

# Translating Migration in the Visual Arts: Calais Children and Project#RefugeeCameras as Collaborative Counter Narratives

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## Abstract

*This study investigates the modalities through which the migrant crisis is portrayed in the creative artistic sector while accelerating the spread of political participatory and activist movements in the areas of subtitling and amateur translation. Participation and activism have stimulated the sphere of translation that has been acting as an important stimulus for the international mushrooming of artistic creativities on public spaces and digital platforms, and also for a different political and cultural reframing of the migrant crisis. 21<sup>st</sup>-century mobility has made translation a crucial device for the negotiation of linguacultural transactions within cultural institutions, public spaces and digital contexts through a variety of media, genres and discourses. While acquiring an increasingly metaphorical significance within and across domains, translation has become the instrument by means of which knowledge is produced, shared and put into practice. Meanwhile, collaborative communities are contributing to the spread of non-professional translation practices within digital frameworks that function through crowdsourcing platforms (Jiménez-Crespo 2017). Drawing on recent research on narrative theory in translating dissent (Baker 2016) and issues of (re) narration in translation studies (Baker 2014), this study is based on the analysis of Sue Clayton's documentary Calais Children: A Case to Answer (2016) and Kevin McElvaney's exhibition Project#RefugeeCameras (2015) from the perspective of Michael Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics, as well as according to audiovisual translation strategies. These works are looked at as artistic counter narratives, where most attention is given to the ideological and structural diversities between misleading news reporting and the narrative modalities employed in the visual arts as digital audiovisual interventions for the construction of migration, which can potentially give rise to discourses of translation for dissent and protest, where migrant repertoires can emerge with a greater sense of authenticity.*

## Keywords

*crowdsourcing, amateur translation, collaboration, migration, systemic functional linguistics, the visual arts*