



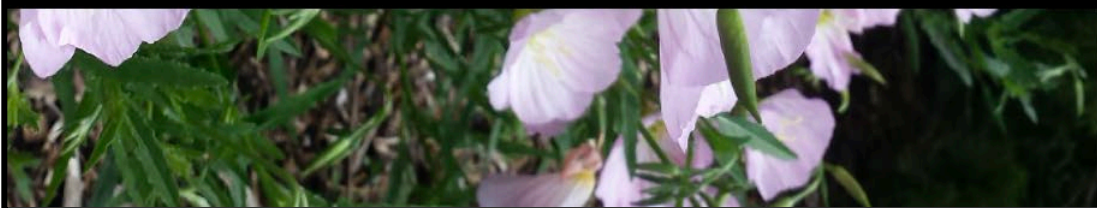
Southwest Baptist
UNIVERSITY

SCOP

Spring 2021



Vol. 48



A Literary Journal of the Department of Language and Literature

Southwest Baptist University

Bolivar, MO

Works by Students of Southwest Baptist University

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Sometimes I'll Start a Sentence, y No Sé a Dónde Va. — by Anna Saffels

Traditionally, the United States has held a reputation for being a melting pot of the global community and a vast array of cultures. Appropriately, the English language itself is a melting pot of other languages. Among those influential languages resides Spanish. Encounters with the Spanish language are largely unavoidable in the United States. As of 2009, Spanish was the second most spoken language in the United States, and the United States is projected to house the largest population of Spanish speakers in the world by the year 2050 (Lozano). Already, the Latino community is the largest minority group in the nation (Rothman 515). Hispanic culture is spreading throughout the States and creating hybrid Hispanic-American cultures. Culture and language are intrinsically bound, so it is unavoidable that this culture shift impacts language. Spanish influence on the English language dates back as far as the sixteenth century and the industrial dealings of Spain with the United States (González). Since then, each language has borrowed features from the other, including vocabulary, phonology, morphology, and the like. The collision of Hispanic and American culture and the sharing of language have borne a hybrid code: Spanglish.

The term "Spanglish" is controversial within linguistic communities as well as Hispanic-American communities. While some celebrate the word for the way that it captures the hybrid language and culture, others find it illegitimate and offensive to the Hispanic community. With recognition that

“Spanglish” is not an official linguistic term, it is helpful in referring to the hybrid or mixed code of English and Spanish. This paper will defend Spanglish as a legitimate variety and dialect of the English language due to its combinative use of English and Spanish, application of linguistic rules in practice, and increasing use in literature, pop culture, and everyday communication. The term *variety* has a very broad application including “any distinct form of a language” (Seargeant 13). The term *dialect* may be a more appropriate category for Spanglish; a dialect “refers specifically to a language variety in which aspects of the vocabulary and grammar indicate a person’s regional or social background” (13). Spanglish as a dialect of English gives great indication to the Hispanic background of the speakers.

For the sake of this paper, the casual language crossing between English and Spanish that manifests in one-word borrowings on rare occasions will not be examined. Rather, the code-switching being addressed is more immersive and involves consistent and habitual crossover. That being said, Spanglish exists on a continuum sometimes operating with a superstrate of Spanish with English influence while other times operating with a superstrate of English with Spanish influence. Determining factors for where one falls on this continuum can range anywhere from formal language learning to home language to dialect region to coherence level of either language. It can be simply a matter of preference as well. Peter Sayer states, “the function of a vernacular is to allow its users to express their

group affiliation. In this sense, Spanglish can be seen as the vernacular of bilingual Latinos in the Southwest and throughout the United States. Expressions of ethnic identity and group affinity and solidarity are the *sociopragmatic functions of code-mixing*" (100). Those who speak Spanglish may use the language intentionally or unintentionally; either way, there is a social affiliation that comes with the use of the language.

Spanish spoken by Latinos is littered with English borrowings, where English words or phrases are adapted to Spanish (Casielles-Suárez). Some of these borrowings are characterized by code-switching— mixing the languages at the sentence or phrase level. However, as Casielles-Suárez claims, "The term code-mixing, on the other hand, seems more appropriate for those cases where rather than switching from one language to another at a sentence or a phrase level, bilingual speakers mix two or more languages inside a phrase, as in:

Estos giant porteño mosquitos are trying to bite my hyper-sensitive cuerpo here en el comedor where I write." (152).

When the languages become so intertwined as this, it is hard to determine what is the main language being spoken. Such code-mixing creates a basis for the need to distinguish a new hybrid from the two individual languages. There is no arguing that borrowing and loanwords can be traded between English and Spanish while the languages remain separate. However, code-mixing that merges the languages, as Spanglish does, blurs the lines

between the languages. Therefore, Spanglish must be viewed as a heterogenous hybrid of Spanish and English.

Defining Spanglish stirs up the ambiguity surrounding its classification. Beyond the mixing of English and Spanish lexicons, this hybrid has structure including the adaptation of lexical elements on a morphological, phonological, and semantic level as well as code-switching involving syntax (Rothman 520). A poem by Daniel Enrique Pérez titled *Ode to Spanglish* illustrates the use of Spanglish in literature and within the first line, exemplifies phonological adaptation. It begins, "I don't *espeak* your language" (Pérez 187). The translation of the inflected English verb *I speak* into Spanish is *(yo) hablo*. There is no word *espeak* in either English or Spanish; rather *espeak* is a phonological adaptation. Pérez took the English *speak* and wrote it using the phonological rules of Spanish.

Sayer gives an example of one type of constraint that bilinguals practice when code-switching. Based on his own research, Sayer claims that a Spanglish speaker would be expected to produce a sentence similar to (1a), but never a sentence like (1b).

1a) *Ya no tengo **the key***. (Now I don't have the key.)

(1b) **Ya no **I have the key***. (98)

Casielles-Suárez says, "although there are different perspectives on how to analyze code-switching and code-mixing and numerous debates about the best way to describe the grammar or grammars involved, all linguistic

analyses of these phenomena have concluded that the mixture is not random, but in fact is rule-governed and systematic” (153). Spanglish has its own vocabulary, grammar, and rules giving this hybrid code an identity of its own.

