First, there is the insomnia plague, which makes the people in Macondo write labels on everything to remind them of the things that they know they will soon forget, including a large sign that declares “God Exists.” Then, there is Jose Arcadio’s decent into madness while speaking incomprehensible gibberish, only to discover he really isn’t crazy and that he is speaking Latin. Finally, after Melquaiades’ death, making him the first person to die in Macondo, the narrator suggest that a place doesn’t really exist until someone dies there.

How do these things, and many other things in the narrative, speak to issues regarding language – language as a system of symbols representing abstract ideas and language as a way to transmit knowledge – and the individual or collective identity?