

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan

An Analysis of Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue": Exploring Language, Identity, and Power

Introduction:

Have you ever felt misunderstood, your words failing to convey the true depth of your meaning? Amy Tan's poignant essay, "Mother Tongue," resonates with anyone who's grappled with the complexities of language and identity. This in-depth analysis delves into the multifaceted layers of Tan's powerful narrative, exploring how she uses personal anecdotes to illuminate the social and cultural implications of linguistic differences. We'll dissect the essay's central themes, examining the power dynamics inherent in language, the impact of dialect on perception, and the profound connection between language and identity. Prepare to embark on a journey of linguistic exploration, unearthing the hidden meanings and enduring relevance of Tan's unforgettable essay.

I. The Power of Language: High versus Low

Tan masterfully juxtaposes "high" and "low" forms of English throughout the essay. Her mother's "broken" English, characterized by grammatical inaccuracies and limited vocabulary, is contrasted with her own proficient, academic writing. This contrast isn't merely a stylistic choice; it highlights the unequal power dynamics embedded within language. The "high" English commands respect, authority, and opens doors to opportunity, while the "low" English, often associated with limited education or immigrant status, can lead to misunderstanding and marginalization. Tan's own experiences navigating these different linguistic registers showcase the social and economic consequences of speaking different versions of the same language. She demonstrates how her mother's "limited" English was interpreted as a limitation of her intelligence rather than a limitation of her linguistic tools. This highlights the prejudice often directed towards non-standard dialects.

II. Identity and the Shaping Power of Language

Tan's exploration of language extends beyond mere linguistic structures; it's deeply intertwined with her identity as a Chinese-American daughter. Her mother's English becomes a symbol of their shared cultural heritage and familial bond. However, it also represents a source of tension. Tan acknowledges the internal conflict she faced wanting to embrace her mother's linguistic heritage while simultaneously navigating a world that often valued the dominant form of English. This internal conflict reflects the universal struggle of bicultural individuals striving to find balance and belonging. She eloquently captures the emotional weight of feeling alienated from one linguistic community while simultaneously feeling the pressure to assimilate to another. Her language is both a bridge and a barrier – a source of connection and a source of division.

III. Challenging Stereotypes and Linguistic Prejudice

Tan powerfully challenges the preconceived notions associated with different dialects. She exposes the prejudice and judgment faced by individuals who speak non-standard English. By sharing personal anecdotes, she humanizes the experience of linguistic difference, rendering it relatable and breaking

down stereotypes. She exposes how judgments based on language can obscure a person's true intelligence and capabilities. Tan's essay serves as a powerful call for understanding and acceptance of linguistic diversity. It encourages readers to move beyond superficial judgments and appreciate the richness and variety within the English language.

IV. Language as a Tool for Self-Discovery

Through her exploration of language, Tan ultimately achieves a deeper understanding of herself and her relationship with her mother. The essay is not just about linguistic differences; it's a journey of self-discovery. By grappling with the complexities of her mother's language and its impact on their relationship, Tan gains a new appreciation for her mother's intelligence and resilience. This self-discovery is intricately woven into the narrative, showcasing how language can facilitate self-understanding and intergenerational healing. The essay reveals a profound empathy for her mother's experience, showcasing how her own mastery of language has allowed her to bridge a communication gap and to appreciate the strengths of her mother's linguistic background.

V. The Enduring Legacy of "Mother Tongue"

"Mother Tongue" continues to resonate with readers decades after its publication. Its exploration of language, identity, and power remains strikingly relevant in a world increasingly conscious of linguistic diversity and social justice. The essay's impact extends beyond academic circles, finding relevance in discussions about cultural sensitivity, educational equity, and the importance of embracing diverse voices. Its enduring legacy lies in its ability to foster empathy, promote understanding, and challenge societal biases related to language and culture. The essay remains a powerful reminder that linguistic diversity is a source of strength, not weakness, and that valuing different forms of expression enriches our collective experience.

Outline of "An Analysis of Mother Tongue by Amy Tan"

Introduction: Briefly introduce Amy Tan and her essay "Mother Tongue," highlighting its central themes and the analysis's scope.

Chapter 1: The Power Dynamics of Language: Analyze the contrast between "high" and "low" English and their implications for social status and opportunity. Provide specific examples from the essay.

Chapter 2: Identity and the Shaping Power of Language: Explore the interwoven relationship between language and Tan's identity as a Chinese-American daughter, emphasizing the complexities of biculturalism.

Chapter 3: Challenging Stereotypes and Linguistic Prejudice: Discuss how Tan dismantles stereotypes surrounding non-standard English and challenges prejudiced attitudes toward linguistic differences.

Chapter 4: Language as a Tool for Self-Discovery: Examine how Tan uses language to explore her relationship with her mother, resulting in self-discovery and a deeper understanding of her own identity.

Chapter 5: The Enduring Legacy of "Mother Tongue": Discuss the continued relevance of the essay in contemporary discussions of language, identity, and social justice.

Conclusion: Summarize the key findings of the analysis and reiterate the lasting impact of "Mother Tongue."

(Detailed explanation of each point in the outline is provided above in the body of the article.)