Spanglish is not limited to codeswitching between those who speak both English and Spanish fluently. To some raised in Hispanic-American homes, Spanglish was the language taught in the home— it is the mother tongue. In some of these cases, full proficiency in either English or Spanish is never reached, creating a unique environment for a hybrid code. It is within these communities that Spanglish becomes a unique tool. It is because of Spanglish’s “rule-governed and systematic” structure that it is able to stand as a mother tongue without a speaker needing to be proficient in either English or Spanish. This is further evidence that Spanglish is a legitimate variety of the English language; a mock language or use of a casual loanword does not have the strength to stand as Spanglish does.

Younger generations of Hispanic-Americans are more likely to speak Spanglish than their elders. In John Lipski and Ana Roca’s *Spanish in the United States: Linguistic Contact and Diversity*, the authors conclude that, “most studies report greater use of Spanish for first-generation speakers, use that gradually decreases with successive generations of individuals, and in some cases, as early as in second-generation families” (47). Younger generations are mixed into a culture that is primarily English-speaking while

receiving English or bilingual educations leading to an adoption of English. Often, the use of the home language, Spanish, is limited only to the home or amongst limited communities. In order to comfortably live on the border of these two cultures, many Hispanic-Americans speak Spanglish with one another, a sign of the mixing cultures.

As the Hispanic-American population grows in America, Spanglish is rooting itself in literature and other cultural works. Spanglish is appearing in published literature, television, music, news, advertisements, and social media (Casielles-Suárez 157). Artists like Shakira and Enrique Iglesias are producing songs in Spanglish that are reaching global stages. Books are published exclusively in Spanglish with no in-text translations. Some works are so heterogenous that there is no main language (158). Lipski refers to the U.S. Mexico border in the following quote, but his remark can be true pertaining to much of the Hispanic-American community today: "...the U. S.-Mexico border is a unique southwestern setting, where neither English nor Spanish completely prevails in the minds or the daily lives of its residents" (51). English and Spanish are cohabiters of the younger generation of Hispanic-Americans. As a response, the Hispanic-American communities are embracing Spanglish and using it proudly on a national and even global stage.

The United States has seen a significant rise in the Hispanic-American population in recent decades. With this influx of Hispanic culture, younger

generations are finding themselves not solely belonging in one culture or the other. As American and Hispanic culture have mixed so have the languages. Spanglish is a heterogenous hybrid of English and Spanish with its own distinguishable rules and structure. Spanglish is more than a mock language or causal language crossing through a few borrowed words— it is an institution of language that belongs to a specific hybrid culture found in the United States. It is for these reasons that Spanglish should be considered not only a variety of English but a dialect of the English language.

Daniel Enrique Pérez's *Ode to Spanglish*, which was referred to above, illustrates not only the composition of Spanglish but the attitude of those who claim it as their own. A portion of his work reads:

Original:

English Translation:

Mi jefe

My father

Raised me

Raised me

To be orgulloso

To be proud

De mi cultura.

Of my culture

Mi jefa

My mother

Me enseñó

Taught me

How to speak

How to speak

Proper Spanglish

Proper Spanglish

I know lo que soy.

I know what I am.

Cuando hablo

When I speak

With mi gente

With my people

In our native tongue

In our native tongue

I feel like I'm en casa... (189)

I feel like I'm at home...

The United States celebrates its reputation as a diverse land. By adopting Spanglish as a dialect of the English language the hybrid code of this country's largest minority can achieve validity which is a great step towards acceptance of diversity. The Hispanic-American population will continue to grow, influencing and shaping American culture. Legitimizing the Spanglish dialect is a step towards proudly embracing the Hispanic-American population in the United States.

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The Infinite Road to Literacy — by Ana Brezindine

My journey with reading began before I was born. While my mom was pregnant, my dad read aloud *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien, Leo Tolstoy's *What Men Live By*, and *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis in hopes that I could hear him. As far-fetched as it seems, I believe that his decision has had a lasting impact on me to this day. My mom enjoys telling the story that soon after I was born, I cried out in distress and refused to stop until I was in my dad's arms and he spoke to me. As soon as I heard his voice, I became calm. His choice to introduce me to the concept of reading at such a young age may be a large part of why I decided to pursue a degree in English. My evident love of literature and writing can be attributed to the impact my family and teachers had on me as a child.

My exposure to literature did not end abruptly after my birth. In fact, it continued steadily. When I began grade school, my dad began reading a chapter of C.S. Lewis' Narnia series aloud as I ate breakfast. Starting with *The Magician's Nephew*, we progressed all the way to the *Last Battle* before I finished elementary school. I have vivid memories of being entranced by the magical tale as I gulped down a glass of milk each morning. My least favorite days were when we had to stop at an integral part of the story. The abrupt endings seemed to happen more often than not, and looking back, I suspect my dad did that intentionally. The cliff hangers certainly kept my attention and fashioned me into an eager reader. He was not the only one

who helped mold me into the bookworm that I am today. My mom also played a pivotal role when it came to my introduction to independent reading. Before I started grade school, she bought me a set of Scholastic books called *BOB Books* for beginning readers. I can clearly remember the frustration I had looking at the simple and repetitive sentences such as "Mat sat" and "Sam sat." There was nothing more boring to me on the entire planet than those books. After being exposed to C.S. Lewis, I can understand my lack of appreciation for *BOB Books*. My poor mother patiently walked me through reading these books by myself. She claims that I learned how to read them all in a single day. I clearly remember the night that I read my very first book by myself. Alone in my room, I pulled my copy of *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss off my bookshelf. On my bed, I sat and read aloud every single word. After I completed the book, I excitedly ran into my parent's bedroom shouting that I could read all by myself. I must have read *Green Eggs and Ham* to them enough times that I doubt they would want to hear it to this day. Both of my parents poured so much into me when it came to teaching me how to read. I credit my dad with helping expose me to notable works of literature at such a young age. My mom, the teacher, diligently worked with me through tears and stubbornness to see me become an independent reader.

Reading was not the only topic that my family considered important for me to learn, as there was equal stress on the importance of writing.

