

## 1: The Mother Tongue: English and How It Got That Way by Bill Bryson

*Certainly not this grammar-allergic reviewer, but The Mother Tongue pulls it off admirably. Bill Bryson--a zealot--is the right man for the job. Bill Bryson--a zealot--is the right man for the job. Who else could rhapsodize about "the colorless murmur of the schwa" with a straight face?*

I cannot give you much more than personal opinions on the English language and its variations in this country or others. I am a writer. And by that definition, I am someone who has always loved language. I am fascinated by language in daily life. I spend a great deal of my time thinking about the power of language -- the way it can evoke an emotion, a visual image, a complex idea, or a simple truth. Language is the tool of my trade. And I use them all -- all the Englishes I grew up with. Recently, I was made keenly aware of the different Englishes I do use. I was giving a talk to a large group of people, the same talk I had already given to half a dozen other groups. The nature of the talk was about my writing, my life, and my book, *The Joy Luck Club*. The talk was going along well enough, until I remembered one major difference that made the whole talk sound wrong. My mother was in the room. And it was perhaps the first time she had heard me give a lengthy speech, using the kind of English I have never used with her. Just last week, I was walking down the street with my mother, and I again found myself conscious of the English I was using, the English I do use with her. We were talking about the price of new and used furniture and I heard myself saying this: And then I realized why. It has become our language of intimacy, a different sort of English that relates to family talk, the language I grew up with. Like off the street kind. The local people call putong, the river east side, he belong to that side local people. That man want to ask Du Zong father take him in like become own family. Now important person, very hard to inviting him. Respect for making big celebration, he shows up. Mean gives lots of respect. Chinese social life that way. He come to my wedding. Chinese age I was nineteen. Yet some of my friends tell me they understand 50 percent of what my mother says. Some say they understand 80 to 90 percent. Some say they understand none of it, as if she were speaking pure Chinese. Her language, as I hear it, is vivid, direct, full of observation and imagery. That was the language that helped shape the way I saw things, expressed things, made sense of the world. But I wince when I say that. I was ashamed of her English. I believed that her English reflected the quality of what she had to say. That is, because she expressed them imperfectly her thoughts were imperfect. And I had plenty of empirical evidence to support me: My mother has long realized the limitations of her English as well. When I was fifteen, she used to have me call people on the phone to pretend I was she. In this guise, I was forced to ask for information or even to complain and yell at people who had been rude to her. One time it was a call to her stockbroker in New York. She had cashed out her small portfolio and it just so happened we were going to go to New York the next week, our very first trip outside California. So mad he lie to me, losing me money. Tan, was shouting at his boss in her impeccable broken English. We used a similar routine just five days ago, for a situation that was far less humorous. My mother had gone to the hospital for an appointment, to find out about a benign brain tumor a CAT scan had revealed a month ago. She said she had spoken very good English, her best English, no mistakes. Still, she said, the hospital did not apologize when they said they had lost the CAT scan and she had come for nothing. She said they did not seem to have any sympathy when she told them she was anxious to know the exact diagnosis, since her husband and son had both died of brain tumors. She said they would not give her any more information until the next time and she would have to make another appointment for that. So she said she would not leave until the doctor called her daughter. And when the doctor finally called her daughter, me, who spoke in perfect English -- lo and behold -- we had assurances the CAT scan would be found, promises that a conference call on Monday would be held, and apologies for any suffering my mother had gone through for a most regrettable mistake. But I do think that the language spoken in the family, especially in immigrant families which are more insular, plays a large role in shaping the language of the child. And I believe that it affected my results on achievement tests, I. While my English skills were never judged as poor, compared to math, English could not be considered my strong suit. Math is precise; there is only one correct answer. Whereas, for me at least, the answers on English tests were always a judgment call, a matter of

opinion and personal experience. Well, I could never think that way. And all the other pairs of words “red, bus, stoplight, boring” just threw up a mass of confusing images, making it impossible for me to sort out something as logical as saying: Why are there few Asian Americans enrolled in creative writing programs? Why do so many Chinese students go into engineering! But I have noticed in surveys “in fact, just last week” that Asian students, as a whole, always do significantly better on math achievement tests than in English. Fortunately, I happen to be rebellious in nature and enjoy the challenge of disproving assumptions made about me. I became an English major my first year in college, after being enrolled as pre-med. I started writing nonfiction as a freelancer the week after I was told by my former boss that writing was my worst skill and I should hone my talents toward account management. And at first I wrote using what I thought to be wittily crafted sentences, sentences that would finally prove I had mastery over the English language. And the reader I decided upon was my mother, because these were stories about mothers. So with this reader in mind “and in fact she did read my early drafts” I began to write stories using all the Englishes I grew up with: I wanted to capture what language ability tests can never reveal: Apart from what any critic had to say about my writing, I knew I had succeeded where it counted when my mother finished reading my book and gave me her verdict:

### 2: mother tongue - Wiktionary

*The Mother Tongue is the story of the evolution of the English language, from its humble beginnings as a Germanic tongue to what it has evolved into over the centuries. So, Bill Bryson + cheap equals insta-buy for me, apparently.*

I bought this book about two or three years ago, thinking it might be an entertaining read that might fill me in on some of the historical aspects of the English language. I had already read "A Short History Of Nearly Everything", and, knowing nothing about science, thought it was a rather entertaining read, even though I had some I also believe this to be one of the few books I have on my Goodreads shelves worthy of one star only. Before I start, let me tell you two things: The second thing I would like to mention is that I have some kind of idea about linguistics, but am not a linguist; where I am, however, a kind of expert, is in the study of foreign languages. I am therefore intimately acquainted with the workings of many foreign languages -- though almost all of them are European. I have also rather extensively studied the historical connections between languages and their classification in language families and so on. It is painfully obvious that Bryson speaks no foreign languages. Neither does Chomsky and he knows a thing or two about linguistics. Bryson makes the same mistake most monolingual speakers of any language make: Bryson tries to justify the popularity of the English language not with historical or political arguments because I am sure that the colonization of a significant part of the world by the British Empire and the subsequent cultural and political hegemony of the United States had nothing to do with it -- nooo, English is magic! Bryson then tries to argue the point with facts that are, while true for the most part, totally irrelevant. One "fact" that makes the English language so great, he says, is that it has "so many more words than all the other languages". How many words a language has, Bill, is not only something that cannot accurately be ascertained, but also something that is completely irrelevant. In brief, language create composita in a different way, for instance; so where you might create a million different random words in German, in other languages, you have to link them together, meaning you will have less dictionary hits. Not that that has any bearing on the "quality" of the language. Some languages even HAVE to make more words because they have agglutinative qualities such as Hungarian and Turkish; meaning they lump prefixes, suffixes, and other elements together, creating big lump words. Also, English is the dominant language of science; as such, a lot of the scientific vocabulary is included in dictionaries. Not that these words are usually English except for the newer sciences like computer science, of course ; they often come from Latin or Ancient Greek anyway. There are also more dictionaries being produced in English on account of it being more "popular", and the commercial production of English being more viable. As such, its lexicography can be assumed to be more advanced. At one point, I had to stop reading. I should read it again and reiterate some of the other numerous "arguments" Bill Bryson puts forward in favour of the English language. Unfortunately, Bryson probably thought that he can easily trespass on this territory, since everyone who is able to speak must be a linguist. My review may sound harsh, but this book definitely does more harm than good. And people should remember that "fun fact" books, be they about natural sciences or linguistics, do not represent knowledge. I am sure that people endowed with a deeper understanding of natural science have shaken their head at "A Short History Of Nearly Everything" as well.

## 3: The Mother Tongue Summary & Study Guide

*The Mother Tongue (ISBN ) is a book by Bill Bryson which compiles the history and origins of the English and the language's various quirks. It is subtitled English And How It Got That Way.*

