

**TRANSLATION AND HYBRID IDENTITIES: THE CASE OF *LA FILLA ESTRANGERA*, BY
NAJAT EL HACHMI***

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ABSTRACT: Over the last decades, migrations have massively expanded. Societies are becoming increasingly diverse and cultural interchanges are becoming very common. The experience of migration poses many different challenges to those who live it. It places them in an in-between state, where they do not completely belong to the culture of origin or to the target community. This is inevitably reflected in the way they speak, which is often a mixture of two or more languages. Some migrant writers have depicted their border experiences in their works, such as Catalan author with Moroccan origins Najat El Hachmi. This article aims to explore the self-translations of an immigrant young woman in the novel *La filla estrangera* (El Hachmi, 2015), who struggles to conciliate her hybrid identity.

KEYWORDS: Translation, Cosmopolitanism, Hybridity, Catalan, Amazigh

Migrants transform and are transformed by the communities and societies they become a part of, and translation is central to this process.

Moira Inghilleri (2017, p. 3)

1. Introduction: hybrid identities expressed through hybrid languages

We live in a world of hybridity, where global and local languages interact and shape translingual (Canagarajah, 2013) discourses. Postcolonialism marked the beginning of an era in which minority identities were expressed by this mixture. These colonised (and later decolonised) territories were the cradle for today's hybrid languages. By using different strategies, the inhabitants of these countries mix the European coloniser's languages with local vernacular languages. These new forms of language are responses to the coloniser's dominance, portraying the asymmetries between those who hold power and those who are subjected to it. They are acts of rebellion against the European yoke. At the same time, they represent forms of group solidarity (Bandia, 1996, p. 147).

Nowadays, we live in a period of mass movement of peoples across the world (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, p. 4). This has given rise to a clear growth of transcultural exchanges and the subsequent increase of hybrid languages and identities. Migrants do not travel to and from empty spaces – they bring a suitcase full of experiences with them to a place full of different speakers (Blommaert, 2010, p. 6). In these new contexts, they have to negotiate their identities by implementing different strategies of translation. Minority identities try to redefine themselves within the borders of contexts where majority identities prevail.

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Migrants search to belong to new foreign realities without losing their previous identity (Inghilleri, 2017). They engage in processes of negotiation and transformation, no longer feeling defined by their culture of origin or by the target community. Identities are re-presented through language, whatever kind of language that might be (Spivak, 1993, p. 179). Therefore, translation becomes a key stakeholder in global exchanges because it enables engagement with new realities. Translation is the tool needed in these processes of migrant (re)definitions.

The tensions and negotiations between majority and minority identities, expressed through language, have been depicted by a series of writers worldwide. They are often migrants themselves or children of migrants, and they are known as hybrid authors. They have documented their experience of the foreign. The act of putting migrant experiences into words is indeed a way of legitimising it, i.e. the building-up of a body of minority hybrid literature within a society seeks to prove its legitimacy. The presence of hybrid works is a way of giving migrants a voice. In this line, this article understands intercultural communication “as a translation process” (Polezzi, 2009, p. 173), following the trend initiated by the translational turn in cultural studies (Bassnett, 1998). In addition, it engages with Gentzler’s (2017, p. 7) proposal of “rethinking translation, not as a short-term product or process, but as a cultural condition underlying communication”. Considering this, we presume that migrants perform translations of their linguistic identities. We believe this is possible because their identities are multiple, as they are defined both by the culture where they come from and by the culture of the territory to which they have emigrated. Migrants are therefore “translated men” (Rushdie, 1991, p. 17) or, as later named by Cronin (2006, p. 45), “translated beings”. This understanding of translation engages with the broad perspectives of our discipline presented by Bassnett (2012; 2014), Baker (2016), Gentzler (2017) and Bassnett and Johnston (2019, forthcoming).

