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The translation of humour in Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett's Good omens

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate how the different types of humour in Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett's Good Omens have been translated into French and German as De Bons Présages and Ein Gutes Omen, respectively. This study applies frame semantics to analyse how the translators recreated the humour of the ST in the instances that they were able to do so. This theory examines how context is created and what expectations arise from an individual's knowledge of context i.e. their understanding of the context and what the reader or hearer associates with it. The novel involves several subplots, but the same humorous elements such as puns, parody and an invented archaic variety of English appear throughout the book and it is the aim of this study to determine how these elements were dealt with by the translators. I will compare the two translations and determine how, and if each translator was able to recreate the same frames that made the ST humorous.