in the previous case *whom* is used more often after a preposition and the preceding preposition is also the same. There is a difference between the prepositions which precede *who* most often, in the previous case it was *with* but in this case it is *to*. In terms of relative frequency there are no big differences between the use of pronouns in written and spoken language, the only difference is between *who* and *whom* in the spoken corpus which is even more significant than in the previous case when the pronoun was in the final position.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
. [i] whom [v*]*	59	$1,39^{-7}$	21	$1,91^{-7}$
. [i] who [v*]*	10	$2,35^{-8}$	2	$1,82^{-8}$

Figure 27. Overview of the results in COCA

(85) *To **whom** do we owe equality of esteem, dignity and respect?* [COCA: 2012: MAC_America)

Three queries out of eight where *who* and *whom* are interrogatives in the initial positions showed 126 tokens which are shown in Figure 28. As it was expected there was a higher number of *who* in the initial position. The construction with *whom* appeared only three times but these appearances were in spoken corpus not in written as I predicted. When *who* was used as an interrogative the lexical verb

which followed a personal pronoun was in 93 % *think* as in (86). This verb occurred in all three tokens beginning with *whom* as shown in (87).

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
. whom [vd] [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	0	0	3	$2,74^{-8}$
. who [vd] [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	48	$11,3^{-8}$	72	$65,8^{-8}$
. who [vd] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	2	$0,47^{-8}$	1	$0,91^{-8}$

Figure 28. Overview of the results in COCA

 (86) ***Who*** *do you think was a biggest loser tonight?* [COCA: 2015: SPOK: CNN]

(87) ***Whom*** *do you think is going to win?* [COCA: 1992: SPOK: ABC_Brinkley]

When searched for eight queries which contained a free relative *whoever* or *whomever* seven of the queries showed 160 tokens altogether. As it was expected there was a higher number of occurrences of *whomever* but only in the written corpora as can be seen in Figure 29. The relative frequency shows that *whoever* following a verb is used more often more often in spoken rather than written language and also it is used three times more often than *whomever* in the corpus of spoken English.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[vv] whomever [p*] [vv*]*	59	$13,9^{-8}$	13	$11,8^{-8}$
[vv] whoever [p*] [vv*]*	46	$11,5^{-8}$	34	$31,0^{-8}$
[vv] whomever [nn*] [vv*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	0	0
[vv] whoever [nn*] [vv*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	0	0
[vv] whomever [at*] [nn*] [vv*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	0	0
[vv] whoever [at*] [nn*] [vv*]*	0	0	2	$1,82^{-8}$
[vv] whomever [d*] [nn*] [vv*]*	1	$0,23^{-8}$	0	0

 Figure 29. Overview of the results in COCA

The results deny Quirk et al.'s (1985) claim about non-specific free relatives being restricted to occurrence only with volitional verbs *chose, like, please, want, wish* because only 74 % of the pronouns were followed by these verbs. 26 % were usually followed by a verb of action as in the example (88).

(88) *Try to get them interested, and ask* **whomever** *you speak with to help get the word out.* [COCA: 2015: MAG: Essence]

The last set of queries contained again free relative pronouns *whoever* and *whomever* this time following a preposition. This set provided the highest number of tokens, concretely 1120.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[i] whomever [v*]*	107	$25,2^{-8}$	30	$27,4^{-8}$
[i] whoever [v*]*	734	$1,72^{-6}$	249	$2,27^{-6}$

Figure 30. Overview of the results in COCA

(89) *Funds are granted to* **whomever** *is favored by the managers of PAC associations…* [COCA: 1994: MAG: WashMonth]

The most common preposition preceding *whoever* and *whomever* was *to* as in (89). It was expected that the more frequent pronoun following a preposition will be *whomever* since this free relative follows the same case assigning mechanism as *who/whom.* As can be seen in Figure 30 the number of *whoever* is seven (eight) times higher than the number of *whomever.* The relative frequency of *whoever* in the corpus of spoken English is twice higher than in the corpus of written English but the relative frequencies of *whomever* are almost the same.

The results confirm the hypothesis about *who* being more frequent in general and also about *whom* being used more often after a preposition. However, the first set of queries which was based on (90) showed that *who* is not always the pronoun which is most frequent as *whom* was found in some contexts more frequently.