A good example of these hybrid writers is Najat El Hachmi, a Catalan author with Moroccan origins. Among her works, the novels *L’últim patriarca* (2008), *La filla estrangera* (2015) and *Mare de llet i mel* (2018)¹ portray many of the challenges of living in-between languages and cultures. In this line, El Hachmi’s novels show that translation is a key element in migrants’ everyday lives. In fact, Vidal (2012, pp. 240, 244, 247) argues that this novelist presents daily life as a form of translation. We presume that these rewritings are often identity rewritings because they imply an adaptation of migrants’ fragmented identities to different contexts. This article will focus, hence, on El Hachmi’s *La filla estrangera* (2015). This novel and *Mare de llet i mel* tell the same story from different perspectives. The first one is narrated by the daughter, who describes her migrant identity struggles while she is becoming an adult. The second one is narrated by her mother, who

¹ *L’últim patriarca* received one of the most recognised Catalan literary award, the Premi Ramon Llull, in the year of its publication. The subsequent growth of interest in the novel led to its translation into many languages, such as English, under the title *The Last Patriarch*. For their part, *La filla estrangera* and *Mare de llet i mel* have not been translated into English. Their titles would literally be rendered as *The Foreign Daughter* and *Mother of Milk and Honey*, respectively.

faces the challenge of understanding the constant questionings of her growing-up daughter. Neither the mother's nor the daughter's name is included in the novel analysed by this case study. This article will focus specifically on the daughter's experience as it is the main focus in *La filla estrangera*. However, we believe that her mother also uses translation as a tool in her daily life, as portrayed in *Mare de llet i mel*. We think the daughter's experience can be extrapolated to many other migrants (and, especially, to migrants who emigrated when they were very young and have been mostly raised in their host country). As for the title *La filla estrangera*, it symbolises the feeling of uprooting the protagonist experiences in her migrant condition. She believes she does not completely belong to her nation of origin or to her host country. This feeling of not belonging to any place (or, from a different perspective, this multiplicity of identities) is, in fact, very common among migrants. Besides many other hybrid writers, scholars such as Appiah (2006, pp. 90-91) and Anzaldúa (1987) have also experienced and later described this situation.

La filla estrangera is mostly written in Catalan, in order to be understood by the target market and, above all, to legitimise the place of the young Moroccan protagonist within Catalan society. However, the author includes words in Tamazight² as well as Moroccan sayings that have been literally translated into Catalan in the middle of Catalan discourse, to show her distinctiveness. Given that migrants have multiple identities, our hypothesis for this article is the following: migrants use translation as a tool to negotiate their multiple identities within the context of diverse cultural traditions, implementing different translation strategies to define who they are and to fit in different situations. So as to defend this hypothesis, we will closely examine the attitudes of the main character in *La filla estrangera* (El Hachmi, 2015), a young girl who was born in North Morocco, but who grew up in Catalonia. The revision of this character's attitudes will serve as a model of the situation many other migrants experience. In fact, El Hachmi has stated that, although the novel is not autobiographical, it includes fragments of her own personal life experiences as well as other migrants' stories she has gotten to know (La Vanguardia, 2015, para. 9; VilaWeb, 2015, para. 10). She has argued that she has tried to put herself in the shoes of migrant Moroccan young girls who are becoming adults (VilaWeb, 2015, para. 10).

2. The Russian doll metaphor and the linguistic framework of Catalonia

Before delving into the analysis, it is necessary to describe briefly the linguistic situation in Catalonia. Our aim is to have a clear vision of the different linguistic identities living there.

² Tamazight is one of the official languages of Morocco, together with Arabic. Spoken in different parts of the country, as well as in other areas of Northern Africa, there is no real consensus regarding the number of speakers. It is estimated that 40% of its speakers are Moroccan, 17% are Algerian, 1% is Tunisian and 5% are people living in the Libyan Arab Jamahitiya; another fraction is spoken in Mauritania. However, some analysts estimate higher figures, reaching 60%-80% of speakers in Morocco and 45%-55% in Algeria (Mezhoud and El Kirat El Allame, 2009, p. 26-31; Moscoso García, 2002, p. 13-16; Zaid and El Kirat El Allame, 2018, p. 1-3;). The community speaking this language is known as Amazigh (the endonym) or Berber (the exonym). This article will use the adjectives Moroccan and Amazigh as contextual synonyms because the novel's main characters were born in Amazigh families in Morocco.

