Anas Ashraf

Professor Thomas Collins

English 110 - D2

29 November 2018

For my poem, I believe my main barrier in communicating with the audience was attempting to convey the story effectively. It was quite difficult to be able to set up a premise, establish a character and the change he attempts to bring in his life. It was quite difficult to elucidate the state of being in a vegetative state but yet still being conscious of everything around you. I think I failed in the introduction of the course and it was not as effective as intended. The metaphors that I am making in the first quatrain do run the risk of the reader taking a metaphor as the literal analysis of the situation I am trying to convey. I still lack the ability to poetically explain a situation without being explicit about it and ruining any chances it had of varying interpretations. I overcame the barrier of having a bad opening to the octave by limiting myself to the same scenario in the second quatrain rather than having an entirely new situation introduced into the already convoluted poem. I believe it was done in a satisfactory manner where it kind of made up for the weak opening but the existence of the weak opening is not justified in and of itself and this shows my lack of skill in communicating to the audience in such a genre. My second genre which was the experimental eulogy fell apart when I attempted to realize the goal I had set out in my mind in communicating with my audience. I intended for the audience to be those who are interested in reading a random person being mourned, and the audience would probably be interested in seeing how another average person just like themselves would be remembered. I attempted to shock the audience by having them realize that they may as well be reading their own eulogy but the delivery near the end was done either too subtly to have any effect or with such bad execution that it had no effect and flew right over most readers heads. I contemplated being blunt about it and just saying “and that person being mourned is you the reader” but I quickly disregarded the idea as it sounds atrocious and would make anybody omit the eulogy from their memory out of pure contempt and spite of the terrible execution of an interesting idea. It was quite hard keeping the major parts of the story vague enough so that they apply to nobody in particular, but precise enough so that everybody can relate to it. I believe in the end I accomplished was a story that was verbose and useless and said more about the author than it did about the reader, the exact opposite of my intent.

Composing these two genres gave me more autonomy and promoted more academic risks than the research essay. It was much more rewarding in coming with a concept of your own and attempting to implement it by yourself, despite the result being objectively bad. This composition of two genres promoted more thinking outside the box and you did not necessarily concern yourself with the content but rather you focused more on the way you would present your content. Thus you had to consider the best avenues to approach the content you have in mind. Research essays are more predetermined and there is not much you can experiment with, as everything has a universal standard that you are supposed to abide by. With these genres I often found myself indulging in rhetorical techniques that were plainly and objectively inefficient in what would be ideal, but I chose to do those genres anyways because that is what I believed I would enjoy the challenge in. In exploring new grounds which I might have never previously considered before.

The two genres I chose were not because I believed they would best represent my argument but because I believed they were the most fun for me to do. It was trivial to me whether or not I accomplished anything with literary merit, as opposed to research papers. I chose the poem because I wanted to see if I had what it takes to restrict myself to a meter without catalexis and to use a rhyming scheme effectively while still focusing on the stress of the words in my syllabus and keeping the number of syllables same throughout the poem. I absolutely did not accomplish what I thought I would but it was a pleasant experience regardless. By choosing to work on a poem, I limited my audience to those who usually are not interested in euthanasia per se but are interested in death and suicide and thus by extension euthanasia. Thus I explored the topic of euthanasia not primarily through itself but through the bigger picture of our inevitable demise. This made me ponder death and the absurdity of life much deeply than I would if I were to write an op-ed for instance. For the eulogy, my reasoning behind why I chose it mirrors the reasoning behind why I chose to do a poem, simply because it amused me. The genre made me write for an audience with intent to make them ponder about their own life more critically rather than someone else’s. This is why I considered my eulogy to be more experimental rather than traditional.

The rhetorical techniques I found myself using in the poem was a lot of catalexis, volta, alternating rhyming schemes and organization of my ideas in three quatrains and a duet. I also saw myself using metaphors and quite extensively throughout the poem. For the eulogy, the most ubiquitous rhetorical technique by far has to be the irony. It is used extensively so the audience can pick it up in their second reading after being met with the twist at the end.