
Writer's Statement about "The Becoming of an Outsider: A Story of How the Molded Clay Was Shaped"

CHAD JONES

Originally, I did not have any idea as to what to write about for my final project. I had a starting idea, but realized that carrying it out would not only be difficult, but the topic would be very vague—and, in my opinion, uninteresting. For me, my writing process was very unique, it took a lot of thought and recollection—I was recalling memories I didn't even know existed. For me it was bittersweet. The simple question that I was responding to was, "How did the way you speak today come about?" I looked at this prompt from a holistic approach, and that's when the timeline started!

Towards the beginning of this assignment, even though I had a concept of what I wanted to write about, I had some difficulty articulating it. With this difficulty came me seeking out Dr. Kareem's advice for better perspective. In class, Dr. Kareem told us that this discourse autobiography wouldn't be hard, but it would be meticulous, and she was right! The purpose in doing so, from what I understood, was to express the ways that our distinct linguistic styles and discourse(s) came to be. The objective behind doing so was to show our professor, as well as others, how the cultivation of our different languages provided us with a culmination of selective language patterns that we used in our present-day conversations and continuations in life.

Overall, the difficulty in this assignment came from having to recall so heavily my life events. I say my life events, because these are what shaped me; as someone who is very adaptable, I always used language as an avenue to fit in and blend (as further explained in my paper). It took patience; patience was the way I overcame these struggles. It was a simple waiting game—allowing my thoughts and memories to come forward as they pleased was all it took to carefully piece together this mosaic on my history. For the critiques, I learned to appreciate and accept them; at first, my paper was written in a vague manner (partly because I didn't know how to explain myself and partly because I didn't feel comfortable doing so), but I decided to take the advice of others and further explain exactly what I meant. In doing this, I was able to piece together a better narrative that showed people a clear image of Chad Jones. In taking these critiques, I shifted my target audience as well. At first, I was willing to be heard by anyone who ventured to read my paper, but that changed when I realized that my paper was hard to comprehend because of its vagueness. This caused me to change my audience from anyone, to my professor specifically. I wanted to make sure that my paper was cohesive and interesting enough for her to have a good read while grading it, but I also wanted to ensure that I did well on the assignment.

In closing, the intention of this piece was to offer another perspective on language that I feel is underrepresented and left unheard. I wanted to use this piece to serve as another voice that says, "me too." Because I feel that the representation and understanding of minorities, specifically Black Americans, is not really considered and looked at as a genuine issue, I ventured to use this assignment to explain why—why some black people use language patterns the way they do, and why these patterns alternate based on situational contexts. If I had to do this project again, I would only change the word count limit; in doing this I would have more time, freedom, and space to create more of my story that delves deeper to explain how I came to be. In extending the word count, I would also be able to include more voices and perspectives that would give readers more holistic and interesting views on discourse.