

# Critical summary



In her essay "How to Tame a Wild Tongue", Gloria Anzaldua, a former professor and a feminist, argues that language is tied deeply to our identity. Chicanos need to identify ourselves as a distinct people. We needed a language with which we could communicate with ourselves, a secret language, her Chicano culture is in deep connection with their language. She supports this claim first by starting with an example of how her language is not accepted as who she is, she lives in America therefore is expected to speak American, but when surrounded by people of her native language she speaks chicano. Then she progresses into the details of how her language progressed and was formed. Through this formation, she connects the language to her identity and how she relates directly to the language.

Towards the end of her essay she begins to connect herself to her language and challenges American acceptance of English as the only language appropriate in the United States. Her purpose is to draw attention to the inequality of language acceptance, and to show how it can begin to prevent someone from finding an identity. The intended audience is those who are lost in their identity, due to the fact that they live in a country which has multiple backgrounds yet only one language is accepted. In a controversial yet confident tone, in which she addresses the oppressors of her language. This is significant because it establishes how language can connect to one's identity, even in a society that only accepts one language. One of her key flash points is within the conclusion of her essay. She describes her acceptance of her identity as chicano, no matter how dominant the mainstream society is over her language. She will remain steadfast with her

identity as chicano no matter how many times she we will be oppressed by mainstream white society.

This is in connection with the keyword of chicano, which is the source of her identity. This helps challenge people's perceptions of what language is and how it can connect to identity. It helps establish and support her point that people need to be challenged to recognize value in an unique language, not the standard white language. This supports her main argument that language is tied into identity. One of her main uses is challenging the reader, she challenges the reader to think over what identity is and how it relates to one's language.

She does this by using pathos, in which she creates emotion between identity and language. She appeals to the reader's pathos, strengthening her argument that their language has been oppressed therefore she has felt lost for an identity most of her life. It has been an extreme struggle for her as a chicano. Another uses is the use of spanish throughout the article. This helps her express ideas and emotions that she couldn't when only using english. It helps strengthen the point that when using spanish she is stronger in expressing herself and her identity.

Her shortcomings are found in the lack of logos throughout the essay. She uses to much pathos in her argument, without the statistics to back up her argument it leaves holes and causes her argument to be weakened. If she showed logos for her and other cultural languages used in the United States it would have strengthened her argument that identity is linked to culture by showing how others connect to their unique language separate from english.

Another limit is her use of spanish because it weakens the readers understanding of her use of spanish. Some people don't know what she was referring to when she switched from english to spanish and back to english. Overall though, her argument that language is linked to identity is portrayed successfully in her article.