2.2 FIRST VS. THIRD PERSON

Personal Writing, such as for a reflective essay, or a "personal response" discussion posting, can be written in the first person (using "I" and "me"), and may use personal opinions and anecdotes as evidence for the point you are trying to make. All other Ashford papers (Exposition, Persuasion, and Research Papers) should generally be written in third person, and should use only credible academic sources to support your argument.

EXAMPLES OF FIRST AND THIRD PERSON WRITING

First person example (only acceptable for personal writing)

I think Shakespeare’s play *Hamlet* is about the relationships between family members. I really liked the play, and in some ways the characters reminded *me* of *my* own family.

Third person correction (appropriate for all other academic writing)

Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* deals with the relationships between family members. In *Examining Hamlet*, Arnold Latimer describes these relationships as "conflicted" (2005, pg. 327).

Explanation: In the second example, the pronouns "I" and "me" have been omitted, and academic sources are used as evidence.

First person example (only acceptable for personal writing)

The theory of learning that I relate to the most is Bandura’s social cognitive theory. This is the theory that you can learn to do things by observing others. I know this theory is true because I learned how to fix cars by watching *my* dad over many years.

Third person correction (appropriate for all other academic writing)

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory is based on the idea that people can acquire knowledge by observing others through social interaction. This theory was demonstrated through Bandura's "Bobo Doll" experiment (1961).

Explanation: In the second examples, the focus is on objective facts, rather than on what "I" think, and academic sources are used as evidence.