The tensions between majority and minority languages in today's society are depicted in the novel *La filla estrangera* (El Hachmi, 2015). This novel has a very significant role today, due to the recent independence disputes in Catalonia, which are generating controversy around the status of Catalan and Spanish. *La filla estrangera* very faithfully describes the tensions between global and local languages in the context of a small village in Catalonia. Although Catalan is a minority language, it becomes the lingua franca in this linguistic context. On the other hand, Spanish tries to impose its values over Catalan. When confronting Spanish, Catalan becomes a minority language. Therefore, *La filla estrangera* is a particularly relevant book nowadays because it depicts the conflict between two minority languages in a context where there is already another linguistic battle: that between Catalan and Spanish. In fact, the status of Catalan and Spanish has been a source of debate for years. Recently, the Spanish central government suggested including a new checkbox in school enrolment documents to allow parents to choose if they want their children to be taught in Spanish rather than in Catalan from the 2018-2019 school year onwards. This proposal did not go ahead in the end, but it is undoubtedly a reflection of the identity and linguistic tensions regarding the status of Catalan and Spanish in Catalonia. At the same time, the role of English as a lingua franca puts pressure on all the other languages. Many people believe that English is just like any other language, in an "illusion of language parity", but this is most probably not the case (Campbell, 2005, p. 27ff). English is putting pressure on Tamazight and Spanish, as it is increasingly widespread, especially among young people.

These identity and linguistic tensions have sprung up as a result of world interconnectedness. Minority and majority linguistic identities face and challenge each other. It is the increasing supremacy of power languages versus the strong and prevailing resistance of minority languages and hybrid languages. It is English, the lingua franca, versus all the other languages in the world. It is also any imperialist language versus the hybrid forms springing up around it. It is Spanish versus Catalan, but it is also Catalan versus Tamazight and versus the hybrid Catalan-Tamazight varieties that are flourishing in Catalonia. This is the Russian doll metaphor. The relationship between languages is asymmetric and their power increases or decreases according to ideological factors. As we have seen, Spanish is a power language and a minority language at the same time and in the same geographical area. Everything depends on the languages with which it establishes relations. Therefore, some languages impose themselves on others to reinforce their identity status, because identity is built through language and by mirroring itself onto other languages. While Catalan is imposing itself on Tamazight, and Spanish on Catalan, English is spreading its power over Spanish and other minority languages. In today's globalised and competitive world, universalism is the trend. Languages race against each other to gain supremacy by using universalistic strategies. English has become the homogenising lingua franca and puts pressure on all the other languages, inevitably transforming all of them into minority languages (Campbell, 2005). In the following section, we will examine the

strategies of a young girl of Moroccan origin living in a deeply hybrid and sensitive setting, Catalonia, to face her deeply diverse reality.

3. Translating a hybrid identity: an analysis of Najat El Hachmi's *La filla estrangera*

In this section, we will focus on some fragments of *La filla estrangera*. The main topic of the novel is the bond between an Amazigh immigrant mother and her daughter within a very specific context: that of the Moroccan migration to a small village in the inner part of Catalonia. This context will be our field to analyse the translations the daughter implements in order to manage her own hybrid identity. She was born in the Rif region, in the north of Morocco, and emigrated to Catalonia with her mother when she was little. The life moment portrayed is the final period of her teen years. We presume she is around 18 years old, because she has just taken a university entrance exam and Catalan students often sit this exam at this age. At this point of her life, she starts reflecting about who she is and where she belongs, partly driven by the need to decide on her career and personal life ahead. As the daughter of an immigrant woman, she looks for her place in Catalan society, where she belongs and does not belong at the same time. Despite her origins, she has spent most of her life in Catalonia. In addition, and probably most interestingly, she constantly reflects on the language she uses. A very similar situation is depicted by the author in some of her other novels, such as *L'últim patriarca* (2008) (Carrasco, 2019, forthcoming) and *Mare de llet i mel* (2018). The book is full of references to these hybrid identity struggles. In this article, we will focus on the purely linguistic aspects, i.e. the extracts in which the young protagonist implements translation strategies resulting in the use of a hybrid discourse. At this point, we deem it necessary to mention that other elements also play their part in the negotiations of the girl's hybrid identity, for instance, her body.³ However, as previously stated, this article will focus particularly on the negotiations where language *sensu stricto* is present. To form our corpus, we have compiled all the extracts in which the character negotiates her own identity and we have selected those in which the translations of her own linguistic identity are more clearly expressed through certain language strategies.