FAQs:

1. What is the central theme of Amy Tan's "Mother Tongue"? The central theme revolves around the complexities of language, its relationship to identity, and the power dynamics inherent in different linguistic forms.
1. How does Amy Tan use personal anecdotes in her essay? Tan uses personal anecdotes to illustrate the impact of her mother's "broken" English on their communication and her own experiences navigating different linguistic contexts.
1. What is the significance of the contrast between "high" and "low" English? This contrast highlights the unequal power dynamics associated with different forms of English and the social and economic consequences of speaking non-standard dialects.
1. How does language contribute to identity formation in the essay? Tan's mother's English becomes a symbol of their shared cultural heritage, but also a source of both connection and tension as Tan navigates a world valuing standard English.
1. What are the implications of linguistic prejudice as depicted in the essay? Tan exposes how judgments based on language can mask a person's true capabilities and intelligence, highlighting the need for linguistic sensitivity and understanding.
1. How does "Mother Tongue" challenge societal biases? The essay directly challenges preconceived notions about non-standard English and advocates for the acceptance of linguistic diversity.
1. What is the significance of Tan's self-discovery journey through language? Tan's exploration of language allows her to gain a deeper understanding of herself, her relationship with her mother, and her bicultural identity.
1. What is the enduring legacy of "Mother Tongue"? The essay continues to spark crucial conversations about cultural sensitivity, linguistic equity, and the importance of embracing

diverse voices.

1. How does the essay contribute to the ongoing conversation about social justice? "Mother Tongue" contributes by shedding light on linguistic inequality and encouraging a more equitable and inclusive approach to language and cultural differences.

Related Articles:

1. Amy Tan's Literary Style: A Deep Dive: Analyzes Tan's writing style, exploring her use of imagery, symbolism, and narrative techniques.
1. The Role of Family in Amy Tan's Works: Examines the importance of family relationships and intergenerational dynamics across Tan's literary corpus.
1. Comparing and Contrasting "Mother Tongue" with Other Works on Language: Compares "Mother Tongue" to similar essays exploring language, identity, and cultural difference.
1. Cultural Identity in Amy Tan's Fiction: Explores the theme of cultural identity in Tan's novels, particularly the complexities of biculturalism.
1. The Impact of Immigration on Language and Identity: A broader discussion examining the impact of immigration on the formation of linguistic and cultural identities.
1. Linguistic Prejudice and its Social Consequences: An analysis of the social and economic consequences of linguistic prejudice and discrimination.
1. The Power of Storytelling and Personal Narrative: Explores the power of personal narrative as a tool for social commentary and fostering understanding.

1. Teaching "Mother Tongue" in the Classroom: Provides suggestions for teaching "Mother Tongue" effectively in an educational setting, incorporating diverse pedagogical approaches.

1. Analyzing the Use of Figurative Language in "Mother Tongue": Close reading of the essay focusing on the author's skillful use of metaphors, similes, and other literary devices.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Mother* Claudia O'Keefe, 1996-05 Mary Higgins Clark, Amy Tan, Joyce Carol Oates and Maya Angelou are among the gifted writers who share their personal reflections on mother in this exceptional collection of fiction, essays and poetry. From a woman's choice to become a mother to the inner workings of a mother's relationship with her children, the full cycle of motherhood is brought to life in these touching works.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Dreams and Inward Journeys Marjorie Ford, Jon Ford, 1990

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: The Joy Luck Club Amy Tan, 2006-09-21 "The Joy Luck Club is one of my favorite books. From the moment I first started reading it, I knew it was going to be incredible. For me, it was one of those once-in-a-lifetime reading experiences that you cherish forever. It inspired me as a writer and still remains hugely inspirational." —Kevin Kwan, author of *Crazy Rich Asians* Amy Tan's beloved, New York Times bestselling tale of mothers and daughters, now the focus of a new documentary *Amy Tan: Unintended Memoir* on Netflix Four mothers, four daughters, four families whose histories shift with the four winds depending on who's saying the stories. In 1949 four Chinese women, recent immigrants to San Francisco, begin meeting to eat dim sum, play mahjong, and talk. United in shared unspeakable loss and hope, they call themselves the Joy Luck Club. Rather than sink into tragedy, they choose to gather to raise their spirits and money. To despair was to wish back for something already lost. Or to prolong what was already unbearable. Forty years later the stories and history continue. With wit and sensitivity, Amy Tan examines the sometimes painful, often tender, and always deep connection between mothers and daughters. As each woman reveals her secrets, trying to unravel the truth about her life, the strings become more tangled, more entwined. Mothers boast or despair over daughters, and daughters roll their eyes even as they feel the inextricable tightening of their matriarchal ties. Tan is an astute storyteller, enticing readers to immerse themselves into these lives of complexity and mystery.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: The Hundred Secret Senses Amy Tan, 1995-10-17 *The Hundred Secret Senses* is an exultant novel about China and America, love and loyalty, the identities we invent and the true selves we discover along the way. Olivia Laguni is half-Chinese, but typically American in her uneasiness with her patchwork family. And no one in Olivia's family is more embarrassing to her than her half-sister, Kwan Li. For Kwan speaks mangled English, is cheerfully deaf to Olivia's sarcasm, and sees the dead with her yin eyes. Even as Olivia details the particulars of her decades-long grudge against her sister (who, among other things, is a source of infuriatingly good advice), Kwan Li is telling her own story, one that sweeps us into the splendor, squalor, and violence of Manchu China. And out of the friction between her narrators, Amy Tan creates a work that illuminates both the present and the past sweetly, sadly, hilariously, with searing and vivid prose. Truly magical...unforgettable...this novel...shimmer[s] with meaning.--San Diego Tribune *The Hundred Secret Senses* doesn't simply return to a world but burrows more deeply into

