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Funderburk

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Journal #2: Literacy Reflection

My earliest literacy memory is my grandparents reading books to me at a young age. Some of the first books I remember being read to me include *The Three Little Pigs*, *Pete the Cat and His Four Groovy Buttons*, and *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* My grandparents and parents would read these books to me repeatedly until I could understand what they were saying and the meaning behind the pictures illustrated. I vividly remember *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* This was my favorite book, so as soon as I could read on my own, I memorized all the words on every page and would constantly recite it. I was able to read when I was in kindergarten with a very basic understanding of the words. English is my first and only language I learned how to speak and read, other than a few words in Spanish I learned in my freshman year of high school.

My background has shaped the way I use language in many ways. I was born in Nazareth, Pennsylvania and recently moved to South Carolina; in the little time I have been here, I have noticed a lot of different words and phrases people use depending on where they are from. For example, I would call a soft drink, “soda” but I have heard many people from the south refer to it as “coke” even if it's not an actual Coca-Cola. Another one I have noticed is generally with

older people in the south, calling sneakers “tennis shoes” even if they are for everyday style or running shoes.

Some breakthroughs teachers have taught me in school that helped me as a kid were sounding out words I was unsure of, clapping out syllables, pointing at words as I read them to help follow along, and making connections between words with similar spellings/appearances. Most of these techniques I learned in elementary school, and they helped comprehend words so I can read and write at the level I do now. The most useful tool for me was finger pointing what I was reading to make sure I didn’t lose my spot.

I think language is intertwined with personal identity, expression, and society. For me music is a big part of my life. I listen to music all the time and hear how singers express themselves through lyrics. Diving into the history of music shows how language, racial, political, etc. barriers have been broken. Language is connected to personal identity because without it people wouldn’t be able to communicate basic needs, feelings, and ideas with each other. Which then relates to society. I don’t think society would be able to function nearly as smoothly it does not without being able to communicate.