



Contents lists available at [JSLP](#)

Journal of Second Language Pedagogy

Journal homepage: <https://www.sanad.iau.ir/journal/jslp>

## Strategies of Using the Sich/Reflexive Verbs in German and Arabic: Implications for Language Teaching and Learning

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### KEY TERMS

Arabic  
German  
Language Learning  
Language Teaching  
Sich/Reflexive Verbs

### ABSTRACT

The present paper is dedicated to the implications for language teaching and learning of reflexive verbs in German and how they are interpreted in Arabic. Reflexive verbs are very common in German, whereas they are not used in the same way in Arabic. These verbs represent a significant portion of the German language. They include verbs that take direct objects (accusative case) as well as indirect objects (dative case). The list of reflexive verbs comprises more than 40 verbs in total. In this paper, the authors present strategies for dealing with such verbs in Arabic and explain how their meanings are conveyed, despite the absence of equivalent reflexive structures in the Arabic language. Furthermore, the paper offers guidance for teachers, learners, translators, and syllabus designers on how to introduce these verbs effectively in curricula. It also discusses methods to help learners of both languages understand the concept clearly, avoiding any ambiguity.

### ARTICLE TYPE

Original Research Paper

Received:	2 September 2025
Revised:	10 September 2025
Accepted:	27 September 2025
Published Online:	5 October 2025

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## 1. Introduction

The need for a transfer grammar is indispensable when working with languages where the syntactic constructions used to express a given meaning in one language differ radically from those used to express the same meaning in the other language (Bross, 1962; Fandrych & Tallowitz, 2000). Clear and Concise: Basic Grammar for German as a Foreign Language in 99 Steps. Velcro.). Under such circumstances, if mechanical translation is to be realized, some sort of exhaustive formal list of the constructions in the output language which are equivalent to the constructions in the input language

is needed (Ammon, 2015; Forouzani, 2019). The compilation of such a list will, admittedly, be a laborious and tedious task. Learners of a new language find it easy when there are similarities between their language and the new language (Abdulhadi, et al., 2023). On the other hand, the new language becomes difficult when there are differences and difficulties increase when the difference becomes more paramount (Baker, 2011). One of the features of German language is the extensive use of the dative case. This case is not as common in the Arabic language. Hence, German learners of Arabic and Arab learners of German find challenges when the matter comes to the dative case (Garrett, 2010; Stantcheva, 2018). The present paper is based on analyzing the various grammatical situations in which reflexive verbs are used in German and on rendering these verbs into Arabic.

Reflexive verbs in German are interpreted and dealt with in Arabic in different ways. Reflexive verbs pose an important linguistic issue not only between German and Arabic, but also between German and other languages (Alexiadou & Schäfer, 2014). Hendriks et al (2014) indicate that there are two types of reflexive forms, a weak form (zich in Dutch and sich in German) and a strong form (zichzelf in Dutch and sich selbst in German) in standard Dutch and German (Oya, 2010). The choice between the two reflexive forms in Dutch has been explained by the selectional restrictions of the verb, distinguishing among three verb classes of inherently reflexive verbs, accidentally reflexive verbs, and transitive verbs (Fisher, et al., 1996; Swick, 2008). The same three verb classes can be distinguished in German, suggesting that the factors governing reflexive choice in Dutch and German are similar (Edwards, 2011; Ellis, 2002). However, several studies have pointed out that Dutch 'zich' is more restricted in its use than German 'sich'. Comparing similar sentences across the two languages, an overall preference for the strong reflexive in Dutch but an overall preference for the weak reflexive in German can be observed (Schmitt, 2002). German is distinguished by having the kind of verbs called reflexive verbs (Affum, et al., 2024). Reflexive verbs are verbs with a pronoun that relates to the subject of the sentence (De Alencar, et al., 2005). These reflexive verbs are very common in German (Bobzin, 1980). In comparison with Arabic, such verbs are expressed in different ways (Noun Cases in German: The dative case, 2004); more of these ways within the context and not through using any reflexive verb (Jack, 2014; Tschirner, 2006; Timmermans et al., 2004). For example, when someone wants to be polite in German, and he wants to thank someone else, he would say:

Ich bedanke mich bei Ihnen

In Arabic the translation of this sentence is:

(Thank you very much) أشكرك شكرا جزيلا

This is the normal and natural translation in Arabic, but if we translate the German sentence literally into Arabic, the translation will be:

(I thank myself for you) أنا اتمشكرني لديك

This is a funny and wrong translation because it is never used in Arabic like this. In another example, German distinguishes between the difference between the words "heiraten" and "verheiraten".

"heiraten" ist die aktive Handlung, etwas zu tun, also selbst eine Ehe einzugehen, während "verheiratet sein" der Zustand ist, verheiratet zu sein, und "sich verheiraten" bedeutet, dass eine Person aktiv die Eheschließung veranlasst.

"الزواج" هو الفعل النشط المتمثل في القيام بشيء ما، أي الدخول في زواج، في حين أن "الزواج" هو حالة الزواج، و"الزواج" يعني أن شخصًا بنفسه آخر يرتب بنشاط حدوث الزواج (أي يتزوج أو يزوج نفسه).