it, following new trails to fresh revelations.--Newsweek

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Bonesetter's Daughter* Amy Tan, 2001-02-19 A mother and daughter find what they share in their bones in this compelling novel from the bestselling author of *The Joy Luck Club* and *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*. Ruth Young and her widowed mother have always had a difficult relationship. But when she discovers writings that vividly describe her mother's tumultuous life growing up in China, Ruth discovers a side of LuLing that she never knew existed. Transported to a backwoods village known as Immortal Heart, Ruth learns of secrets passed along by a mute nursemaid, Precious Auntie; of a cave where dragon bones are mined; of the crumbling ravine known as the End of the World; and of the curse that LuLing believes she released through betrayal. Within the calligraphied pages awaits the truth about a mother's heart, secrets she cannot tell her daughter, yet hopes she will never forget... Conjuring the pain of broken dreams and the power of myths, *The Bonesetter's Daughter* is an excavation of the human spirit: the past, its deepest wounds, its most profound hopes.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Skin That We Speak* Lisa Delpit, Joanne Kilgour Dowdy, 2013-04-09 "Lucid, accessible" research on classroom language bias for educators and "parents concerned about questions of power and control in public schools" (Publishers Weekly). In this collection of twelve essays, MacArthur Fellow Lisa Delpit and Kent State University Associate Professor Joanne Kilgour Dowdy take a critical look at the issues of language and dialect in the education system. *The Skin That We Speak* moves beyond the highly charged war of idioms to present teachers and parents with a thoughtful exploration of the varieties of English spoken today. At a time when children who don't speak formal English are written off in our schools, and when the class- and race-biased language used to describe those children determines their fate, *The Skin That We Speak* offers a cutting-edge look at this all-important aspect of education. Including groundbreaking work by Herbert Kohl, Gloria J. Ladson-Billings, and Victoria Purcell-Gates, as well as classic texts by Geneva Smitherman and Asa Hilliard, this volume of writing is what Black Issues Book Review calls "an essential text." "The book is aimed at helping educators learn to make use of cultural differences apparent in language to educate children, but its content guarantees broader appeal." —Booklist "An honest, much-needed look at one of the most crucial issues in education today." —Jackson Advocate

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Opposite of Fate* Amy Tan, 2003 The author reflects on her family's Chinese American legacy, her experiences as a writer, her survival of natural disasters, and her struggle to manage three family members afflicted with brain disease.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Genius of Language* Wendy Lesser, 2005-07-12 Fifteen outstanding writers answered editor Wendy Lesser's call for original essays on the subject of language—the one they grew up with, and the English in which they write. Despite American assumptions about polite Chinese discourse, Amy Tan believes that there was nothing discreet about the Chinese language with which she grew up. Leonard Michaels spoke only Yiddish until he was five, and still found its traces in his English language writing. Belgian-born Luc Sante loved his French Tintin and his Sartre, but only in English could he find "words of one syllable" that evoke American bars and bus stops. And although Louis Begley writes novels in English and addresses family members in Polish, he still speaks French with his wife—the language of their courtship. As intimate as one's dreams, as private as a secret identity, these essays examine and reveal the writers' pride, pain, and pleasure in learning a new tongue, revisiting an old one, and reconciling the joys and frustrations of each.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Do You Speak American?* Robert Macneil, William Cran, 2007-12-18 Is American English in decline? Are regional dialects dying out? Is there a difference between men and women in how they adapt to linguistic variations? These questions, and more, about our language catapulted Robert MacNeil and William Cran—the authors (with Robert McCrum) of the language classic *The Story of English*—across the country in search of the answers. *Do You Speak American?* is the tale of their discoveries, which provocatively show how the standard for American English—if a standard exists—is changing quickly and dramatically. On a journey that

takes them from the Northeast, through Appalachia and the Deep South, and west to California, the authors observe everyday verbal interactions and in a host of interviews with native speakers glean the linguistic quirks and traditions characteristic of each area. While examining the histories and controversies surrounding both written and spoken American English, they address anxieties and assumptions that, when explored, are highly emotional, such as the growing influence of Spanish as a threat to American English and the special treatment of African-American vernacular English. And, challenging the purists who think grammatical standards are in serious deterioration and that media saturation of our culture is homogenizing our speech, they surprise us with unpredictable responses. With insight and wit, MacNeil and Cran bring us a compelling book that is at once a celebration and a potent study of our singular language. Each wave of immigration has brought new words to enrich the American language. Do you recognize the origin of 1. blunderbuss, sleigh, stoop, coleslaw, boss, waffle? Or 2. dumb, ouch, shyster, check, kaput, scram, bumme? Or 3. phooey, pastrami, glitch, kibbitz, schnozzle? Or 4. broccoli, espresso, pizza, pasta, macaroni, radio? Or 5. smithereens, lollapalooza, speakeasy, hooligan? Or 6. vamoose, chaps, stampede, mustang, ranch, corral? 1. Dutch 2. German 3. Yiddish 4. Italian 5. Irish 6. Spanish