From the very beginning of the novel, we can see that the protagonist is aware that she needs translation in her daily life. The first example takes place at the beginning of the novel, when she is making coffee for her mother:

How would I have to call the pot to make coffee? *Thaglaxt, abarrad...* so different in our-their language, and I am unable to find Catalan equivalents. All of a sudden, this lexical gap, so insignificant, so banal, has reminded me how far I am from her, from her world, from her way to see and understand things. However much I translate, however much I try to pour words from one language to the other, I will never completely achieve it, there will always be differences. In spite of this, translation continues to be a sweet distraction, a tangible way to

³ The protagonist faces the challenge of living within two opposite beauty standards. Moroccan society expects her to have an opulent body shape, while the Catalan society asks her to have a slim one. She has to deal with these differences in a particularly problematic life period in which her body plays an important role: she wants to succeed in job interviews in Catalonia and strives to be liked by her recently-espoused Moroccan husband. She reflects extensively on the hard, daily choices she has to make regarding this issue.

at least wish to perform a coming together between our realities, which has been useful since we arrived here. (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 15, my translation)⁴

She realises that Tamazight uses two words for the pot to make coffee, which do not have a direct equivalent in Catalan. At that moment, she realises that there is a gap between herself and her mother. Then, she admits that translation has been the way to bring her Moroccan reality and Catalan reality closer together since she arrived in Catalonia when she was little. When she is making coffee with her mother, she needs to translate her Catalan identity into Amazigh parameters. She cannot make coffee only with Catalan words. She needs to highlight her Amazigh traits in this context, reinforcing her condition of translated woman as a result. This distance between the protagonist and her mother gives shape to the whole novel, as well as the translations she constantly needs to implement. The young protagonist realises she does not identify with many Amazigh traits that she sees in her mother. Instead, she has embraced many Catalan features after having spent most of her childhood there. The more she struggles to distance herself from her Moroccan origins, the more her mother wants her to get them back. This tug of war represents the protagonist's self-conflict regarding her hybrid identity. The result is a perpetual process of translation, as we will see in the following paragraphs of our analysis.

We can find a very clear example of the Catalan-Amazigh battle at the beginning of the novel. After mother and daughter have lunch together, the mother leaves the kitchen while the daughter stays behind to do the washing-up: "I have thought 'bye, mother, thanks for everything', but I have thought it in Catalan, rather than in her language. There are some thoughts that I have had or that I can only remember to have had in a language that is not hers" (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 17, my translation).⁵

In the Amazigh culture, it is typical to use this expression of gratitude after eating. However, as we have seen, the protagonist realises that this thought came to her mind in Catalan, rather than in Tamazight. This is a reflection of the identity struggles she is going through. She is becoming aware of the importance of Catalan in her daily life and of how difficult it is to conciliate both languages. This expression of gratitude is neither totally Catalan nor Tamazight. It is a hybrid translation of her own linguistic identity – what Bhabha (2004) would call a translation in the "Third Space" and Anzaldúa (1987), in the "borderland". It represents Bhabha's *vernacular cosmopolitanism*, which implies "moving in between cultural traditions, and revealing hybrid forms of life and art that do not have a prior existence within the discrete world of any single culture or language" (Bhabha, 2004,

⁴ "Com n'hauria de dir, de la tetera pel cafè? *Thaglaxt, abarrad*, tan nítidament diferents en la nostra-seva llengua, i jo que no sóc capaç de trobar-ne la correspondència. De sobte aquest decalatge lèxic, tan insignificant, tan banal, m'ha fet recordar com n'estic de lluny d'ella, del seu món, de la seva manera de veure i entendre les coses. Per més que tradueixi, per més que intenti vessar les paraules d'una llengua a l'altra, mai no ho aconseguiré, sempre hi haurà diferències. Tot i això la traducció segueix sent una distracció dolça, una manera almenys tangible de voler fer aquest acostament de les nostres realitats, que m'ha sigut útil des que vam venir aquí."