While I attended preschool, my afternoons were spent with my Mema and Papa until my parents finished work. While toys were always the priority, my Mema also made sure to supply me with workbooks to help me with my handwriting. I remember her patiently helping me fill out pages in my workbook that encouraged me to work on my penmanship and spelling. I believe that her decision to do this is a large part of why I did not struggle with writing while so many other students did. She had the most beautiful penmanship, and I have kept papers with her writing on them to remember her by. As I continued my education, I remember my teachers mentioning communication arts as my strength to my parents. The first time I felt like I could excel at a school subject occurred in my third grade classroom. My teacher would set aside time each day of the week for the students to write a creative story. On Monday, our class would receive a topic and would brainstorm. The rest of the weekdays would have designated time for writing and editing until we turned in our final copies on Friday. I specifically remember feeling very overworked as I would end up writing almost double the number of pages compared to my peers. However, every Friday that I turned in my story, my teacher would read it and praise me for how well I had done. I even remember her giving me candy as a reward. After the rewarding process occurred a few times, I realized that writing was something I truly enjoyed about school. As the year came to a close, we had a third-grade graduation ceremony. The ceremony included the awarding of

a superlative that our classmates voted on. I remember desperately wanting to win the "Best Smile" award. Contrary to my wishes, I received the award for "Best Oral Reader." I was devastated. Looking back on this is quite humorous, and I can now appreciate the award as an aspiring English teacher. The support I received from my family members and teachers while growing up has encouraged me to continue to pursue opportunities to read and write.

Reflecting on the literature that I was exposed to as a child is incredibly fascinating as it seems to have impacted the kinds of books I enjoy today. My dad read so many stories to me that involved fictional worlds with epic battles between the powerful forces of good and evil. My favorite example of this is seen within the series *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, which my dad introduced to me at a questionably young age. Throughout middle school, I fell in love with the magical and battle-filled *Percy Jackson* series by Rick Riordan and the dystopian trilogy *The Hunger Games* by Suzanne Collins. As I have moved on, for the most part, from young adult literature, I find myself loving memoirs that focus on overcoming adversity, dystopian literature, and historical fiction that focuses on triumph over evil. Reflecting upon this, I find it fascinating that almost every book or series that I have loved growing up can be connected back to the theme of good versus evil. I believe this can be due to the books my dad chose to read to me during my early adolescence. One of the reasons my

dad read Narnia to me was to help me begin to see the joy and wonder that Lewis portrayed through his allegorical characters. Even at such a young age, I understood that Aslan was a representation of Jesus. When I read now as an adult, I still look for Biblical allegories or religious meanings within texts. I am so thankful my dad instilled this trait in me as a reader, as I believe he made it much easier for me to understand literary terms such as allegory and symbolism when I studied them in school.

I believe that my passion for English is derived from the way my teachers and family members encouraged me as a child. The decisions they made aided me in growing as both a reader and writer. It is fascinating to see how my interests and strengths have been heavily influenced by my exposure to literature at a young age. I am so grateful to have parents who understood the importance of language arts, and I owe a lot of my success as an English major to my patient and diligent parents.

"Tell me again how to suffer properly" – by Taylor Brown

Tell me again how to suffer properly.

Tell me how it is you feel closest to God

In the moments when your mind is

farthest from your own.

As for me,

I will tell you

I feel religion

When the afternoon sun

shines on my face after months

tucked away.

I feel religion

when my ribs ache,

and my eyes water,

after a hard and breathless laugh.

There is nothing heavenly

Or holy

about suffering
for the sake of suffering.

Holiness is in my best friend's callused hands
waving wildly through the air
as she tells me a story.

Holiness sleeps next to me
as I dream of spring and summer and fall
and all that could be.

She slumbers,
and I fear not her return to me.

For religion is less about God,
and more about those
who cower beneath him.

I have mistaken cowardice
for obedience
for far too long.

So at last

I feel religion in the marrow of my bones as

I wrap my arms around my own body, a place of worship.

And a slave I am

no longer.

Bonfire — by Josey Murphy

I watched in silence as the wild flames licked at the indigo abyss above, clashing with the ivory stars. The community bonfire crackled angrily in front of me, but despite the noise, I tried to listen to the people around me. A young couple on my left discussed leaving the celebration early; a group of friends to my right talked about their plans for trick-or-treating; a man across the fire spoke about his hatred for the late October heat. The entire town was in attendance around the bonfire, but still, nobody tried to talk to me. Nobody even looked at me.

My loneliness eventually became too much to bear; I started searching for someone who would acknowledge me, but the only being to look in my direction was a gray tabby, staring with glassy, golden eyes. Even then, when I reached out to pet the cat, it backed away from my hand before scurrying off into the crowd. No, this wasn't fair! I wasn't there to be shunned or ignored. The All Hallows' Eve bonfire at the cemetery was my one chance to talk to the townsfolk, and I didn't want to waste it.

After considering who to approach, I slowly inched my way towards a cluster of isolated teenagers, standing far from the fire. They appeared to be around my age -- seventeen, maybe eighteen. However, despite there being only four of them, I soon realized that they were intimidating nonetheless. Having been under the cover of midnight, their true appearances eluded me

until it was too late. The two boys were giants, boasting broad shoulders and muscular body frames. Goliath himself wouldn't have stood a chance against them. The girls by their sides nearly matched them in height, but what they lacked in muscle, they made up for in grim appearances. The females' hands were clawed and grotesque from their long, acrylic nails; their pale makeup was ghastly in the faint flickering of the firelight, their eyeshadow causing their dark eyes to sink deeper into their sockets. Their faces frightened me more than those who came to the bonfire in plastic monster masks. I was hesitant to go any closer, but my determination to talk to someone outweighed my fear.

The nearer I walked, however, the more I began to notice the peculiar way in which they were standing. Two of the teenagers were shoulder to shoulder, keeping watch over the grounds with suspicious eyes. The others were crouched behind them, fiddling with something in the grass.

Curious, I avoided the eyes of the watchkeepers and moved around to see what was happening. Like everyone else at the bonfire, they paid no attention to me. Once I had a clear view of the two crouching teens, I watched in appalled horror as they chipped away at a gravestone, pushing and kicking at the aged concrete until it crumbled.

What?! No! I thought with a gasp, my eyes widening, *They can't do that! It's disrespectful!*

"H-hey!" I cried loudly, stunned by their heinous act, "Don't break those!" I rushed towards the vandals as they shuffled over to the next tombstone. I reached out and snatched at their wrists before they could touch it, but my hands passed through them like water.

