

Title of paper : The Translation of Arabic Proverbs and Sayings to German

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Abstract

Proverbs and sayings are part of our everyday life. They convey popular wisdom, rules of behaviour, experience etc. gathered by a people or community of humans over the various periods of its history, thus reflecting the past and present culture of this specific people or community.

Within the context of intercultural communication and cultural transfer, these linguistic phenomena can be regarded as ideal bridge builders between peoples as they provide an insight into each other's everyday thinking and acting.

Translators, as mediators between cultures, have the responsibility to present their readerships a true picture of the respective foreign culture. While proverbs and sayings, as 'mirrors of a people's soul', are precious tools for this purpose on the one hand, their fixed-form character and individual and metaphorical nature confront the translator with particular problems. Normally, a one-to-one translation is not possible. In many cases, the socio-cultural meaning of an expression gets lost if the literal meaning is preserved, and vice versa. The translator has to consider many things in relation to text and cultural context.

The paper deals with the various approaches to the translation of proverbs and sayings suggested by translation theory, with particular focus on translations from Arabic to German. The introductory theoretical part of the paper is illustrated by practical examples.