

ID7007 *Multilingualism, Translation and Identity in Literature*

Module type Optional (programme module)

Term / hours Michaelmas / 22

ECTS 10

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Module description

Samuel Beckett's adoption of French or Vladimir Nabokov's turn to English are not uncommon literary choices, much like T.S. Eliot's and James Joyce's inclusion of multiple foreign languages in their works. But what is involved in these choices? And what are the implications of reading such texts? What role do translation and self-translation play in these cases? This module explores the phenomenon of multilingualism in literature, in order to assess its implications for notions of identity, literary form, and translation practice. Beginning with an analysis of Eva Hoffman's autobiographical reflection on living between languages, this module will examine experimental works, such as, among others, H el ene Cixous's multilingual reading of works by the Brazilian-Ukrainian writer Clarice Lispector, Antonin Artaud's unclassifiable texts replete with nonsense and magical syllables, and a poem written in four languages – English, French, Italian, and Spanish – by poets Octavio Paz, Jacques Roubaud, Charles Tomlinson, and Edoardo Sanguineti.

Assessment

The module is assessed through a 4,000-word essay (100%).

Indicative bibliography

Artaud, Antonin, *Antonin Artaud, Selected Writings* (University of California Press, 1976).

Cixous, H el ene, *Vivre l'orange* (Des Femmes, 1979).

Hoffman, Eva, *Lost in Translation: A Life in a New Language* (Vintage, 1989).

Paz, Octavio, Roubaud, Jacques, Tomlinson, Charles, and Sanguineti, Edoardo, *Renga: A Chain of Poems* (Penguin, 1979).

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

- LO1 Identify and describe literary multilingualism in literature.
- LO2 Analyse and reflect on the relationship between languages and translation practices in literature.
- LO3 Accurately and critically deploy key concepts pertaining to literary form and language both in abstract and systematic reflection and in close readings of select passages.
- LO4 Reflect on key methodological issues: in particular, negotiate the interplay between textual analysis and theoretical inquiry.
- LO5 Develop academic written and oral skills through essay writing and in-class presentations.