(90) *We feed children whom we think are hungry.*

When the pronouns occurred after a preposition both in the final and initial position the accusative form was used eight times more often in the case of final and six times more often in the case of initial position. The relative frequencies show that *whom* in the final position is used more in the corpus of written English rather than in the corpus of spoken English. On the contrary *who* in the final position is more frequent in spoken language and when the relative frequencies of *who* and *whom* are compared within the corpus of spoken English the frequency of *whom* is five times higher. When we consider *who/whom* as a part of a fronted PP *whom* is again more frequent than *who*. The preposition *to* was the most frequent preposition preceding *whom* in both positions, this preposition preceded also *who* when it was in the final position in a sentence when *who* was a part of a fronted interrogative element the preposition which preceded most often was *with*. Another set of queries which focused on interrogatives contained an interrogative pronoun without a pied-piped preposition which was separated from the rest of the sentence by an embedded clause. In this case there were only three occurrences of *whom*, all three tokens were found in the corpus of spoken English.

 The results of the set of queries based on (91) show that the free relative *whomever* is more frequent in the written corpus and *whoever* in the spoken.

(91) *You can bring whomever you like.*

Quirk et al. (1985) claim that free relatives are restricted to occur only with volitional verbs *chose, like, please, want, wish* but the result deny this claim as a quarter of the free relatives was not followed by a volitional verb.

As it was mentioned earlier the result confirmed the hypothesis about *whom* being used more often after a preposition however, they disproved the hypothesis too because both *whom* and *whomever* were expected to be more frequent after a preposition. *Whom* was but *whomever* was not because *whoever* was much more frequent in written as well as in spoken corpora.

7.2. BNC

The first set of queries showed 1474 tokens altogether however 1315 tokens were excluded because they either did not meet the criteria or contained a pronoun *that*.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[nn] whom [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	3	$3{,}35^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] who [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$1{,}19^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] whom [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	4	$4{,}47^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] who [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$1{,}19^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] who [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$1{,}19^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] whom [d*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$1{,}19^{-8}$	0	0
[nn] who [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	58	$6{,}49^{-7}$	9	$9{,}03^{-7}$
[nn] whom [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	50	$5{,}59^{-7}$	1	$1{,}0^{-7}$
[p] whom [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	6	$6{,}71^{-8}$	1	$1{,}0^{-7}$
[p] who [p*] [vv*] [v*]*	10	$1{,}11^{-7}$	1	$1{,}0^{-7}$
[p] whom [at*] [nn*] [vv*] [v*]*	1	$1{,}19^{-8}$	0	0

Figure 31. Overview of the results in BNC

As can be seen from the results in Figure 31 *whom* is most likely to occur after a noun and before a pronoun followed by a lexical verb. The lexical verbs following pronouns are mostly verbs expressing state of mind as can be seen in (92) but action verbs occur in that position too as shown in (93). This occurrence is also most frequent in COCA and the relative frequency shows that *whom* is more common among British English speakers. However, there were some queries which did not give any results at all and as can be seen *whom* is found in a spoken register only twice whereas in COCA the occurrence is 19 times higher.

(92) *He consulted a few people **whom** he though were good tests of opinion.* [BNC: 1988: W_non_ac_polit_law_edu: Baldwin]

(93) *... the people **whom** he addresses might well regard the policeman as a rival lout.* [BNC: 1987: W_ac_polit_law_edu: Offences against public order]

A set of queries which was searched for next was almost identical with the previous one but instead of a lexical verb in the penultimate position there was an auxiliary *be.* This resulted in seven tokens in the written part of the corpus and

none in the spoken part. Since there were no data to compare the results with, the tokens will not be further analysed.

A set of queries containing a preposition preceding *who/whom* which was in the final position in the sentence, as can be seen in (94), showed 70 tokens in total. *Whom* occurred in 62 tokens and 61 of them were in the written corpus, *who* was found in eight and six of them appeared in the written corpus.

(94) *It did not matter, nor which chest of drawers belonged to* **whom**. [BNC:1991: W_fict_prose: All the sweet promises]

There were 11 tokens of *whom* as a part of a fronted PP as shown in (95) , ten of them occurred in the written corpora and one in the spoken. *Who* was less frequent than *whom* as there was only one occurrence in each register.

(95) *To* **whom** *is the word 'our' addressed?* [BNC: 1987: W_ac_polit_law_edu: The political economy of soil erosion in developing countries]

The next set of queries regarded the interrogative *who/whom* in the initial position but was separated from the clause by an embedded clause as in (96). There was no occurrence of *whom* in BNC and only eight sentences which contained *who,* therefore this set of queries will not be analysed.

