

Comparison of Two Literary Adoptions of the Story: Perfume - The Story of a Murderer

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The novel “Perfume - The Story of a Murderer” is included in the literature syllabus of Learners of German as a Foreign Language in the fourth year Honors Degree program at the University of Kelaniya. The novel is a Historical Fiction written by the German writer Patrick Süskind in 1985 and has its setting in Paris in the 18th century just prior to the French Revolution. It revolves around a person with an exceptional sense of smell, which takes a dark turn and leads him to kill 26 virgins to create the world’s finest perfume. The movie based on the novel directed by Tom Tykwer in 2006 is shown to the students when teaching the literary work, to enhance their interpretation skills. During the course of teaching differences between the two adaptations of the story: the novel and the movie were identified. The objectives of this study are to compare the two adaptations in order to identify the differences between them and to recognize the impact of different adaptations on the interpretation skills of literature learners of German as a foreign language. The primary data for the qualitative study were collected through the novel written by Partrick Süskind in 1985 and the film based on the novel, directed by Tom Tykwer in 2006. The secondary data were gathered through print media, e-books and scholarly articles. According to the results, differences between the two adaptations were identified based on narration, characters, scenes and the effect they create. It is concluded that both the novel and the movie are successful in narrating the story within their own limitations, and the novel gives the reader comparatively more space to think, feel, imagine, and create their own interpretations.

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