Translation is a subject which many people have concerned themselves with and written about for centuries. From the time of Martin Luther's Bible translation in the sixteenth century, translation theorists have tried to formulate rules, which when applied, are supposed to result in a good translation. From the work preceding this project, it has become clear that no hard and fast rules can be applied to translation because translation is an art and not a science, despite what some people claim. Rules should be borne in mind but must be constantly adjusted to suit the given situation. Reiss (1976:7) states very aptly that a translation should be "so genau wie möglich, so frei wie notig" but she goes on to say that the concepts behind "frei" and "genau" are largely subject to each translator's own perception of what he means. Translation should be flexible and creative to accommodate every mood and aspect of any situation.

By working systematically through the glossary, a few very clear and interesting conclusions may be made, which are discussed below.

The first point which strikes the eye is that when comparing the literal translation with the figurative equivalent, it was found that these only correspond rarely
e.g. "Kuh" and "cow". In a few cases the literal translation could be considered to be suitable in English but strictly speaking this usage is usually idiosyncratic although people do make use of it. An example would be "blöde Ziege" translated as "silly goat". The term is acceptable in English and the speaker's intended meaning is clearly conveyed. It was however found that this particular expression was primarily used by non-native English speakers, which may point to the fact that it has crept into South African English via the English spoken by the German, Austrian and Swiss speaking communities living in South Africa.

It was also found that German tends to refer to people as animals to a far greater extent than English does. The most commonly used expressions to describe people in German are "Hund, Schwein, Esel, Ziege, Ganz, Ente, Affe, Idiot, Schätzchen, Schatz" whereas the most commonly used expressions used in English to describe people are "pig, bitch, fool, clot, idiot, bastard, honey, darling, angel, sweetie, love". It appears that in German animals are used to express anger and frustration, and this occurs only to a lesser degree in English, where the majority of commonly used terms of affection and abuse do not refer to animals. When expressing affection towards their children or loved ones, the Germans also tend to use animal expressions more often than the English. e.g. "Hase, Kätzchen, Kröte, Maus,
Mäuschen, Vögelchen, Schäfchen, Ferkel, Ferkelchen."

An observation of a more general nature is that in both German and English there are more expressions of abuse than expressions of affection, and this holds true more so for German than for English.

Another interesting point which came to light from the glossary is the comparable use of adjectives (modifiers) in English and German, e.g. "dumme, blöde, alte, süss" and "silly, stupid, old, sweet". These three adjectives are some of the most commonly used adjectives in both languages and because they have the same meaning across the language barrier, they can be literally translated and used in the same way in both languages. Adjectives which are not as commonly used in German do not lend themselves to literal translation e.g. "garstig, flott, struppig".

One of the problems of translating the terms discussed in the glossary, was translating the compound noun construction so commonly used in German, and almost non-existent in English. e.g. "Hundesau, Schweinkerl" These expressions have to be translated by a "That .... of a ...." construction: ("That idiot of a driver......") This construction in turn does not exist in German. Another grammatical construction which is difficult to translate is
the noun + adjective combination which does not exist in English in the same form. e.g. "Katze + freundlich = katzenfreundlich". These expressions have to be translated in the form of similies in English: "As ... as a ...". These would be impossible to translate word for word.

From the glossary it has become clear that the relationship between the addresser and the addressee is either hostile or friendly and informal or formal. In fact the relationship, by its very nature, is always informal, but was defined as formal in many cases to point out to the reader that a particular expression could be uttered amongst strangers and would thus take on the polite form in German, which does not exist in English. For instance one stranger could call another stranger a pig, but because they are strangers the addresser would say "Sie Schwein" and not "Du Schwein". This is what is meant by a formal relationship, when the relationship is actually informal, because in a real life situation these terms of affection would (should) never be used in formal situations e.g. to a president, a boss, a teller etc.

It was also found that all the terms discussed in the glossary are conventional as opposed to idiosyncratic. As long as a term is known to all German speaking people it is defined as conventional, and this has no bearing on the frequency of its usage.
The terms that are used depend entirely on the individual family and the situation. Some parents call their little girl "Maus" whereas others call their little girl "Kätzchen", even though they know of the existence of the term "Maus". It is simply a question of preference.

Another problem encountered while translating the terms constituting the glossary, was that the terms were out of context. In some cases they have been placed into a context, but it would have been impossible to place each expression into all its various contexts. It must be borne in mind that, when put into a context, other than the one the term was placed into in the glossary, the meaning of the expression may change.

The unpredictability of which connotations are attached to one particular animal pose a problem for a non-native German speaker. For example, according to Whaley and Antonelli, referring to someone as a dog should be complimentary but it is not. In contrast, calling someone a mouse should be abusive, because mice are considered to be vermin, yet it is a very commonly used term of affection.

The expressions discussed in this glossary are of course only the more commonly used ones. It would be impossible to discuss all the idiosyncratic variations of each expression because almost any adjective could be used to qualify any
noun (animal) depending on the individual using the expression, and the list of expressions to be discussed would be endless. In omitting the discussion on these idiosyncratic expressions, one of the greatest difficulties of translating the terms has been avoided completely. Suitable equivalents have been found for every expression which is discussed in this project, although in the majority of cases word for word equivalents could not be substituted, and others had to be found. Despite the limitations of the project, i.e. the fact that a vast number of animal categories have not been included (see p.44), this glossary should serve as a basic guide to non-native German speakers.
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