(96) ***Who*** *do you think is looking after your baby?* [BNC: 1992: W_fict_prose: King Solomon's carpet]

When it was searched for the first set of queries containing a free relative pronoun 160 tokens were found in COCA but only 9 tokens in BNC, two tokens contained *whomever* and were found in the corpus of written English and seven contained *whoever*, five of them were found in the written corpus and two in the spoken corpus.

Unlike the previous the previous queries the next set showed 161 tokens in total. The results in Figure 32 show that *whoever* follows a preposition more often than *whomever* as would be expected. The same case can be observed in COCA. The relative frequencies of *whoever* in spoken and written corpora are almost the

same, *whomever* cannot be compared since it was used only in the written corpus of English.

Query	Written		Spoken	
	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency	Relevant tokens	Relative frequency
[i] whoever [v*]*	139	$1{,}55^{-6}$	16	$1{,}60^{-6}$
[i] whomever [v*]*	6	$6{,}71^{-8}$	0	0

Figure 32. Overview of results in BNC

BNC unfortunately does not provide as wide range of data as COCA does. The results confirm the hypothesis about *whom* being more frequent in the written corpus than in the spoken. Regarding *whom* after a case assigning preposition the hypothesis was also confirmed as there was a lower number of *who* in this context. Most tokens were gained when searching for free relative pronouns and the results as in COCA disprove the hypothesis about *whomever* being used more often after a preposition.

8.   Conclusion

As was outlined in the introduction the main focus of this thesis is on use of interrogative and relative pronouns *who(ever)* and *whom(ever)* by native speakers. It was also mentioned that there is a false general opinion that these pronouns follow the same case assigning mechanism as 3sg pronouns. This argument was disproved by discussing a diachronic view on this subject and demonstrating that the case morphology of these pronouns did not develop in the same way. The next chapter focuses on *who/whom* in present day English, mainly on the rules which explain occurrence of *whom* in the sentence (97).

(97) *He saw a man whom he thought was his biology teacher.*

Lasnik and Sobin (2000) introduce a concept of catchers and slippers this concept, which is explained in the same chapter, is important because it is operated with in the questionnaire research.

The research was based on two studies, the first being a questionnaire research and the second a corpus research. In the hypothesis I stated that a more frequent use of *whom* is expected from the older participants and that the occurrence of fronted *whom* will not be frequent. Both of the statements were partially disproved in general the use of *whom* by younger respondents was higher than expected. However, the first examined sentence of the questionnaire (98) confirmed the hypothesis because most of the participants aged 16- 30 decided to use the indeclinable pronoun *that.*

(98) *We feed children ___ we think are hungry.*

Whom in this context was the least preferred pronoun as it was expected, the same results were found in the two corpus studies. The most frequent relative pronoun was the indeclinable *that* which was excluded from the analyses and in general *who* was more frequent than *whom*, although in some context the accusative pronoun occurred more often than the nominative. It was also expected that *whom* will be less frequent in the spoken corpus which was not confirmed in general because the relative frequencies showed only little differences.

Interesting results showed PPs whose part was the accusative form *whom* as in (99). In the first case the PP was in the final position in a sentence and more than a half of participants younger than 31 classified the sentence as a catcher. When the PP was fronted the acceptability was higher not only among the youngest respondents but in general. The corpus research confirmed the hypothesis about *whom* being more frequent than *who* after a preposition not only in the written corpus but also in the spoken.

(99) *Mary showed something to someone but I don't know exactly what to whom.*

When an interrogative pronoun was separated from the rest of the sentence by an embedded clause as shown in (100) the occurrence of *whom* was very low however the participants who indicated *whom* as the most likely option were all younger than 31. COCA results prove that *whom* in this type of construction is very infrequent.

(100) ___ *did you say will go to the cinema with us?*

Part Two which focused on structures of interrogative sentences brought unexpected result and also disproved the hypothesis because the use of *whom* by younger participants in questions was more frequent than expected. It was also expected that *whom* will be used more not only by the oldest group of participants but also by a group 46- 60 or even 31- 45 however the two groups used interrogative *whom* very little. The results show that the preposition which is most likely to be fronted together with an interrogative element is *on* because nine of 58 participants used a construction with a pied-piped preposition while questioning the capitalised part of (101). The preposition which occurred most often in the initial position in the corpora was *to*.