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Managed Hand* Miliann Kang, 2010-06-02 Two women, virtual strangers, sit hand-in-hand across a narrow table, both intent on the same thing—achieving the perfect manicure. Encounters like this occur thousands of times across the United States in nail salons increasingly owned and operated by Asian immigrants. This study looks closely for the first time at these intimate encounters, focusing on New York City, where such nail salons have become ubiquitous. Drawing from rich and compelling interviews, Miliann Kang takes us inside the nail industry, asking such questions as: Why have nail salons become so popular? Why do so many Asian women, and Korean women in particular, provide these services? Kang discovers multiple motivations for the manicure—from the pampering of white middle class women to the artistic self-expression of working class African American women to the mass consumption of body-related services. Contrary to notions of beauty service establishments as spaces for building community among women, *The Managed Hand* finds that while tentative and fragile solidarities can emerge across the manicure table, they generally give way to even more powerful divisions of race, class, and immigration.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Simple Recipes* Madeleine Thien, 2009-10-31 With delicate language and wisdom, Madeleine Thien explores the longing of families pulled apart by conflicts between generations, cultures, and values. Each of these stories captures a deeply personal world in which characters struggle to reconcile family loyalty with individual desires. In *House*, a 10-year-old girl longs for the alcoholic mother who left the house one day never to return. In *Dispatch*, a woman tries to hold her marriage together even after finding proof that her husband is in love with someone else. In *A Map of the City*, a young woman's troubled relationship with her father overshadows the course she takes in her adult life. Thien's fresh perspective and spare, haunting prose have already won her prizes and the praise of established masters. *Simple Recipes* is the beginning of a luminous writing career.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Kitchen God's Wife* Amy Tan, 2006-09-21 Remarkable...mesmerizing...compelling.... An entire world unfolds in Tolstoyan tide of event and detail....Give yourself over to the world Ms. Tan creates for you. —The New York Times Book Review Winnie and Helen have kept each other's worst secrets for more than fifty years. Now, because she believes she is dying, Helen wants to expose everything. And Winnie angrily determines that she must be the one to tell her daughter, Pearl, about the past—including the terrible truth even Helen does not know. And so begins Winnie's story of her life on a small island outside Shanghai in the 1920s, and other places in China during World War II, and traces the happy and desperate events that led to Winnie's coming to America in 1949. *The Kitchen God's Wife* is a beautiful book (Los Angeles Times) from the bestselling author of novels like *The Joy Luck Club* and *The Backyard Bird Chronicles*, and the memoir, *Where the Past Begins*.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Mother to Mother* Sindiwe Magona, 2022-08-23 A

searing novel, told in letter form, that explores the South African legacy of apartheid through the lens of a woman whose Black son has just murdered a white woman. *Mother to Mother* is a novel with depth, at once an emotional plea for compassion and understanding, and a sharp look at the impacts of colonialism and apartheid on South African families. Inspired by the true story of Fulbright scholar Amy Biehl's murder, the book takes the form of a letter to the victim's mother. The murderer's mother, Mandisa, speaks of a life marked by oppression and injustice. Through her writing, Mandisa reveals a colonized society that not only allowed but perpetuated violence against women and impoverished Black South Africans under the reign of apartheid. This book is not an apology for the murder but rather something more. It seeks to connect, through empathy and storytelling, one pained mother with another who is grief-stricken and in mourning. A beautifully written exploration of the society that bred such violence, *Mother to Mother* will resonate with readers interested in understanding and ending racial injustice, as well as the lasting colonial foundations of oppression.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Me Talk Pretty One Day* David Sedaris, 2009-05-04 A new collection from David Sedaris is cause for jubilation. His recent move to Paris has inspired hilarious pieces, including *Me Talk Pretty One Day*, about his attempts to learn French. His family is another inspiration. *You Cant Kill the Rooster* is a portrait of his brother who talks incessant hip-hop slang to his bewildered father. And no one hones a finer fury in response to such modern annoyances as restaurant meals presented in ludicrous towers and cashiers with 6-inch fingernails. Compared by *The New Yorker* to Twain and Hawthorne, Sedaris has become one of our best-loved authors. Sedaris is an amazing reader whose appearances draw hundreds, and his performances including a jaw-dropping impression of Billie Holiday singing *I wish I were an Oscar Meyer weiner* are unforgettable. Sedaris's essays on living in Paris are some of the funniest he's ever written. At last, someone even meaner than the French! The sort of blithely sophisticated, loopy humour that might have resulted if Dorothy Parker and James Thurber had had a love child. *Entertainment Weekly* on *Barrel Fever* Sidesplitting Not one of the essays in this new collection failed to crack me up; frequently I was helpless. *The New York Times Book Review* on *Naked*