⁵ "He pensat: adéu mare, graciès per tot, però ho he pensat en aquesta llengua i no en la seva. Un pensament que se m'ha fet fals de sobte. Hi ha pensaments que només he tingut o puc recordar haver tingut en la llengua que no és la seva."

p. xiii). Although the protagonist feels she is betraying the Amazigh culture, she is in fact finding her own place in between two different linguistic and cultural identities. She is neither a hundred per cent Catalan nor a hundred per cent Moroccan, but she is at the crossroads between these two cultural traditions, and this is reflected in her language. In this case, she has been able to find a (linguistic) place where both worlds can coexist. However, she does not always find this in-between space, as we will see in the following example.

Moroccan women cluck their tongue in a very specific way (El Hachmi, 2015, pp. 106-107). This sound is very effective for the Amazigh community in certain communicative contexts. The protagonist argues that many Moroccan girls who have also grown up in Catalonia can do it. However, she admits that she cannot, even though she has secretly been practising in order to achieve it. When she becomes aware of her inability, she says, “I suddenly felt foreign, unable to belong to the same group as my mother, even though I tried to learn. Here we can see how a cluck can make you feel uprooted” (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 107, my translation).⁶ We can see how she tries to completely belong to her mother’s world. This proves that, sometimes, translation is not possible. She also gets frustrated when she realises that other girls like her can cluck their tongue. This example shows that there are situations in which the migrant feels unable to translate their linguistic identity to fit the new context.

Many of the protagonist’s attempts to translate her hybrid identity are very much related to food. This is probably one of the most fruitful areas where translation is portrayed. Indeed, it is connected to the mother-daughter relationship. In 1961, the semiologist Roland Barthes (2013) stated that food transmits a series of meanings. According to Chiaro and Rossato (2015, p. 239), “food is neither a joke nor poetry; it is the cornerstone of life and lies at the heart of our cultural identity”. Migrants take with them a set of cultural elements from their country of origin. Besides their language, one of the most remarkable is their culinary tradition. Food items transmit information about the places they come from (Chiaro and Rossato, 2015, p. 240) and, as a consequence, help constitute the identities of those who cook and eat them. Food and language are very much related, “an inextricable part of a person’s identity” (Chiaro and Rossato, 2015, p. 241).

Taking this into consideration, we will start by the bread-making process. El Hachmi focuses on this process in *L’últim patriarca*, *La filla estrangera* and *Mare de llet i mel*. Women are the ones in charge of this task in the Amazigh culture and it has a special relevance for this community: women who are able to make it particularly well are always highly acknowledged. The protagonist’s mother in *La filla estrangera* is one of these women. However, her daughter does not have this ability, because this tradition is not needed as much in the Catalan context: bread can be bought in any supermarket and Catalan women do not generally spend so much time cooking as Amazigh women do. In other words, she has grown up in a context where making bread is not so recognised by

⁶ “Em sentia sobtadament forastera, incapaç de pertànyer al mateix grup que la mare encara que ho intentés i mirés d’aprendre’n. Vet aquí com un espetec de la llengua et pot fer sentir desarrelada.”

society. In addition, she is not such a skilled cook like her mother. This is a source of frustration for her, because she is aware that she lacks an essential trait in the Amazigh community.

