

THE SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF FORCED MIGRATION

A Multi-Media Educational Tool

Summer 2021

Language and Migration

Target audience: Advanced and lifelong learners

Keywords: language, translation, personal narrative

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Through these sources, we have collected a wide range of voices that present to us the relationship between migration and language. We will observe language beyond just a tool to communicate to one another, but also its role in the physical survival and cultural integration of migrants. The world is constantly changing, and now it's become more and more common to speak a different number of languages. There is a rise of hybrid languages in response to mass migration. On the other side, there are many who use languages as a tool of control, encouraging the death of indigenous languages.

The perspectives we will read, see, and listen to through this selection vary from anecdotal, to surreal and poetic. They all deal with what it means to connect through language. To find oneself, struggling to connect with others and with the members of their own community. Many translate, others combine the languages that connect their ancestry and their present. What effects do war, hunger, and migration have on language? Can we ever be fluent in a language? How does language connect to territory, land, and home?

IDENTITIES IN TRANSLATION

This collection of essays showcases different ways in which language, migration and scholarship connect. These are all writers who, through their identities as migrants or members of diasporic communities, contribute to their fields in both literature and education. How has language created barriers for these writers? And how does language become a tool to overcome these barriers?

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Susan Holmes, "[The World at Home: US Writing in Translation](#)," Words without Borders, November 2017

- Editor's note the importance of giving migrant writers and translators a space to showcase their talents, and the importance of the translator's job in bringing down barriers and borders.

Mahdhu Kazah, "[Editor's note: Kitchen Table Translation](#)," Asterix Journal, August 9, 2017

- Editors note the importance of understanding the rich questions and complications migrant translators bring to literature.

Amy Tan, "[Mother Tongue](#)," Home is Where the Heart Dwells Harvard Blogs, February 6, 2008

- This essay focuses on the different types of English migrants must employ in day to day life, and the limits Chinese migrants phase in being taken seriously in English Literature.

Illan Stavans, "[In Defense of Spanglish: low-bred languages, the class struggle and why Amherst college teaches Spanglish](#)," The Common Reader, October 12, 2014

- This essay breaks down the rise of Spanglish in the U.S., the history that follows it, and the reception of his Spanglish translation of "Don Quixote de La Mancha".

LANGUAGE, TRANSLATION, AND POLITICS

Here there is a range of different resources that discuss the importance of language, translation and politics. They document different instances in which language can become a matter of life and death to some communities. The sources present the importance of translation when working with refugees and the loss of identity that can occur as one loses their own mother tongue.

Mia Marzotto, "[The global response to displacement and language barriers – three reasons for hope](#)", Translators Without Borders, 2018

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- This essay focuses on the new systemic developments the UN hopes to implement in order to provide proper care and assistance to migrants and refugees as they deal with language barriers.
- For more information, watch [Translation Matters: The Story of Our Work in Kenya](#), YouTube, Translators WB, 2015

Mirielle Gaselle, "[Translation as Transhumance](#)," Translated by Rob Schwartz, The Feminist Press at CUNY, November 14, 2017

- This book depicts the biography and philosophical inquiries of writer Mirielle Gaselle – who grew up in the aftermath of losing her language to Nazi Germany – and how her experiences led her to translate poets from East Berlin and Vietnam as an act of defiance.

["Restrictions in the Use of the Kurdish Language"](#) Human Rights Watch, February, 1999

- The document depicts the different prohibitions the Turkish government has placed on the Kurdish Language and its presence in media.
- For background information on who the Kurds are, see [Aljazeera, Who Are the Kurds? What Do They Want? And Why Does Nobody Want to Give It to Them?](#) Youtube, 2017

Valeria Luiselli, "[Tell Me How it Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions](#)", Coffee House Press, April 4, 2017

- This book presents us the translator's job of humanizing young migrants who face deportation. This book brings us closer to the reality many children experience when migrating to the United States. An illuminating work about the realities of modern day migration.

LANGUAGE IS MIGRANT

This section focuses on the writings of poet Cecilia Viacuña and an interview with Poet Javier Zamora. Each of them discuss the nature of language, and it's connections with migration. Allow the philosophy and imagination that these texts inspire to come forward into the class. How does language trespass borders, how do

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these texts help us understand the reality of borders and the effects they have on all of us?

Cecilia Viacuña, "[Language is Migrant.](#)" Poetry Foundation, April 18, 2016

- Cecilia Viacuña breaks down the concept of migration while interweaving it with the conceptual art she has created in her life.

Javier Zamora, "[Poems Don't Need Their Papers,](#)" Poetry of the shelves Podcast, July 3, 2018

- This podcast has the poet Javier Zamora, discuss his experience returning to El Salvador and how his poetry has been shaped by his crossing in the desert.