(101) *The obligation to finish the work lies on YOU.*

Klima (1964) claims that the fronted *whom* can be found only in the most formal style if this was true then it would have to be concluded that at least four of the youngest respondents use what he calls elegant of literary English as their variant of everyday language. This is very improbable therefore his claim is not right in this case although if the sentence (100) proves this claim therefore it can be

concluded that when *whom* is an object of a preposition it is more likely to appear as a fronted element then *whom* which is an object of a verb.

The participants used the free relative *whomever* more often than the accusative *whom*. Even though *whomever* is more likely to be used still more than three quarters of the respondents preferred *whoever* in the sentence (102). This item did not show any difference in acceptability with respect to the age of the participants. The COCA results show that *whomever* which is an object of a verb is more frequent in the written corpus and *whoever* in the spoken. The sentence in (103) is one of 40 sentences which did not contain a volitional verb which according to Quirk at al. (1985) is the only type of verbs a free relative can occur with.

(102) *You can bring ___ you like.*

(103) *Try to get them interested, and ask whomever you speak with to help get the word out.* [COCA: 2015: MAG: Essence]

 (104) *We send the package to whoever needs it.*

Since the free relative pronouns follow the same case assigning mechanism as *who/whom* it was expected that there will be a high number of occurrences of *whomever* after a preposition. This expectation was not fulfilled as almost three quarters of participants indicated the sentence in (104) as a slipper and the corpus data also show that *whoever* is more likely to occur after a preposition both in written and spoken corpora.

In general the results show that *whom* whose case is licensed within a normal case checking system by a preposition or a verb is much more natural than *whom* whose case is checked by a grammatical virus. When considering free relative pronouns it seems that they are less likely to undergo a change of case even when they follow a case assigning item. This fact gives impetus to a further research which would focus on comparison of *who/whom* and *whoever/whomever* within the case assigning system.

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Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce pojednává o nesouladu pádových forem vztažných a tázacích zájmen *who(ever)* a *whom(ever)* mezi rodilými mluvčími angličtiny. Existuje mylné přesvědčení, že je těmto zájmenům připisován pád na základě stejného procesu jako zájmenům osobním. Hlavním cílem teoretické části je vyvrácení tohoto mýtu.

Nejprve byl definován střed zájmu této práce, tedy vztažná zájmena a typy vět, které tato zájmena uvozují, tázací zájmena a typy otázek. I přesto že angličtina patří k jazykům, které nemají bohatou pádovou morfologii, hraje pád stěžejní roli při rozlišování *who* a *whom*. Z tohoto důvodu je v poslední části první kapitoly je představen strukturní pád, v rámci něhož jsem se zaměřila na pravidla, na základě kterých je pád připisován, a také na disociaci mluvnických pádů a sémantických rolí.

Další kapitola, která se věnovala diachronnímu vývoji pádu výšeuvedených zájmen, měla za úkol poukázat na odlišnosti vývoje osobních zájmen a vztažných spolu s tázacími. Důraz byl kladen hlavně na vývoj vztažných a tázacích zájmen, která v době staré angličtiny měla rozlišné formy. V období střední angličtiny můžeme pozorovat synkretizmus těchto zájmen. Fenomén synkretizmu se objevil už ve staré angličtině a to hlavně u dativu osobních zájmen, který se nezachoval do dnešní doby.

Poslední kapitola teoretické části je zaměřena na zvláštní typ vedlejších vět, v nichž jsou použita neurčitá zájmena *whoever* a *whomever*. Tento typ se od ostatních liší tím, že je interpretován ne jako věta, ale jako fráze, která je modifikována vedlejší větou přívlastkovou jako v (105).

(105) a) *Whoever broke the window should pay for it.*

    b) *The person who broke the window should pay for it.*

Některé ze školních gramatik nezmiňují rozdíl mezi *who* a *whom*, další ano, avšak mnohdy jsou pro demonstraci problému použity příklady, které vedou k mylnému přesvědčení, že *whom* je používáno tam, kde se objevuje akuzativ osobních zájmen, zejména třetí osoby. Aby byl vyvrácen tento mýtus nejen z diachronního,

ale i ze synchronního pohledu, uvádím řadu příkladů, kde je akuzativ třetí osoby gramatickou formou, ale použití *whom*, které nese stejný pád, by vedlo ke gramaticky nesprávné konstrukci. Hlavním bodem zájmu je však diskuze pravidel, která objasňují použití *whom* v určitém kontextu, kde by podle preskripční gramatiky mělo být užito nominativu. Lasnik a Sobin (2000) uvádí koncepci „catcher" a „slipper", což jsou konstrukce, které rodilí mluvčí považují za přirozené, v případě „slipper", či nepřirozené, v případě „catcher". Tato koncepce je velmi důležitá pro empirickou část práce.