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *We Should Never Meet* Aimee Phan, 2005-11-15 Compelling, moving, and beautifully written, the interlinked stories that make up *We Should Never Meet* alternate between Saigon before the city's fall in 1975 and present-day Little Saigon in Southern California---exploring the reverberations of the Vietnam War in a completely new light. Intersecting the lives of eight characters across three decades and two continents, these stories dramatize the events of Operation Babylift, the U.S.-led evacuation of thousands of Vietnamese orphans to America just weeks before the fall of Saigon. Unwitting reminders of the war, these children were considered *bui doi*, the dust of life, and faced an uncertain, dangerous existence if left behind in Vietnam. Four of the stories follow the saga of one orphan's journey from the points-of-view of a teenage mother, a duck farmer and a Catholic nun from the Mekong Delta, a social worker in Saigon, and a volunteer doctor from America. The other four take place twenty years later and chronicle the lives of four Vietnamese orphans now living in America: Kim, an embittered Amerasian searching for her unknown mother; Vinh, her gang member ex-boyfriend who preys on Vietnamese families; Mai, an ambitious orphan who faces her emancipation from the American foster-care system; and Huan, an Amerasian adopted by a white family, who returns to Vietnam with his adoptive mother. *We Should Never Meet* is one of those rare books that truly takes an original look at the human condition---and marks the exciting debut of a major new writer for our time.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Funny in Farsi* Firoozeh Dumas, 2007-12-18 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Finalist for the PEN/USA Award in Creative Nonfiction, the Thurber Prize for American Humor, and the Audie Award in Biography/Memoir This Random House Reader's Circle edition includes a reading group guide and a conversation between Firoozeh Dumas and Khaled Hosseini, author of *The Kite Runner*! "Remarkable . . . told with wry humor shorn of sentimentality . . . In the end, what sticks with the reader is an exuberant immigrant embrace of

America.”—San Francisco Chronicle In 1972, when she was seven, Firoozeh Dumas and her family moved from Iran to Southern California, arriving with no firsthand knowledge of this country beyond her father’s glowing memories of his graduate school years here. More family soon followed, and the clan has been here ever since. *Funny in Farsi* chronicles the American journey of Dumas’s wonderfully engaging family: her engineer father, a sweetly quixotic dreamer who first sought riches on Bowling for Dollars and in Las Vegas, and later lost his job during the Iranian revolution; her elegant mother, who never fully mastered English (nor cared to); her uncle, who combated the effects of American fast food with an army of miraculous American weight-loss gadgets; and Firoozeh herself, who as a girl changed her name to Julie, and who encountered a second wave of culture shock when she met and married a Frenchman, becoming part of a one-couple melting pot. In a series of deftly drawn scenes, we watch the family grapple with American English (hot dogs and hush puppies?—a complete mystery), American traditions (Thanksgiving turkey?—an even greater mystery, since it tastes like nothing), and American culture (Firoozeh’s parents laugh uproariously at Bob Hope on television, although they don’t get the jokes even when she translates them into Farsi). Above all, this is an unforgettable story of identity, discovery, and the power of family love. It is a book that will leave us all laughing—without an accent. Praise for *Funny in Farsi* “Heartfelt and hilarious—in any language.”—*Glamour* “A joyful success.”—*Newsday* “What’s charming beyond the humor of this memoir is that it remains affectionate even in the weakest, most tenuous moments for the culture. It’s the brilliance of true sophistication at work.”—*Los Angeles Times Book Review* “Often hilarious, always interesting . . . Like the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, this book describes with humor the intersection and overlapping of two cultures.”—*The Providence Journal* “A humorous and introspective chronicle of a life filled with love—of family, country, and heritage.”—Jimmy Carter “Delightfully refreshing.”—*Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* “[*Funny in Farsi*] brings us closer to discovering what it means to be an American.”—*San Jose Mercury News*

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Accidental Asian* Eric Liu, 1999-09-07 Beyond black and white, native and alien, lies a vast and fertile field of human experience. It is here that Eric Liu, former speechwriter for President Clinton and noted political commentator, invites us to explore. In these compellingly candid essays, Liu reflects on his life as a second-generation Chinese American and reveals the shifting frames of ethnic identity. Finding himself unable to read a Chinese memorial book about his father’s life, he looks critically at the cost of his own assimilation. But he casts an equally questioning eye on the effort to sustain vast racial categories like “Asian American.” And as he surveys the rising anxiety about China’s influence, Liu illuminates the space that Asians have always occupied in the American imagination. Reminiscent of the work of James Baldwin and its unwavering honesty, *The Accidental Asian* introduces a powerful and elegant voice into the discussion of what it means to be an American.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: 75 Readings Plus Santi V. Buscemi, Charlotte Smith, 2004 *75 Readings Plus* is a version of the best-selling *75 Readings* that supplies additional guidance for student readers. Both books are rhetorically arranged and collect the most popular essays for first-year writing. The readings represent a wide variety of authors, disciplines, issues, and interests.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Amy Tan in the Classroom* Renée Hausmann Shea, Deborah L. Wilchek, 2005 Offers teachers practical strategies for teaching Amy Tan’s writings in the classroom, with an activity-based approach to teaching both the print and film versions of *The Joy Luck Club* and the nonfiction *The Opposite of Fate: A Book of Musings*.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: What We Talk About When We Talk About Love Raymond Carver, 2015-05-25 The most celebrated story collection from “one of the true American masters” (*The New York Review of Books*)—a haunting meditation on love, loss, and companionship, and finding one’s way through the dark that includes the iconic and much-referenced title story featured in the Academy Award-winning film *Birdman*. Raymond Carver’s America is ... clouded by pain and the loss of dreams, but it is not as fragile as it looks. It is a place of survivors and a place of stories.... [Carver] has done what many of the most gifted writers fail to do: He has invented a country of his own, like no other except that very world, as Wordsworth said, which is the world to

