

The Joy Luck Club

Tiny single celled organisms called bacteria are controlled by stimuli from their environment. If the micro-organisms detect a solid, they back up, turn and begin crawling in another direction. If the bacteria senses a food source they attach itself to the nourishment and inhale the diet via diffusion. The method basic cells accomodate their environment is identical to citizens adjusting to their society. Acknowledging society's modern opinion on sexual offenses, today's deterrents impose stricter and lengthier prison sentences in comparison with the penalties a two decades ago. To appreciate the significance of a novel, the reader must be aware of the atmosphere and environment influencing the writer. The Joy Luck Club revolves around the lives of four mother and daughters blooming from two contradictory generations of rival Chinese values and conflicts. The novel's success relies on the author's ability to create an ambiance using literary devices to portray Chinese cultural background.

Grammatical errors grade eleven students commonly make deserve applause when integrated into the novel. The poor grammar of the main characters initially gives the reader the initial impression that the author is unable to form a proper sentence. Suysan Woo explains to her daughter, 'I thought maybe only just die... Maybe taste not too bad. But I can smell, dead taste, not firm.',(P.234). This English sentence lacks the basic pronouns needed to be grammatically correct. However when translated to Chinese, the quotation would exemplify a perfect smooth-flowing sentence. Pages later, the reader slowly learns that the author manufactures such mistakes voluntarily. The sentence is written in this justifiable style to duplicate the speech many Chinese immigrants practice. The repeated pattern guides the reader to harmonize with the Chinese dialogue and effectively perserves Chinese cultural setting throughout the entire story.

Audience participation is a tremendous factor that can either make or break a presentation. Instead of physical involvement, the reader's restless mind is set free to meander in the mind-boggling diction. The reader is puzzled when Auntie Ying says, 'help us stack the tiles and make four walls', (P.23) Is the word 'wall' to meant be taken literally? The uncertain term 'wall' refers to the four stacks of tiles forming the square playing area of the popular recreational Chinese game known as mahjong. A discerning Chinese audience will easily be able to comprehend the term. For those who are not as gifted in the language a clear, concise explanation is provided in the next paragraph. Understanding the diction grants the reader a deep sense of belonging and loyalty towards the novel's culture. By being able to grasp and relate to the terms, the reader is aware and understanding of the cultural decor the novel is furnished with.

In many circumstances it is much more convenient to explain an idea with one word over another. The novel applies stealthy metaphors to express a Chinese slang that no word or phrase English can imitate. A plainspoken man cutting open a watermelon asking Ying Ying if she wants a piece, 'Kai Gwa?'(p.273) The evil suggestion the man makes is carefully hidden and disguised in the innocence of the young girl. After the initial penetration of the knife, an exposed watermelon cannot be opened again. When the man bluntly asks Ying Ying 'Kai Gwa?'(P.273), he is slyly suggesting that he will be the one who first opens her like a watermelon and claims her virginity. Thoughtful metaphors probe the reader to constantly stop and meditate about the cultural influence of each line.

The primary use of characters is to convey the writer's messages to the reader. Through characterization, the literary director gives reason behind the thoughts and actions of his cast. Lindo Jong is carefully described by her daughter as, 'A horse, born in 1918.'(P.183) Opening a entirely new dimension to the play, the reader is feed traditional myths and superstitions about the sacred Chinese calendar. Classifying each year to an animal, the timetable bestows every creature with it's own unique balance of strengths and weaknesses. A horse is described as an animal who is destined to be obstinate and frank. We witness these traits in Lindo when she is dissatisfied about an appealing waiter who has failed to meet her expectation of proper service. Amusingly instead of quietly leaving and taking her business elsewhere, she makes a huge show of embarrassing the innocent waiter, 'Pulled back the dollar bills and counted out exact change.. explaining firmly :'No Tip!'"(P.184) Whenever the colorful personalities of the characters are uniform with their fabled animals, the reader recalls and learns the superstitions. It becomes reflex for the reader to consciously incorporate the Chinese folklore linked to the characters. Using this technique the author persuades the reader to gradually assimilate themselves to the Chinese culture.

Displaying two items at once allows the spectator to accurately compare the similarity between one item to another. Unsatisfied with this conventional standard, the author cleverly narrows the comparison between an item and a Chinese item. An-Mei Hsu is told her mother is 'a ghost'(p.33), not because she was dead, but because her mother has, 'little respect.. traitor to our ancestors.'(p.28) Being a concubine classified a person spiritless because it was considered such a sinful blasphemy, society that woman must have lost their spirits to the temptation of the devil. When An-Mei is slapped the decision of whether to with live her 'disgraceful' mother or her aunt and uncle somebody shouts, 'It's just the ass of the same old mule!.. Life is what you see in front of you!'"(P.274) Concubines are also compared to donkeys, slaves that don't even deserve an ounce of courtesy or respect. Captives of their masters destined to amount to nothing and a

miserable future. The two interpretations of the concubine reveal the values and morals of society at the time. The device is frequently used to stress the cultural ambiance of the novel.

The genuine themes communicated the narration of a novel point out a fact, injustice or emotion about the time period the author wishes to write about. The knowledge a reader acquires after reading a quality novel can be the most rewarding gift a writer can give. An issue the author distinguishes is the remarkable loyalty that exists between Chinese mothers and daughters. The faithfulness of a Chinese daughter is exhibited when Lindo Jong agrees to marry her planned husband. Knowing that the sacrament will doom her to unhappiness and sorrow she goes against her own will and reasoning to honor the wishes of her parents describing it as, 'sacrificed my life to keep my parents promise.' (P.43) This is a very common act of respect a stubborn society instinctively expects from their children. The theme lies on a parallel with the setting, complimenting and aiding and abetting the believability of on another, going perfectly hand in hand.

The novel is visually depicted as a successive number of beautifully painted pictures in the reader's imagination. The cultural setting affects the visions of the dreamer, 'I dreamed of jagged peaks lining a curving river, with magic moss on the banks.' (P.7) In China there are many mountains and rivers what have established themselves for centuries. In dry regions where snowfall is rare mountain tops, they are as sharp as daggers. In waterlogged areas the dampness inspires moss to accumulate beyond considerable proportions. The reader is offered a glimpse into the thoughts and images many Chinese people ponder. Through imagery, the reader can visualize the dynamic setting of the novel. The imagery supports the setting by constructing a vivid cultural backdrop for the performance to take place.

The author's talent of employing devices is faultlessly applied in creating Chinese ambiance. The very second the reader peel to the first page an unforgettable cultural safari commences. In a jungle of cultural diction, metaphors, similies and imagery the enjoyable expedition hunts for a valuable spiritual treasures. When discovered, the reader is enriched with a complete understanding of the Chinese culture. Each jewel a vast window of knowledge exploring the life of a culture seldom journey by Western authors. A landmark and a new standard for novels to follow the reader's only regret will be they will have to wait for the sequel.