The language immersion school, operated by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians , teaches the same curriculum as other American primary schools , but Cherokee is the medium of instruction from preschool onward, and students learn it as a first language. Such schools have proven instrumental in the preservation and perpetuation of Cherokee. One of the more widely accepted definitions of native speakers is that they were born in a particular country raised to speak the language of that country during the critical period of their development. That is achieved by personal interaction with the language and speakers of the language. Native speakers will not necessarily be knowledgeable about every grammatical rule of the language, but they will have good "intuition" of the rules through their experience with the language. Children growing up in bilingual homes can, according to this definition, have more than one mother tongue or native language. In the context of population censuses conducted on the Canadian population, Statistics Canada defines mother tongue as "the first language learned at home in childhood and still understood by the individual at the time of the census. That includes young immigrant children whose families have moved to a new linguistic environment as well as people who learned their mother tongue as a young child at home rather than the language of the majority of the community , who may have lost, in part or in totality, the language they first acquired see language attrition. Mother tongue[ edit ] International Mother Language Day Monument in Sydney, Australia, unveiling ceremony, 19 February According to Ivan Illich , the term "mother tongue" was first used by Catholic monks to designate a particular language they used, instead of Latin , when they are "speaking from the pulpit". That is, the "holy mother the Church" introduced this term and colonies inherited it from Christianity as a part of colonialism. Tolkien , in his lecture " English and Welsh ," distinguishes the "native tongue" from the "cradle tongue. Significance[ edit ] The first language of a child is part of the personal, social and cultural identity. Research suggest that while a non-native speaker may develop fluency in a targeted language after about two years of immersion, it can actually take between five and seven years for that child to be on the same working level as their native speaking counterparts. That has implications on the education of non-native speakers. One definition is that a person is bilingual by being equally proficient in both languages. A person who grows up speaking English and begins learning Spanish for four years is not necessarily bilingual unless they speak the two languages with equal fluency. This study found the following: The order in which these languages are learned is not necessarily the order of proficiency. For instance, if a French-speaking couple have a child who learned French first but then the child grew up in an English-speaking country, the child would likely be most proficient in English. Other examples are in India , Indonesia , the Philippines , Kenya , Malaysia , Singapore , and South Africa , where most people speak more than one language. The designation "native language," in its general usage, is thought to be imprecise and subject to various interpretations that are biased linguistically, especially with respect to bilingual children from ethnic minority groups. However, all of three criteria lack precision. Defining "native language"[ edit ] Based on origin: Based on internal identification: The principles, according to the study, are typically accepted by language experts across the scientific field. A native speaker is defined according to the guidelines as this: The individual acquired the language in early childhood. The individual has intuitive knowledge of the language. The individual is able to produce fluent, spontaneous discourse. The individual is competent in communication. The individual identifies with or is identified by a language community. The individual has a dialect accent including the official dialect.

## 4: The Mother Tongue - Wikipedia

*Program two in the series The Story of English traces the history of the language in terms of successive invasions of the British Isles, from the Anglo-Saxons through the Norman French in*

### 5: The Mother Tongue (Audiobook) by Bill Bryson | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)

*The Mother Tongue is an almost flawless popularization of the linguistic history of English. I've read many of Bryson's books and I have to say that this was his best.*

### 6: SparkNotes Search Results: Mother Tongue

*The heroic books, even if printed in the character of our mother tongue, will always be in a language dead to degenerate times; and we must laboriously seek the meaning of each word and line, conjecturing a larger sense than common use permits out of what wisdom and valor and generosity we have.*

### 7: First language - Wikipedia

“The Economist, "Foul playThe power of profane language," 25 Jan. Kinstler, meaning artist in German, Deckard's mother tongue, alludes to the concentration of artists and galleries in the area.

### 8: Mother Tongue, by Amy Tan | Home Is Where The Heart Dwells

*The Mother Tongue Center was established in Abu Dhabi, UAE in as a specialized center in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. The center aims at raising the standards of teaching Arabic to a professional academic level.*

### 9: The Mother Tongue by Bryson, Bill

*Mother tongue is a traditional term for a person's native language—that is, a language learned from birth. Also called a first language, dominant language, home language, and native tongue (although these terms are not necessarily synonymous).*

*Finance bodie merton IX. Exhibits open to the public . during the period of the tercentenary celebration [at the Church of St. Visual basic 6.0 with ms access database connectivity Microsoft Quickpascal Programming for the Pc The Cosmology of John Ross Building and plumbing codes Incomplete block designs Eprg model in international business 2005 ford escape xtl v6 owners manual General trends in the evolution of prokaryotic transcriptional regulatory networks Babu, M.M. Balaji, S. Government finance and economic development Developing web applications by ralph moseley Network security technologies and solutions ccie professional development Basics of engineering economy 2nd edition Ieland blank Seasons of the Witch Daily 2007 Decision support system journal The hostiles were apparently everywhere Italian Verbs For Dummies Appeals to the Illinois Supreme and appellate courts Worlds together worlds apart volume 2 concise edition Oxford handbook of the economics of gambling Multiscale modelling in research methodology The complete birdhouse book Fashion Book, The Mini Edition 11th Cat, Vol. 5 (11th Cat) The Cobweb Christmas Dissolved nutrient and suspended particulate matter data for the San Francisco Bay estuary, California, O Waiting for the Whales Complications in spinal surgery Depression across cultures Laurence J. Kirmayer and G. Eric Jarvis The Sorensen 4 Incident Speech and language : on the origins and foundations of inequality among speakers Clarence John Laughlin Customer service test questions and answers No stress night time potty routine Embracing America Whos who in track and field Unleash the night Museum of modern art Social Differentiation and Social Inequality*