"No, no, *no!*" I couldn't stop them. I could only watch as another headstone tumbled with a muffled thud.

Desperately, I sprinted from person to person at the bonfire, shouting at each of them, "Does anybody see what they're doing?!" If I couldn't do anything, then maybe someone else could.

Nobody listened to me, though. No heads turned to look as I screamed in their faces; no one seemed to notice me or the vandals. My frustration climbed by the second, only to give way to sorrow. Why were the living so ignorant?!

Surrounded by a somber air, I eventually dragged myself back to the first destroyed gravestone and knelt beside it, feeling a heavy weight on my shoulders. The smashed bits of stone were awfully familiar to me --and I knew exactly why. My eyes swept over the broken pieces until I found what I was searching for. In weathered letters, one chunk of aged stone read:
Avery White.

My name.

The shrill ringing of a silver bell interrupted my sadness, signaling the end of the bonfire. As if in response, the street lights flickered back to life

alongside the road, and the houses of Northridge lit up in the distance as those who stayed home switched their lights back on. Keeping the town dark was a part of the tradition.

My attention quickly switched to the water bearer -- a stocky man with thinning hair and a graying beard. Ceremoniously, he lifted a large bucket of water in his mighty hands, and in a single motion, he extinguished the flames of the All Hallows' Eve fire.

In huddled masses, the townspeople began to trudge out of the cemetery, returning home.

"No, wait!" I called out in a choked voice to those departing, my eyes threatening to shed tears. I hadn't been able to socialize with anyone! I didn't even find anybody who could see me...

Too late. I was abandoned, unable to leave with the other residents of Northridge.

With a frown, I glimpsed around at the empty graveyard with misty eyes, and I couldn't help but notice all the *garbage* left behind. Soda cans, candy wrappers, plastic bottles -- they all littered the grass. The bonfire tradition was supposed to honor the dead, but I guess that sentiment faded long ago.

My shoulders slumped in dismay, and I hung my head, disappointed by the night I had suffered through.

As I looked to the ground, thinking I was alone, I was surprised to see a small creature staring back at me. The tabby cat! With big, saucer-like eyes, it studied me up and down and waited patiently for... something.

It took me a while to move. Cautiously, I crouched down and held out my hand towards the animal. When it didn't budge, I took the opportunity to reach out and touch its pelt. It didn't flinch; it didn't move away. My fingers passed through the cat's hide, but it didn't seem to mind. In fact, it began to purr. With a soft smile forming on my lips, I continued petting the tabby the best I could.

However, I was soon interrupted as someone came searching for their pet.

"Ashes!" a feminine voice called. A figure stepped from the darkness, barely illuminated by the waning moon.

The tabby --Ashes-- swiftly left me as it heard its owner's shout.

I shifted my eyes to the woman as she lifted the cat in her arms. She turned away.

A disappointed sigh escaped my lips, and my smile left again. I twisted around, and with a heavy heart, I began to walk towards the gravestones.

"Say, it's pretty late. Do you need a ride home, miss?"

I froze. Slowly, I looked over my shoulder.

The lady was staring directly at me, waiting for a response.

Perplexed, I allowed my gaze to sweep across my surroundings. There was no one else. It was just us. "...me?"

She nodded and repeated, "Yeah, do you need a ride home?"

My jaw dropped. She saw me? *She saw me!* I couldn't believe it. I must have looked like a fool, standing there, staring with an awe-struck face. Somehow, through my disbelief, I eventually stammered out, "Uh, n-no. I... don't have far to walk."

"Oh, okay." She waved in departure, smiling politely. "Goodbye, then." With that said, she left the cemetery, heading for a car parked on the roadside.

It wasn't the conversation I was hoping for, but that brief exchange redeemed my horrible night. A wide grin spread across my lips; I stood up straighter. *I was seen.*

With a slight hop in my step, I wandered deeper into the cemetery, away from the lights of the town. In that moment, I couldn't have cared less about the litter and my broken headstone. The memorial served no real purpose to me, anyway -- it was just a grave marker.

Casting one last look at the town of Northridge, I finally waved goodbye to the living world and vanished into the ether, ready to start my next slumber. My time had come to rest peacefully again until the next bonfire.

A Record of English — by Sarah Tuebner

An innumerable number of times in the history of the world, children have asked their parents or teachers how to spell something only to be told, “Go find a dictionary and look it up!” The recommendation has become common among the English-speaking world despite concerns about how to look a word up if one does not already know how to spell it. This example shows that since the beginning of the written form of English, dictionaries have been important to the standardization and stabilization of the English language.

As the process of standardization began, dictionaries were important in stabilizing a language that the educated of the day saw weakening. A push came in the seventeenth century and later to provide a foundation for English. This movement brought about the publication of many dictionaries and other works that attempted to reinforce standards in the English language. The most famous dictionary is Samuel Johnson’s Dictionary, but his writing was not the first. Robert Ramsey says, “Some twenty-four English dictionaries had already been produced, beginning with Robert Cawdrey’s modest octavo of 2,500 words in 1604, and ending with the great Scott-Bailey folio of over 65,000 words published the same year as Johnson’s and in all respects a worthy rival” (57). Around the same time as Johnson’s publication of his dictionary in the 1700’s, Sunday schools were starting to educate the poor working children who would not have had

access to education any other way. These Sunday schools popped up around the factories and poor houses and offered children an opportunity to learn reading, writing, and arithmetic on the one day that they did not work. As more children achieved access to education, the need for a means of stabilizing the language increased. Additionally, the spread of the British empire influenced the need for a unifying language to hold the empire together and keep the language from splintering apart. During the seventeenth century, the British empire had branched into the North American continent, the colonists carrying English as their first language. The distance away from the mother country left the language open to mutation and alteration. Adam Beach paraphrases Samuel Johnson's reasons for creating his dictionary:

In the 'Preface' to his Dictionary (1755), Johnson outlined the major problems plaguing English. A primary concern was that it had remained neglected and uncultivated and had been 'suffered to spread, under the direction of chance, into wild exuberance, resigned to the tyranny of time and fashion, and exposed to the corruptions of ignorance, and caprices of innovation.' (125)

When the language was confined to the British Isles, English could be carefully protected, but as the language spread around the world, the need for a method of standardization entered the picture.