all of us. —The New York Times Book Review

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Chinese Cinderella Adeline Yen Mah, 2009-05-06
More than 800,000 copies in print! From the author of critically acclaimed and bestselling memoir *Falling Leaves*, this is a poignant and moving true account of her childhood, growing up as an unloved daughter in 1940s China. A Chinese proverb says, Falling leaves return to their roots. In her own courageous voice, Adeline Yen Mah returns to her roots to tell the story of her painful childhood and her ultimate triumph in the face of despair. Adeline's affluent, powerful family considers her bad luck after her mother dies giving birth to her, and life does not get any easier when her father remarries. Adeline and her siblings are subjected to the disdain of her stepmother, while her stepbrother and stepsister are spoiled with gifts and attention. Although Adeline wins prizes at school, they are not enough to compensate for what she really yearns for -- the love and understanding of her family. Like the classic Cinderella story, this powerful memoir is a moving story of resilience and hope. Includes an Author's Note, a 6-page photo insert, a historical note, and the Chinese text of the original Chinese Cinderella. A PW BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR AN ALA-YALSA BEST BOOK FOR YOUNG ADULTS "One of the most inspiring books I have ever read." -The Guardian

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Mrs. Flowers Maya Angelou, Etienne Delessert, 1986-01-01 Through her friendship with Mrs. Flowers, a cultured and gentle Black woman, Marguerite develops self-esteem and an appreciation for great literature.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: 75 Readings Charlotte Smith, 2003-06 This book offers an outstanding collection of the most popular essays for first-year writing at an affordable price. The latest edition boasts an extensive new argumentation section, new readings about social issues and the environment, and a new section on mixed strategies - those readings that employ two or more rhetorical modes. 21 of the 75 readings are new to this edition. Also available by Buscemi & Smith is: *75 Readings Plus*, 7/e, ISBN 0071232311, Price pound]25.99 (42.36 Euros) Pub date: June 2003 This book adds to the above an Introduction to each mode, plus Headnotes, Questions for Discussion and Suggestions for Sustained Writing for each selection. - Readings chosen for the book are selected from among the most popular and widely-anthologized pieces. - The text contains a chapter dedicated to each of the Analogy and Mixed Modes writing strategies. - The readings represent a wide variety of authors, disciplines, issues and interests.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: The College Fear Factor Rebecca D. Cox, 2010-02-15 They're not the students strolling across the bucolic liberal arts campuses where their grandfathers played football. They are first-generation college students—children of immigrants and blue-collar workers—who know that their hopes for success hinge on a degree. But college is expensive, unfamiliar, and intimidating. Inexperienced students expect tough classes and demanding, remote faculty. They may not know what an assignment means, what a score indicates, or that a single grade is not a definitive measure of ability. And they certainly don't feel entitled to be there. They do not presume success, and if they have a problem, they don't expect to receive help or even a second chance. Rebecca D. Cox draws on five years of interviews and observations at community colleges. She shows how students and their instructors misunderstand and ultimately fail one another, despite good intentions. Most memorably, she describes how easily students can feel defeated—by their real-world responsibilities and by the demands of college—and come to conclude that they just don't belong there after all. Eye-opening even for experienced faculty and administrators, *The College Fear Factor* reveals how the traditional college culture can actually pose obstacles to students' success, and suggests strategies for effectively explaining academic expectations.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Mona in the Promised Land Gish Jen, 2012-08-29 From the acclaimed, award-winning author of *Thank You, Mr. Nixon* comes a "hilariously funny and seriously important" novel (Amy Tan) about American multiculturalism and a Chinese American teenager doing her best to fit in—even if it means converting to Judaism. In these pages, acclaimed author Gish Jen introduces us to teenaged Mona Chang, who in 1968 moves with her newly