The protagonist reflects on this difference between her mother and herself in many fragments of the novel. This difference is expressed by the hybrid language she uses, in that she declares that she could not completely describe the bread-making process in Catalan (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 22). Every time she tries, many Tamazight words come to her mind. She is able to translate some of the Amazigh ingredients into Catalan. However, it is impossible for her to explain the complete bread recipe by using solely Catalan words; she needs Tamazight words as well. After this reflection, she admits that she could only speak her hybrid Tamazight-Catalan with someone like herself, i.e. with the daughter or son of an Amazigh immigrant family living in Catalonia. The act of describing bread-making with both Catalan and Tamazight words is a translation in the Third Space as well. In fact, Vidal (2015) points out that the mere use of hybrid languages can be seen as a translation itself. Just as all the cooking examples in the novel, the act of making bread is closely linked to the protagonist's home and family. It symbolises her Amazigh identity. However, she decides to describe it using both Catalan and Tamazight words. That is to say, she decides to translate her linguistic identity to fit in between both cultures, instead of choosing only one of them. Furthermore, the protagonist realises that even Moroccan migrant women have started to slightly change some traditional recipes (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 120). These dishes have become hybrid as a result, just like their linguistic identities. Moroccan migrant women are not only translating their identities through language, but also through the food preparation itself.

The Tamazight-Catalan language keeps coming up when she is cooking. Culinary elements are part of the universe of discourse of texts, along with other objects and customs (Lefevre, 1992, p. 41). In other words, they are deeply rooted in the world from which they come. This is why they are so difficult to transfer from one language to another. For instance, the protagonist uses the word *irqusen*⁷ to denote the typical Moroccan pieces of bread with olive oil, and *imsakha* or *imsakhar* to name the saucepan (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 17). She also talks about a type of stew called "xarmiles"⁸ (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 210) and a kind of pastry biscuits known as *xebbakia* (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 85). She explains that she is unable to translate the word *xebb*: "I cannot figure out its name in the language spoken here" (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 90, my translation).⁹ She describes the uses of this ingredient in other contexts, but she declares that "sometimes it is impossible to make up a dictionary simply because you are the only one who has the need to give a name to things" (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 90, my translation).¹⁰ This is why she often adds an explanation

⁷ All the Tamazight words in this article are directly quoted from the original novel. Therefore, the transcription is primarily aimed at a Catalan-speaking public.

⁸ Although this is a Tamazight word, it is not italicised in the novel.

⁹ "No he aconseguit esbrinar com es diu en la llengua d'aquí."

¹⁰ "De vegades és impossible fer-te un diccionari, per la simple raó que el problema de donar nom a les coses és teu i de ningú més."

in Catalan next to them. However, besides their inner translational difficulty, these words show the in-between state where the protagonist lives. Throughout the whole novel, food plays a key role in her identity conformation, as it is “deeply ingrained in our cultural identity” (Chiaro and Rossatto, 2015, p. 237).

The translation and non-translation of the ingredients go beyond purely linguistic parameters to portray the identity negotiations this young woman must implement every day. In other words, these translations and non-translations of food items are translations of her own identity. Furthermore, the use of hybrid strategies proves that migrants often translate in the Third Space, in an attempt to conciliate the two worlds where they belong. In this line, Shuping (2013, p. 58) argues that translators need to “strike a balance” between the universe of discourse of the original and that of the translation. This is precisely what the protagonist tries to do when she is cooking, to remain in an in-between state that allows her to strike a balance. This definitely raises many challenges and exposes them to identity conflicts. In the case of the protagonist, she feels that she is the only one who has to struggle with her hybrid identity. Despite the fact that there are probably more migrants going through the same difficulties, she feels quite isolated. Although she mentions that she knows other Amazigh immigrant girls of her age, we presume she does not know many because no one comes up in the novel.

In addition to food, there are other elements that make her struggle with her hybrid identity, such as colours (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 135). At some point in the novel, mother and daughter travel back to Morocco for the latter’s wedding. There she realises that the Tamazight word for “blue” describes both “blue” and “green” in Catalan. We can see here that colours are deeply connected to culture. She realises that even “universal” realities pose many translation (and conceptual) challenges.