Once the need for a language standard was realized, dictionaries took on the important role as standards for the English language. Despite the continued variety within the English language, the English dictionary in all its forms has kept the language from disintegrating. Trevor Johnston says, "The development of an indigenous literacy is one of several strategies to protect and maintain the language, culture, and way of life" (435). Before the first dictionaries were properly recorded, other attempts were made to provide some standardization to the English language. Andrea Nagy says, "...the early lexicographers provided handbooks of 'cultural literacy' that attempted both to describe for the uneducated reader the established prestige culture and to prescribe a standard of eloquence by promoting recent borrowings and coinages" (Nagy). These handbooks did not find their way into longtime publication, and, ultimately, dictionaries became the predominant way of codifying the language. Nevertheless, it is not up to dictionaries alone to stabilize a language. Education plays a large role by using the dictionary as their basis for education. Howard-Hill notes, "Schoolmasters taught the reformed printers' spellings that were printed in their spelling books, grammars, and dictionaries and all such influences...brought about the graphemic—but not phonemic—uniformity we experience today" (29). Despite multiple attempts to codify the English language, English has spread too widely to have a completely uniform pronunciation around the world. Adam Beach says, "Postcolonial linguistic theory has taught us that standard

English always evolves into a plurality of "Englishes," no matter how many strategies of purification are used to reign in usage" (133). Accents and dialects have both changed the sound of English and the spelling of words except for the presence of dictionaries, providing a standard form of spelling and writing. Standardizing English through the use of dictionaries has been successful in that it has held English together into a semi-mutually understandable language by people around the world. Standardization has allowed for English to be easily taught as there is general foundation for the language already codified and consistent.

Standardization is an ongoing work, and dictionaries continue to be important as the world progresses in the technological era. As dictionaries have had an important impact on the English language in the past, so they will have an important impact on the future of the English language. Technology evolves, language follows technology, and dictionaries must keep up with the changing times. One growing aspect of dictionaries is the online dictionary. With the advent and promulgation of the internet, internet dictionaries quickly followed and cemented themselves into normal life, despite concerns offered around their legitimacy. Online dictionaries offer a unique conundrum for English. With printed dictionaries, time is taken to compile them and several years may be required for the creation of a dictionary. As a result, the dictionary is more stable and less likely to be swayed by the current trends of English, the inclusion of common slang that

might fade away long before the dictionary is published is eliminated. In contrast, an online dictionary allows for rapid changes in definitions and spellings, appealing directly to the user rather than representing the language. In her article, Alexandra Jarošová argues "While in classical dictionaries emphasis was placed on data, the electronic dictionary focuses on the user's perspective.... Actually, the very theoretical basics of lexicography are being redefined..." (13-14). As the Internet has redefined many aspects of English speakers' lives, so it advances further into redefining the means of standardizing the English language. The Internet brought about many new words to English such as "byte," "cyberspace," "website," and more. Additionally, the Internet also promoted the spread of online lingo and slang that is not considered part of standard English such as the term "googling" to mean looking something up online through a search engine. Because of this alteration to the basis of English, concerns have been brought up in reference to online dictionaries. A problem that could surface with the usage of online dictionaries is the lessening of the standardization effect. A dictionary that is easily swayed with the changing times would have a lesser degree of effectiveness on keeping a language stable. An example would be the rapid adoption of changing spellings or definitions rather than slow and methodical retention shifts. Another thought-provoking issue is presented by Alenka and Marjeta Vrbinc who argue:

One of the main problems concerning the online dictionaries is the absence of information about the target users of the dictionary in question.... Although online dictionaries may be used by native speakers of English without any particular problems, nonnative speakers may experience difficulty. In traditional lexicography, a clear demarcation line exists between dictionaries intended for native speakers and those intended for learners, and the same principle should also be applied to online dictionaries. (9)

As Alenka and Marjeta Vrbinc mention, the implications of ESL learners using online dictionaries could be a challenge. Confusion on meaning and tense could easily spring from the definitions as the online dictionary is not directed towards an ESL learner. Even with these concerns, dictionaries will continue to change and mold to the needs of society. Michael Rundell says "As the scope of the dictionary expands and its structures develop to fully exploit the possibilities of digital media, the lexical data it delivers should also reflect the most up-to-date linguistic thinking about how humans create and understand meanings" (320). As the world of English changes, dictionaries must change with that world.

The ever-changing world of English has provided dictionaries another important role, slightly separate from simple standardization. While most dictionaries are unilingual and designed to define singular words from a particular language, other unique dictionaries exist with their own

importance to the English language. Bilingual dictionaries such as a Spanish-English English-Spanish dictionary are designed to help facilitate translations and communications across languages. A unique dictionary in this category is *A German English Dictionary for Chemists* by Austin Patterson, Ph.D. In the introduction, Patterson states the purpose of his dictionary as follows: "To the advanced worker in chemistry a knowledge of German is almost indispensable, since a very large proportion of chemical literature is published in that language" (Patterson XV). While this dictionary is only useful to a handful of people in a specific field, its uses within that field are vastly and important. This dictionary connects a monolingual person with another language for him or her to understand the job he or she is attempting to complete and could have a powerful impact on day-to-day life. Another example of a specific dictionary is the *Gregg Shorthand Dictionary* by John Gregg and colleagues. In the introduction, the publishers state "It is hoped that this volume will render a useful service to the shorthand writer by placing at his disposal a facile and fluent outline for any word in which he may be interested" (Publishers vi). Many dictionaries are used to help with spelling and pronunciation, but *Gregg Shorthand Dictionary* assists with another vital part of English: writing. The dictionary gives illustrations and examples of proper shorthand rather than the definitions that one would usually find within a dictionary. This dictionary is important to the English language as it will keep a form of shorthand from fading completely into

history. Additionally, some dictionaries are particular to certain unique topics. An example of this is *A Dictionary of Tolkien* by David Day. In the Introduction, David Day writes, "It was compiled and designed as a compact and easy-to-use guide to Tolkien's world. The purpose is to inform and entertain those readers who wish to use [it] to help them in their personal exploration of ... Middle-Earth and the Undying Lands" (Day). The importance of Tolkien's work on English and English storytelling has been well-recorded and entered common knowledge and speech. In the future, a dictionary compiling the terms with an in-depth discussion of them would be not only interesting to Tolkien fans but also potentially useful to understand cultural trends. Such exact dictionaries as the ones mentioned previously serve a very niche role in the impact upon the English language. Nevertheless, the role they fill is important, no matter how small and seemingly insignificant.