Praktická část se skládala z dotazníkového šetření a výzkumu provedeného v Korpusu současné americké angličtiny (COCA) a Britském národním korpusu (BNC). Hlavním cílem dotazníkového šetření bylo zjistit, zda existuje rozdíl v přijatelnosti *whom* mezi generacemi. Hypotéza byla taková, že mluvčí starší generace budou akceptovat a používat akuzativní formu více, než mluvčí mladší generace. Tato hypotéza však byla vyvrácena, jelikož respondenti mladší 31let byli těmi, kdo používal *whom* ve svých odpovědích nejčastěji. Při analýze jsem se také zaměřila na to, jak se liší akceptovatelnost *whom* po prepozicích s ohledem na místo, kde se nachází. Výsledky ukázaly, že pokud je *whom* spolu s prepozicí použito na začátku věty, taková konstrukce je přirozená pro rodilé mluvčí, avšak pokud se tato předložková fráze nachází na posledním místě ve větě jako v (106), míra akceptovatelnosti klesá.

(106) *Mary showed something to someone but I do not know what to whom.*

Výsledky korpusového výzkumu prokázaly správnost hypotézy, že akuzativ bude užíván po prepozicích častěji než nominativ. V rámci výzkumu jsem se také zaměřila na frekvenci těchto zájmen v mluveném a psaném korpusu a hypotéze jsem uvedla, že očekávám vyšší frekvenci *whom* v psaném korpusu než v mluveném. Tato hypotéza byla však vyvrácena, jelikož relativní frekvence neukázaly žádné signifikantní rozdíly mezi mluveným a psaným korpusem.

Nejzajímavějšími jednotkami obou výzkumů byla neurčitá zájmena *whoever* a *whomever*. Těmto zájmenům je připisován pád na základě stejného mechanizmu jako *who/whom*, proto jsem očekávala, že akuzativní forma bude preferovanější po prepozici, popřípadě po verbu. Výsledky z korpusů však ukazují pravý opak a respondenti, i přesto, že používají *whomever* častěji než *whom*, preferují

nominativ i po prepozici, což je opačná tendence než *who/whom*. Tento jev dává podnět k dalšímu bádání, které by se zaměřilo na srovnání konstrukcí s neurčitým zájmenem a konstrukcí se vztažným zájmenem v rámci pádu.

Apendix

BA Thesis Survey

I am a student of English Philology and I would like to ask you to fill this questionnaire which will be used as a source for my Bachelor's Thesis. The questionnaire is meant for native speakers of English ONLY. Please complete the sentences following instructions of each part. The aim of this questionnaire is not to test your knowledge of "correct grammar of English" but I ask you to choose/ write down an answer which sounds most natural to you, which you would say or can imagine someone else to say. The completion should not take more than 15 minutes.
Thank you,
Magdaléna Žaloudíková

*Required

Demographic Information

1. Age *
Mark only one oval.

0-15	◯
16-30	◯
31-45	◯
46-60	◯
60-75	◯
76-90	◯
More than 90	◯

2. Gender *
Mark only one oval.

Male	◯
Female	◯

3. Highest completed level of education *
Mark only one oval.

Primary	◯
Secondary	◯
University	◯

4. Region where you spent most of your life *

....

Part One

In this section you are asked to choose the option you are most likely to use, (likely to use) and least likely to use. Bear in mind that this is not a test of your grammar knowledge. That is why you should choose the option which sounds most/ least natural to you.

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO CHOOSE ONE OPTION MORE THAN ONCE!

5. He did not know ____ she would come, or not. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Whether			
If			
That			

6. In the picture, the person in the blue shorts is ____. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
Me		
I		

7. We feed children ____ we think are hungry. *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Who			
Whom			
That			

8. Did you not meet ____ there? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Nobody			
Somebody			
Anybody			

9. ____ did you say would be at the party? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
Who		
Whom		

10. Mary and _____ have decided to go home. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
Me	◯	◯
I	◯	◯

11. The book was written _____ a well-known author. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
With	◯	◯	◯
By	◯	◯	◯
For	◯	◯	◯

12. You can bring _____ you like. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
Whoever	◯	◯
Whomever	◯	◯

13. _____ and Mary have decided to go home. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
Me	◯	◯
I	◯	◯