prosperous family to Scarshill, New York. Here, the Chinese are seen as the new Jews. What could be more natural than for Mona to take this literally—even to the point of converting? As Mona attends temple rap sessions and falls in love (with a nice Jewish boy who lives in a tepee), Jen introduces us to one of the most charming and sweet-spirited heroines in recent fiction, a girl who can wisecrack with perfect aplomb even when she's organizing the help in her father's pancake house. On every page, Gish Jen sets our received notions spinning with a wit as dry as a latter-day Jane Austen's.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Bone Fae Myenne Ng, 2015-11-03 This emotional story about family and community follows a young woman living in San Francisco's Chinatown as she navigates lingering conflicts and secrets after her sister's death. We were a family of three girls. By Chinese standards, that wasn't lucky. In Chinatown, everyone knew our story. Outsiders jerked their chins, looked at us, shook their heads. We heard things. In this profoundly moving novel, Fae Myenne Ng takes readers into the hidden heart of San Francisco's Chinatown, to the world of one family's honor, their secrets, and the lost bones of a paper father. Two generations of the Leong family live in an uneasy tension as they try to fathom the source of a brave young girl's sorrow. Oldest daughter Leila tells the story: of her sister Ona, who has ended her young, conflicted life by jumping from the roof of a Chinatown housing project; of her mother Mah, a seamstress in a garment shop run by a Chinese Elvis; of Leon, her father, a merchant seaman who ships out frequently; and the family's youngest, Nina, who has escaped to New York by working as a flight attendant. With Ona and Nina gone, it is up to Leila to lay the bones of the family's collective guilt to rest, and find some way to hope again. Fae Myenne Ng's luminous debut explores what it means to be a stranger in one's own family, a foreigner in one's own neighborhood—and whether it's possible to love a place that may never feel quite like home.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Memoirs of a Rebel Princess Abida Sultaan, 2013-05-30 Written shortly before her death and based on the diaries that she kept throughout her life, this book documents the activities of a Muslim princess who rebelled against societal conventions to take an active public role, first, as heir-apparent and chief secretary of an Indian princely state, then as diplomat and dissident in independent Pakistan.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Who's Irish? Gish Jen, 2012-08-29 In this dazzling collection of short stories, the award-winning author of the acclaimed novels *Thank You, Mr. Nixon* and *Mona in the Promised Land*—presents a sparkling ... gently satiric look at the American Dream and its fallout on those who pursue it (*The New York Times*). The stories in *Who's Irish?* show us the children of immigrants looking wonderingly at their parents' efforts to assimilate, while the older generation asks how so much selfless hard work on their part can have yielded them offspring who'd sooner drop out of life than succeed at it. With dazzling wit and compassion, Gish Jen looks at ambition and compromise at century's end and finds that much of the action is as familiar—and as strange—as the things we know to be most deeply true about ourselves.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: Flight Sherman Alexie, 2013-10-15 From the National Book Award-winning author of *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, the tale of a troubled boy's trip through history. Half Native American and half Irish, fifteen-year-old "Zits" has spent much of his short life alternately abused and ignored as an orphan and ward of the foster care system. Ever since his mother died, he's felt alienated from everyone, but, thanks to the alcoholic father whom he's never met, especially disconnected from other Indians. After he runs away from his latest foster home, he makes a new friend. Handsome, charismatic, and eloquent, Justice soon persuades Zits to unleash his pain and anger on the uncaring world. But picking up a gun leads Zits on an unexpected time-traveling journey through several violent moments in American history, experiencing life as an FBI agent during the civil rights movement, a mute Indian boy during the Battle of Little Bighorn, a nineteenth-century Indian tracker, and a modern-day airplane pilot. When Zits finally returns to his own body, "he begins to understand what it means to be the hero, the villain and the victim. . . . Mr. Alexie succeeds yet again with his ability to pierce to the heart of matters, leaving this reader with tears in her eyes" (*The New York Times Book Review*). Sherman

Alexie's acclaimed novels have turned a spotlight on the unique experiences of modern-day Native Americans, and here, the New York Times–bestselling author of *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven* and *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* takes a bold new turn, combining magical realism with his singular humor and insight. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Sherman Alexie including rare photos from the author's personal collection.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *American Multicultural Identity* Linda Trinh Moser, Kathryn West, 2014 Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness... the question of what it means to be an American is contemplated in many works of fiction and nonfiction. The editors of *The American Identity* examine the American character, life in the 'melting pot,' and the many facets of American identity in popular literature. Close readings of the most important works in this genre sheds a new light on the study of this wide-ranging theme.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Forgotten Country* Catherine Chung, 2012-03-01 A Booklist Top 10 First Novels of 2012 pick A Bookpage Best Books of 2012 pick "A richly emotional portrait of a family that had me spellbound from page one."—Cheryl Strayed, bestselling author of *Wild* The night before Janie's sister, Hannah, is born, her grandmother tells her a story: Since the Japanese occupation of Korea, their family has lost a daughter in every generation, and Janie is told to keep Hannah safe. Years later, when Hannah inexplicably cuts all ties and disappears, Janie goes to find her. Thus begins a journey that will force her to confront her family's painful silence, the truth behind her parents' sudden move to America twenty years earlier, and her own conflicted feelings toward Hannah. Weaving Korean folklore within a modern narrative of immigration and identity, *Forgotten Country* is a fierce exploration of the inevitability of loss, the conflict between obligation and freedom, and a family struggling to find its way out of silence and back to one another.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Hunger of Memory* Richard Rodriguez, 2004-02-03 *Hunger of Memory* is the story of Mexican-American Richard Rodriguez, who begins his schooling in Sacramento, California, knowing just 50 words of English, and concludes his university studies in the stately quiet of the reading room of the British Museum. Here is the poignant journey of a "minority student" who pays the cost of his social assimilation and academic success with a painful alienation — from his past, his parents, his culture — and so describes the high price of "making it" in middle-class America. Provocative in its positions on affirmative action and bilingual education, *Hunger of Memory* is a powerful political statement, a profound study of the importance of language ... and the moving, intimate portrait of a boy struggling to become a man.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Fifth Chinese Daughter* Jade Snow Wong, 2019-11-21 Jade Snow Wong's autobiography portrays her coming-of-age in San Francisco's Chinatown, offering a rich depiction of her immigrant family and her strict upbringing, as well as her rebellion against family and societal expectations for a Chinese woman. Originally published in 1950, *Fifth Chinese Daughter* was one of the most widely read works by an Asian American author in the twentieth century. The US State Department even sent its charismatic young author on a four-month speaking tour throughout Asia. Cited as an influence by prominent Chinese American writers such as Amy Tan and Maxine Hong Kingston, *Fifth Chinese Daughter* is a foundational work in Asian American literature. It was written at a time when few portraits of Asian American life were available, and no similar works were as popular and broadly appealing. This new edition includes the original illustrations by Kathryn Uhl and features an introduction by Leslie Bow, who critically examines the changing reception and enduring legacy of the book and offers insight into Wong's life as an artist and an ambassador of Chinese American culture.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Red Tree* Shaun Tan, 2010 A small child awakes to find blackened leaves falling from her bedroom ceiling, threatening to overwhelm her. 'Sometimes you wake up with nothing to look forward to...' As she wanders around a world that is complex, puzzling and alienating, she is overtaken by a myriad of feelings. Just as it seems all hope is lost, the girl returns to her bedroom to find that a tiny red seedling has grown to fill the room with warm light. Astonishing Australian artist, Shaun Tan's latest creation, *The Red Tree*, is a book about