Since the beginning of written language, dictionaries have played a vital role in the standardization of a language and will continue to play that role into the future. The child when told to figure out a spelling or definition on his or her own by looking at a dictionary does not have to wonder which dictionary that he or she should pick up in order to have the correct spelling. With a few minor differences that ultimately change nothing, the child will discover the same spelling and definition in any English dictionary. By this method, English has been stabilized and generally standardized into a

universal language across the many dialects, accents, variations, creoles, and pigeons. Beginning with the dictionaries that Samuel Johnson based his famous dictionary to the online dictionaries of this century, the dictionary has adapted to the changing times and kept the English language stable and dependable as it became the global language now seen today.

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Literacy Narrative — by Taylor Brown

A life can be viewed through many lenses, depending on what an individual finds important or significant. Accomplishments, failures, seasons, stages of personal growth, and stages of physical growth are all ways to paint a well-rounded picture of a person's life. While I believe that a life can never be truly quantified by one thing, I find it most accurate to view my own life through the lens of stories. I remember these stories like they are scenes playing out in a movie. Specifically, they are four novels that at four different ages, changed me and in one way or another, helped make me who I am today. I have read many books but none have had the lifelong impact that these four have had on the person I have become.

It is a warm spring day and I am sitting on my bedroom floor, surrounded by light pink walls and the smell of dinner in the oven. The late afternoon sun shines lazily through the blinds, casting a golden light onto the paperback book in front of my crossed legs. I am on chapter two of my second read-through of "Junie B. Jones Has a Monster Under Her Bed" by Barbara Park. I am six years-old, and Junie B. Jones has taught me that it's okay to be afraid of what is dark and scary and unknown. She has also taught me that monsters can be scared too, and often, all it takes is a conversation with the pursuit of understanding in mind to reach the conclusion that maybe there isn't so much to be afraid of after all.

I am ten years old, and the warm afternoon sun has turned into a cold and wet January day. I hear rain hitting the classroom windows and the chaotic bustle of indoor recess going on around me. My classmates are playing board games and drawing with colored pencils on construction paper while I am at my desk finishing "The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane" by Kate DiCamillo. After reading this book, as well as others by DiCamillo, I have independently declared that she is my new favorite author of all time. Little do I know how many times this choice will change. But, for now, my mind is made up and I am perfectly unaware of how miraculous Edward Tulane's journey truly is in regards to its impact on me. I will re-read this book many times, and each time I will learn more about empathy, friendship, and loyalty from a toy rabbit's perilous journey than any school lesson could ever teach me.

All at once, I am sixteen, and the dramatic highs, lows, and horrors of high school have taken their toll. Everything seems either bad and only getting worse or great and only getting better. Middle ground has no place here. It could not be at a more formative or opportune point in my life to read "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger for the first time. Holden Caulfield's angst, rebellion, and resistance to the adults in his life and to the status quo they represent are exactly what I need to read about. I nod my silent agreement each time he refers to authority figures as "phonies", or when he goes off on an all-too insightful tangent about the world and his

lack of place in it. However, as I make my way through this classic and get to the end, I subconsciously realize the same thing that Holden is forced to realize: maybe I am still just a kid and I don't have to have everything figured out quite yet. Maybe the whole world isn't out to get me like I think it is. Once again, I proclaim a new all-time favorite author and book. I feel understood by Holden in a way that I never have with any other character. The growth I see him experience in his story is deep down what I truly want for myself. I learn to be patient with myself through Holden's impatience with the world around him. I gain a stubborn understanding that not all adults are bad and want me to fail. In fact, many of them, teachers included, care about me and want me to succeed. This is also the moment that I decide exactly what kind of person, what kind of adult, I do *not* want to become: a phony.

It is summertime again. *I am eighteen and my last summer before starting college is coming to a quick and impending conclusion.* There is nothing I can do about this fact and I feel as though I am in a helpless limbo. I haven't said goodbye to my friends and family yet, but I know I will have to soon. I can't jump ahead into what this next season will bring, and I certainly cannot go back to high school and to the sense of relative comfort and safety I felt in that familiar place. I am excited for college, and yet I am terrified by how blind I feel. I have no idea how my story is going to connect and intertwine with other people's stories in this new and unknown

landscape. I am over halfway through a novel titled "The Overstory" by Richard Powers. It tells the stories of several unique individuals who initially have no obvious direct connection to one another. It isn't until they are all united by a common cause that they realize their lives have been intertwined from the start. It is within this context that I enter a new place where my greatest desire is to make connections where there previously were none. This desire must coexist with the fear that I have forgotten how to make new friends and I will never be able to successfully form the connections that I so badly want. "The Overstory" allows me to exist in this uncertain limbo with the comfort that souls can sometimes become intertwined without the full knowledge of the people who carry those souls. It is often within this precariousness that the deepest and most meaningful relationships are formed.

While a life can never be truly defined by one particular thing or a list of a few things, I believe the most formative stages of my own life thus far can be marked by stories. Specifically, my life has been marked by four unique, equally impactful novels. This is not to say I did not read other books in between or after those listed. However, it is to say that any love I feel towards a novel does not always directly equate to its impact or relevance to my own life. I have loved many stories, and I am certain and excited about the fact that I will come to know and love many more stories.

Stories raised me and carried me through to the person I am, and they will surely carry me through to the person I have yet to become.

Good Morning, My Beloved — by Anna Saffels

I have never known a more heavenly morning;
Surely, I am the only one in all creation
Who is witness to this majesty,
That this morning— the sun, the birds,
The sweet air, the heron, the stillness over the water,
Even the shadows casting on the ground—
It all seems as though it was made
With me in mind—
That this morning was designed
A greeting from my Father
To me.

