

The Words of the Pandemic in Spillover by David Quammen

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Abstract : Taking advantage of the ecolinguistic theoretical and practical analysis, the work intends the prophetic, punctual, and at times disturbing language used by David Quammen in Spillover, questioning it from an ecological perspective and contributing to the search for new stories. In the famous volume, the author illustrates a literary history of the great epidemics and pandemics, demonstrating that viruses are nature's inevitable response to man's assault on ecosystems. In doing so, he introduces new words, which have tamed our anxieties in recent years since writing as a human artistic expression can mirror the human conscience. Writing in the Anthropocene, coining a new reference lexicon with respect to what is happening, means offering a form to the idea of survival of the planet, imagining the human being grappling with an environment whose conformation he himself has helped to change with a language that is no longer effective in describing the world as we have known it and that quickly needs a radical overhaul. Following the methodology proposed in Ecolinguistics: language, ecology and the stories we live by, the analysis in the paper will enhance the language that encodes new stories based on: ideologies, framings, metaphors, evaluations, identities, convictions, and salience.

Keywords : Anthropocene, pandemic, spillover, virus, zoonosis

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