We will finish this analysis with reference to religion. The daughter’s family is Muslim. At some point in the story, the young girl decides to stop believing in God, but does not tell anyone (El Hachmi, 2015, p. 29). When she makes this decision, she stops using a series of daily expressions that make reference to religion, such as *bi ismi Al-lah* before eating, *Incha’ Al-lah* when she wishes for something to happen, and *Istagfiru Al-lah* when someone sneezes. She then realises that the richness of her hybrid language has been suddenly reduced, because Tamazight uses many religious expressions. She needs to adapt her language to the characteristic of a non-believer. In other words, she is translating her religious and linguistic identity to the parameters of an atheist. We presume this is also an attempt to distance herself from her mother’s culture. The result is that some linguistic elements are silenced – they suddenly disappear. In general, this is the battle she fights during the whole story: that between Catalan culture and her mother’s culture, between her Catalan self and her Amazigh self.

3. Conclusions: towards a recognition of hybrid identities

The analysis of these examples proves that hybrid identities are constructed through languages. The protagonist of the novel faces the challenge of belonging to two different

realities: that of her mother and that of the place where she lives. These realities are constructed through two different languages, Catalan and Tamazight. Languages exert power over one another. In particular, Catalan exerts pressure over Tamazight. In this context, the protagonist has been translating both worlds since she was very little. However, when she is about to reach adulthood, she becomes aware of the multiple implications and challenges of her identity struggles, especially as she lives in a place where multiple languages interact and different linguistic power battles take place. She is immersed in a context of confluences where she needs to negotiate who she is by taking all of them into account. Her linguistic reality conditions her identity choices. She wants to differentiate herself from her mother, who represents a world she does not completely identify with now. She wants to highlight her Catalan identity. However, this is difficult for her, because her reality is also Amazigh: she lives surrounded by an immigrant Amazigh community.

In order to manage these identity struggles, she reflects on language use and implements translations of her own linguistic identity. She is neither completely Catalan nor totally Amazigh. She is in the contact zone, in a social space “where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power” (Pratt, 1991, p. 34). This situation pushes her to translate her double linguistic identity to adapt herself to different contexts, becoming either “more Catalan” or “more Amazigh” by modifying certain traits or highlighting some specific self-characteristics. This is certainly not easy because these languages are fighting different power battles.

In our analysis, we have gone deep into the protagonist’s language, which reflects the process of the identity translation she implements. In some cases, she needs to prioritise one linguistic identity over the other. For instance, she is unable to cluck her tongue in the Amazigh way, remaining more Catalan. On other occasions she becomes more Amazigh, for instance when she is unable to find a suitable Catalan equivalent for the typical Amazigh coffee pots. However, some other examples prove that she can translate in the Third Space as well, implementing strategies that enable her to conciliate both worlds. In these cases, she does not translate herself according to Catalan or to Amazigh parameters, but she remains in an in-between space where both linguistic identities coexist. This is the case when describing the bread-making process or when giving thanks for lunch. She implements a “code-switching” language technique (Bandia, 1996), giving birth to a Catalan-Tamazight hybrid language. Consequently, we have proved our hypothesis: migrants negotiate their multiple linguistic identities by implementing translation strategies. Some of these strategies bring the protagonist closer to Catalan culture and others, to Amazigh culture. However, at other times, she is able to stay in the *in-between*, conciliating both linguistic identities.

Hybrid languages strike a balance between languages in conflict. They open up spaces of understanding. This is especially relevant in contexts such as the Catalan one, where several linguistic power battles are currently taking place at the same time. The protagonist of this novel implements translations in order to find a place of her own in the middle of

her multiple reality, which results in the building-up of a hybrid language. The need to conciliate identities through translation has been the strategy implemented by many more migrants around the world. This is part of a global trend resulting from the establishment of a market economy and the growth in communication systems (Bielsa and Bassnett, 2009, p. 4). Borders are increasingly fluid and fragmented, and, in turn, so are identities (Bauman, 2000). Hybrid languages are the expression of this fragmentation. Minorities have taken ownership of them in order to define themselves within borders because “language is what is left for those peoples who want to define themselves as different and who do not accept being silenced” (Vidal, 2015, p. 349, my translation). They bring together difference and equality to achieve equality in difference. I believe that, in this *liquid modernity* (Bauman, 2000), translation and hybrid languages will have a growing impact on our discipline in the years ahead.

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