The Jones family lived in the house on the corner — by Hannah Loftin

Jones being a typical name would cause a reader to expect a typical family but the family we see creeping down the sidewalk is far out of the normal social boundaries. The father, always in the lead, shuffles quietly along, his bent figure shadowing past vitality and pride. The mother, brazen and grinning, grips his hand while marching beside him; she frequently glances behind at the trail of their happy, skipping offspring. The history of this family is often speculated at by gossipy neighbors and bored grocery store clerks. No one knew where they had come from, they just appeared one day on that crabby little corner - the only house in the city where it continually rains. They appear once every three weeks or so to buy grocery items down the street, startling the neighbors from their stuffy small talk and biscuits.

One right behind the other, the Jones family paraded down the road to replenish their household necessities. There was nothing remarkable about what they needed, or where they were headed, or who was watching them, or even the weather. But they traipsed into the store, each member targeting their assigned items. Though other customers snickered, the Jones family made their way virtually unbullied until they approached checkout. Mr. Jones' hand started to tremble as he stared hard into his open wallet. The grocery store clerk raised his eyebrows as the father scraped the bottom

of his pocket, looking up and then down again in protest. Beads of stress popped out on his forehead as the line of customers lengthened behind him. His wife crossed her arms and glared. He frantically scratched at his other pockets.

We see from a distance the struggling experience of Mr. Jones. Something inside him was wearing thin, an approaching unknown brink. His life is being pushed closer and *closer*. Onlookers, clearly seeing the fragility of his mental health, feel an odd curiosity and ache in their hearts for his absurd little family but pass over it with indifference.

As his children race laps around the cash register, we return to the scene in time to see the harried father carrying a sparse load of groceries out the door. He left his last shred of pride with the unaffordable items and once again led the way, followed by the mighty strides of his wife.

Mr. Jones is a man who may not live much longer. He is living a life he did not expect to live, with people he wouldn't have chosen again, in a house he didn't want. He shuffles along, day in and day out, secretly hoping something will change, secretly planning in case it doesn't. His family needs him but they return about as much of the help as the grocery store cashier.

Through the days ahead, the Jones family will become much more than a curiosity. They will be a scandal, a tragedy, a shock. The citizens of that dusty little town will be jolted into reality, flooded with realization of

their effect. Some will blame Mrs. Jones, that brazen woman about to become lonely and broken.

The Jones family lived in a house on the corner. They lived a peculiar short little life there before death struck, as a nail splits the wood or a claw slices skin. We leave the scene sobered, their existence fading away from our focus but we know what happens next. We know the signs and we know the result. Maybe his neighbors could have made the difference, maybe his own decisions led him there. Mr. Jones is a man whose end strikes fear into the hearts of mothers, forcing his family to pay the price for their misjudgment. They won't make the same mistake again.

“If there is no peace at this pond” — by Taylor Brown

If there is no peace at this pond,

Then I ask,

Where is there peace?

If there is no purpose here

Among the changing leaves,

Among the ripples,

Among the talkative geese

Floating along with the breeze,

Then I ask,

Where is there purpose?

My head spins with the idea of it.

I long to live with such deliberate motion.

I long to live with

Such meaning,

Such poetry.

The wind does nothing to earn its art,

Nor the ripples,

Nor the geese,

Nor the leaves.

And yet they exude passion.

Because they just are,

Because they just exist.

It is enough for them.

Why is it not enough for me?

By Taylor Brown

Trusting in Magic — by Tonya Eileen-Perdue Baida

It was cold tonight, colder than he had remembered it being in many years. His breath was like a heavy fog that hung in the silence of the cold night air. The skylights were dancing in the starry heavens overhead to the delightfully imagined symphony of the silent stars. The Aurora Borealis' colorful luminescence lightning moved across the sky, hovering as he sat quietly. He looked up to the sky, fondly reminding himself of this time last year. There had been less chill in the air that night, but the lights were equally as brilliant as they were right now. As dazzling as they were every year since he took this post assignment.

The magic was thick in the air; and he couldn't help but feel sentimental about tonight. Tonight, was the last time he would make this journey. He was to retire after this night, this being his last night of the job assignment. The old man began to stand, bending his heavysset body, reaching out for a stern rail of assistance to pull himself up. Suddenly, he was interrupted by a small voice calling out to him from behind. Startled, he quickly turned around to look back toward the grand snow cave entrance behind him.

"Excuse me, sir, it's almost time. Are you ok?" said the small girl with her high-pitched melodic voice.

“Yes, I am just reminiscing about all of the years past and thinking of how I will miss this feeling. The magic always feels strongest; it’s the most wonderful feeling on this night of the year.” He replied with a heavy sigh in his voice.

“We need to get you dressed. Can I help you back inside?” she offered, in an attempt to coax the feeble old man back into the warmth of the indoors.

“No, my dear, I am ready to come in now.” He responded. With a heavy sigh, he reluctantly resumed pulling up slowly to a stand, and with a final grunt, he stood to his feet.

Inside the ice castle’s enchanting design, the workshop floor was brought to life by the tiny craftsmen’s delight and enthusiasm for their creations. The busyness was a stark contrast from the stillness of the night just outside the door, as it abruptly closed behind him. The hundreds of tiny voices falling into the background of conveyor belts and hammers sounded like familiar music to his ears. From the balcony where he stood, he could see the workshop floor below. All were attentively focused upon the last-minute details of this evening’s event assignments. No detail was too small for this

night. This night changed the lives of children and families the world over; this night, everything was utterly magical in every way.

He slowly walked down the short segue of stairs, three slow steps to the mezzanine which encircled the dynamic workshop area. He ran his hand along the candy-striped rail, illuminating stardust sparkles into the air as he began to walk around the room, peering down at the flurry of activity from above. Across the catwalk, he could see the entrance to his dressing room. The brightly colored stained-glass doors illuminated from behind. The colorful doorway's brilliant light design was an inviting sight that lifted his spirits and the pace of his steps, no time to delay.

So many were counting on him this year. They didn't know that his replacement would arrive from training before sun-up tomorrow morning. This was to be his retirement run. He wanted to move with a purpose, go out with the same zeal and vigor that all who worked with him had come to depend on. His excellence of spirit and work ethic was still needed even in these last hours. As he threw open the double doors to his dressing room, the smell of hot fresh oatmeal cookies hit him in the face. His stomach rumbled a whimsical guttural growl. He chuckled before helping himself to a freshly baked cookie from the warm plate on the entryway table.