feelings - feelings that can not always be simply expressed in words. It is a series of imaginary landscapes conjured up by the wizardry of his masterful and miraculous art. As a kind of fable, *The Red Tree* seeks to remind us that, though some bad feelings are inevitable, they are always tempered by hope.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Ferris Beach* Jill McCorkle, 2009-09-22 BONUS! Read a preview of Jill McCorkle's new novel, *HIEROGLYPHICS*, in the *Ferris Beach* e-book. An amazing novel.— Sarah Dessen *Ferris Beach* is a place where excitement and magic coexist. Or so Mary Katherine Katie Burns, the only child of middle-aged Fred and Cleva Burns, believes. Shy and self-conscious, she daydreams about Ferris Beach, where her beautiful cousin, Angela, leads a romantic, mysterious life. It is the early 1970s, and when the land across the road from the Burns's historic house is sold to developers, Misty Rhodes—also from Ferris Beach—and her flamboyant parents move into the nearest newly built split-level. In contrast to Katie's composed, reserved, practical mother, Misty and her mother are everything Katie wants to be: daring, outrageous, fun. The two girls become inseparable, sharing every secret, every dream—until one fateful Fourth of July, when their lives change in a way they could never have imagined. In this classic McCorkle novel, the author's shrewd grasp of human nature creates characters that resonate with truth and emotion, and a story perfect for mothers and daughters to share and cherish.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Yellow Woman* Leslie Marmon Silko, 1993 Ambiguous and unsettling, Silko's *Yellow Woman* explores one woman's desires and changes--her need to open herself to a richer sensuality. Walking away from her everyday identity as daughter, wife and mother, she takes possession of transgressive feelings and desires by recognizing them in the stories she has heard, by blurring the boundaries between herself and the Yellow Woman of myth.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Loop of Jade* Sarah Howe, 2015-05-07 *WINNER OF THE T. S. ELIOT PRIZE 2015* *WINNER OF THE SUNDAY TIMES / PETERS FRASER + DUNLOP YOUNG WRITER OF THE YEAR AWARD 2015* *SHORTLISTED FOR THE FORWARD PRIZE FOR BEST FIRST COLLECTION 2015* There is a Chinese proverb that says: 'It is more profitable to raise geese than daughters.' But geese, like daughters, know the obligation to return home. In her exquisite first collection, Sarah Howe explores a dual heritage, journeying back to Hong Kong in search of her roots. With extraordinary range and power, the poems build into a meditation on hybridity, intermarriage and love - what meaning we find in the world, in art, and in each other. Crossing the bounds of time, race and language, this is an enthralling exploration of self and place, of migration and inheritance, and introduces an unmistakable new voice in British poetry.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *Monkey Bridge* Lan Cao, 1998-06-01 Hailed by critics and writers as powerful, important fiction, *Monkey Bridge* charts the unmapped territory of the Vietnamese American experience in the aftermath of war. Like navigating a monkey bridge—a bridge, built of spindly bamboo, used by peasants for centuries—the narrative traverses perilously between worlds past and present, East and West, in telling two interlocking stories: one, the Vietnamese version of the classic immigrant experience in America, told by a young girl; and the second, a dark tale of betrayal, political intrigue, family secrets, and revenge—her mother's tale. The haunting and beautiful terrain of *Monkey Bridge* is the luminous motion, as it is called in Vietnamese myth and legend, between generations, encompassing Vietnamese lore, history, and dreams of the past as well as of the future. With incredible lightness, balance and elegance, writes Isabel Allende, Lan Cao crosses over an abyss of pain, loss, separation and exile, connecting on one level the opposite realities of Vietnam and North America, and on a deeper level the realities of the material world and the world of the spirits. • Quality Paperback Book Club Selection and New Voices Award nominee • A Kiriyaama Pacific Rim Award Book Prize nominee

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: *The Woman Warrior* Maxine Hong Kingston, 2010-09-01 NATIONAL BESTSELLER • An exhilarating blend of autobiography and mythology, of world and self, of hot rage and cool analysis. First published in 1976, it has become a classic in its innovative portrayal of multiple and intersecting identities—immigrant, female, Chinese, American. • NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD WINNER “A classic, for a reason.” —Celeste Ng,

bestselling author of *Little Fires Everywhere* and *Our Missing Hearts*, via Twitter As a girl, Kingston lives in two confounding worlds: the California to which her parents have immigrated and the China of her mother's "talk stories." The fierce and wily women warriors of her mother's tales clash jarringly with the harsh reality of female oppression out of which they come. Kingston's sense of self emerges in the mystifying gaps in these stories, which she learns to fill with stories of her own. A warrior of words, she forges fractured myths and memories into an incandescent whole, achieving a new understanding of her family's past and her own present.

analysis of mother tongue by amy tan: The Censors Luisa Valenzuela, 1992 The only bilingual collection of fiction by Luisa Valenzuela. This selection of stories from *Clara*, *Strange things happen here*, and *Open door* delve into the personal and political realities under authoritarian rule.

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