14. I am glad to hear _____ he is fine. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Least Likely
X (No pronoun)	◯	◯
That	◯	◯

15. I met a man _____ I thought was a lunatic. *
Mark only one oval per row.

	Most Likely	Likely	Least Likely
Who	◯	◯	◯
Whom	◯	◯	◯
That	◯	◯	◯

16. My sisters looked like they were enjoying _____. *
Mark only one oval per row.

Most Likely Likely Least Likely

Herself
Themselves
Themself

Part Two

In this part you are asked to make the sentences into questions using one of the following words: What, Where, Why, Who, Whom, quetioning the CAPITALISED part of the sentences

Example. His sister likes SKIING
What does his sister like?

17. She went to the theatre with HER BOYFRIEND. *

…………………………………………………………………..

18. We were getting ready for OUR TRIP TO EDINBURGH. *

………………………………………………………………….

19. She could not go out with us because of HER BROTHER. *

………………………………………………………………….

20. She bought a new phone for HER SISTER. *

………………………………………………………………….

21. She had to go there by TRAIN. *

………………………………………………………………….

22. Daniel wrote AN INTERESTING ARTICLE. *

………………………………………………………………….

23. He got this present from HIS PARENTS. *

………………………………………………………………….

24. Steve complained all the time because of THE DELAY. *

………………………………………………………………….

25. The obligation to finish the work lies on YOU. *

………………………………………………………………….

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26. They were fighting against THEIR ENEMIES. *

……………………………………………………………………

Part Three

In the last part you are asked to choose a number from the scale depending on your own intuition. Number 1 stands for a very unnatural sentence, that is, sentence which you would not say/ imagine anyone saying. Number 10, on the other hand, can be given to a sentence which would sound very natural to you.

27. Mary not answered the phone yesterday. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

28. We send the package to whoever needs it. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

29. There is little difference between you and I struggling to count on fingers. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

30. Where do you think they went? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

31. Judith asked if anyone wanted an ice cream. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

32. Bill bought me something, but I do not know what. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

33. Mary showed something to someone, but I don't know exactly what to whom. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

34. The only person that I know about at the playhouse is John. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

35. His cousin does not thinks it is a good idea. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

36. This is the person whom I am told is responsible. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

37. What about did we talk? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

38. He gave the book back to his teacher. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

39. Jane was given flowers by Sam. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

40. The owner is free to choose whomever he likes to work for him. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

41. He made a complaint but I cannot remember which about. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

42. Nobody heard nothing about the new employee. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	⬭	Most Natural

43. People ask me to dinner, people whom I feel ought to hate me. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

44. For whom did you buy these flowers? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Least Natural	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Most Natural

Thank you.

This is the end of the questionnaire.
Thank you for your time!

Magdaléna Žaloudíková

Anotace

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Vedoucí diplomové práce: Jeffrey Keith Parrott, Ph.D.

Počet znaků: 111 079

Počet příloh: 2

Název práce: Mismatching of case on relative and interrogative pronouns *who(ever)* and *whom(ever)*

Název práce v češtině: Nesoulad pádových forem vztažných a tázacích zájmen *who(ever)* a *whom(ever)*

Klíčová slova: vztažná zájmena, tázací zájmena, mluvnický pád, morfologický pád, zájmena

Anotace: Bakalářská práce je zaměřena na nesoulad pádových forem vztažných a tázacích zájmen *who(ever)* a *whom(ever)* mezi rodilými mluvčími angličtiny. V teoretické části je představen úvod do problému, diachronní vývoj pádů těchto zájmen a take synrchonní pohled. Praktická část je založena na dvou studiích-dotazníkovém šetření a korpusovém výzkumu. Středem zájmu je používání zájmena *whom* generacemi mluvčích a take frekvence výskytu *who* a *whom* v mluveném a psaném korpuse.

Klíčová slova v angličtině: relative pronouns, interrogative pronouns, grammatical case, morphological case, pronouns

Anotace v angličtině: This thesis focuses on mismatching of case on relative and interrogative pronouns *who(ever)* and *whom(ever)* by native speakers of English. The theoretical part provides a general introduction into the subject of the research, a diachronic overview of case on the pronouns and a synchronic view on the problem. The empirical part is based on two studies- a questionnaire research and a corpus research. The main focus is on use of *whom* by different generations and frequency of *who* and *whom* in spoken and written corpora.