His uniform hung clean and freshly pressed in the far corner of the room. The mirrored walls made the beauty of his suit visible from every angle. Indeed, his dazzling ensemble imparted wisdom and status to him for many years as the lead workman, the inspirational magician for many others' work. The lively velvet suit had been in his use since the early 1600s, and the stitching was hand-sewn in pure silk. Every executive in his position gets their own uniquely crafted suit for the job, and his was stunning. The soft embossed velvety texture seemed to come alive with movement. Brilliantly reflecting the bright and colorful lights overhead. In the middle of the giant octagon-shaped room, the grand chandelier reflected back onto itself in a mesmerizing never-ending reflection of light; just him and the suit, each one reflecting the same back onto itself in a kaleidoscope of sparkling crimson red and gold enchantment. He loved the delicate feel of the collar; it came alive with his touch.

A knock at the door awakened him from his daydream, followed by the familiar small voice. It was she who he would most dearly miss after this night. He closed his eyes and bowed his head with a smile that could melt an iceberg. The love conjured by the sound of her voice warmed him deeply, consuming his whole being. He turned around, and there in the doorway stood the slight silhouette of his executive assistant, Ameline. She had been a loyal and constant companion for his entire career, as his one genuine

constant affection over his 1700-year tenure. He was her love of the season. There had been many before him, and tomorrow another would too arrive after him, ushering in a new season of history. Ameline stepped forward into the reflection of the kaleidoscope. Her long dark curls danced along in front of her springy stride; she snapped into a posture of attention as her glitzy cheeks pulled back a dazzling smile that grew across her face when her eyes met his gaze. Her long dark locks were almost as long as she was tall, and her bright green eyes reflected the fanciful lighting in the room. Her skin was captivating and shimmery; it sparkled all on its own.

On this night, she too wore her work uniform; she had worn many over the years past. She adorned a matching garment of silk and fine ancient fabrics. Her dress dusted the floor's surface with a playful hem of fur that echoed her hat and matched his suit's collar. The soft white fur that adorned her hairline was joined by a head covering of silver and gold glittery snowflakes where a hat should appropriately fit. This was her favorite seasonal hat. The hat was itself was made of the old magic, the same magic that made the hat he would wear tonight, the same magic alive in all the suits that had come before his. His hat was the most essential part of tonight's dressing ritual, which the two of them had performed together for the past 1700-years.

With that bubbly step and melodic voice, she spoke with love as a parent speaks to encourage a young child. The inviting tone of her voice was met with his complete obedience and a deep laugh out loud. He looked with her into their reflection within the mirror. He noticed he had put on some weight during his tenure at this assignment; and he wondered if it would be needed where he was going next.

One leg at a time, the ancient pajama suit made of fine cotton and silk began to overtake the kaleidoscope's reflection. From every angle, all perspectives reflected crimson with hints of white, silver, and gold flashes moving about the room. She was perched upon a delicate golden stool. They stood face to face as she attended to his attire. His hat was large and complete with the same soft fur brim as hers, fur begging for a delightful fluff from the dainty fingers of the angelic Ameline, as a final touch of magic sprung from her fingers. They were amid the kaleidoscope, perfectly symbiotic in their movements, the room now full of just them and their reflected activities as one. She smiled widely and buttoned his last button before she spoke.

"I will miss you," she stated in a heavenly voice that sounded like wind chimes when she spoke in her native tongue.

"I will miss you as well, my dear," he replied with a profoundly genuine smile.

"You have been my favorite; I will miss you most of all," she said.

Enthusiastically she lunged forward to hug him tightly one last time and felt his beard tickle her nose. He reached around her delicate body to hug her back.

"You have brought me such joy, and you made a difference for us all," she quietly said under cover of his big belly and burly arms. She secretly hoped his replacement would smell of freshly baked gingerbread cookies as he did.

His quick response was so authentic that it took no time to formulate, "Thank you for all you have done. You made my magic come alive. You made me the best I could be every day. I never could have been me without you." He humbly admitted.

"It's been an honor, sir." She said, holding back a tear.

This she knew, he had depended on her daily, as sometimes he could not remember where he had left his boots, even if they were on his feet. Of

course, this night of the year, he would too forget his hat if it not for the meticulous, loving care of his attentive assistant.

“Santa, your sleigh is ready for departure,” boomed a voice from the doorway behind them!

The two quickly shifted their awareness from each other in that final moment to the real reason for tonight and the job at hand. Both simultaneously nodding in acknowledgment back towards the beckoning caller. She kissed him, leaving behind the sparkle of her lips on his cheek before dismissing him to walk out of the doorway, disappearing around the corner.

When she turned the corner, she admired him sitting elegantly in the vintage chrome-covered sleigh as a tear fell from the corner of her eye. Tomorrow would be the beginning of a new season, a new Santa, a new set of suits with a new ritual. A new handpicked Santa who had been groomed by the magical instruction would tomorrow be given his own new appointment. But this past Santa was special, she admitted to herself in silence.

She could hear him calling out to the reindeer. As the sleigh began to rise into the air in weightless movement, he waved to them all, bidding them a Good Christmas Night. With a Ho, Ho, Ho, and a bright flash of light, the jingle bells rang out, and he was gone. He had disappeared into thin air amidst the night sky; with a sprinkling glimmer of elf dust, the reindeer too fizzled out of sight along with the sleigh.

She stepped away, moving quickly toward the tending of new preparations with no delay. Aware in her spirit that she was in-part one with the magic. She trusted in the all-knowing divine purpose of the enchantment she served with a joyful heart. A new magician would arrive with his own anciently crafted suit, along with her matching design in a few short hours. The two would wear their uniquely crafted suits together this one night a year for a new season, as she had done for an eternity of seasons before.

She eagerly awaits dawn's first light to greet the new Santa, to begin serving in his unique reign of inspirational guidance. Together they would create a new season, a new rhythm of ritualistic charisma. Trusting in the magic, she waits, singing heavenly tunes in joyful anticipation of his untold charm.