("To marry" is the active act of doing something, that is, to enter into marriage, while "to be married" is the state of being married, and "to marry oneself" means that a person actively arranges for the marriage to take place.)

The words "heiraten" and "sich verheiraten" are expressed in Arabic in one word "يتزوج".

Due to the fact that such reflexive verbs are expressed in different ways in Arabic, a number of difficulties arise for German learners of Arabic and Arab learners of German. Besides, translators and machine translation may make different mistakes in this regard (Dudin, 2022).

## 2. Methodology

This study adopts the comparison approach in both languages. The examples are translated into Arabic, and the comparison is made to see how Arabic conveys reflexivity in German.

## 3. Data Analysis

The reflexive word or pronoun in German differs according to the noun in the sentences. For example, the pronoun "Ich أنا (I) takes "mich" as in the sentence Ich wasche mich (I wash). The noun/pronoun "Er هو (he) takes "sich" as in Der Arzt/Er setzt sich (The Dr sat.) ; The noun/pronoun "sie هي (she) takes also "sich" as in sie erkältet sich (She caught a cold); the pronoun "Es هو/هي (it) also takes "sich" as in Das Kind duscht sich (The child took a shower). So, the third person singular all take the reflexive pronoun "sich". The other pronouns take different reflexive words as one can see in the first example where "ich" takes "mich". The first person pronoun "Wir نحن (we) takes "uns نحن (us) as in Wir duschen uns (We took a shower); the second person singular pronoun "Du أنت (singular you) (takes dich as in Du meldest dich zum Deutschkurs an (You registered yourself in the German course) ; the second person plural pronoun "ihr انتم (plural you) takes the word "euch انتم (plural you) as in ihr fühlt euch heute nicht gut (You do not feel good today) ; the third person plural pronoun "Sie هم (they) takes the reflexive pronoun "sich" as in the sentence Wir möchten uns über die Universität erkundigen (We want to inform about the university); the last pronoun is the one used for politeness in addressing someone which is "Sie حضرتك (The polite form of you) with capital letter as to distinguish it from the third person singular female pronoun "sie" which is written with the small letter. However, the reflexive pronoun which is used here is the same with the female third person pronoun "sich" as in the sentence Sie duschen sich (You take a shower). Hence, the reflexive pronouns with their Arabic equivalents in German can be summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1***Reflexive Pronouns with their Arabic Equivalents in German*

Pronoun	Reflexive pronoun	Arabic
ich	mich	أنا I
du	dich	أنت You
er	sich	هو He
sie	sich	هي She
es	sich	هو/هي لغير العاقل It
wir	uns	نحن We
ihr	euch	أنتم You
Sie	sich	هم They
Sie	sich	حضر تذك/حضر تكم/حضر تكم You (Polite)

Here, in Table 2, a list of all reflexive verbs in German and their Arabic counterparts is presented.

**Table 2***All Reflexive Verbs in German*

Reflexive Verb in German	Arabic Equivalent	English
Sich ausruhen	يرتاح	To rest
Sich bedanken	يشكر	To thank
Sich beeilen	يسرع	To hurry
Sich befinden	يجد نفسه/يشعر	To find oneself
Sich beschweren	يتذمر	To complain
Sich einigen	يتفق	To agree
Sich entschließen	يقرر	To decide
Sich ereignen	يحدث	To happen
Sich erkälten	يصاب بالبرد	To get cold
Sich erkundigen	يستفسر	To inquire
Sich freuen	يسعد بـ	To be happy
Sich irren	يخطئ	To make a mistake
Sich verabreden	يتنازل	To surrender
Sich verlieben	يقع في الحب	To fall in love
Sich wundern	يتساءل	To wonder

sich anmelden	يسجل	To register
Sich anziehen	يلبس	To get dressed
Sich ärgern	يغضب	To be angry
Sich aufregen	ينزعج	To be bothered
Sich beherrschen	يسيطر على نفسه	To control
Sich beruhigen	يهبط	To relax
Sich beschäftigen	ينشغل	To be busy
Sich bewegen	يتحرك	To move
Sich entschuldigen	يعتذر	To apologize
Sich fürchten	يشعر بالخوف	To be afraid
Sich hinlegen	يستلقي	To lay
Sich langweilen	يشعر بالملل	To feel bored
Sich treffen	يلتقي	To meet
Sich verabschieden	يودّع	To see off
Sich verletzen	يؤذي نفسه	To harm oneself
Sich verstehen	يفهم	To understand
Sich verteidigen	يدافع عن نفسه	To defend
Sich etw. ansehen	ينظر إلى شيء	To look at something
Sich etw. ausdenken	يفكر في شيء	To think of something
Sich etw. merken	يتذكر شيئاً	To remember
Sich etw. rasieren	يحلق	To shave
Sich etw. vorstellen	يتخيل شيئاً	To imagine
Sich etw. waschen	يغسل شيئاً	To wash

\* Schmitt, Dreyer Lehr – und Übungsbuch der deutschen Grammatik (2002)

The list above can be divided into three groups of reflexive verbs, which are explained in the following sections.

### 3.1 The First Group of German Reflexive Verbs

The first group includes the reflexive verbs that are used with a reflexive pronoun in the accusative case and they make one unit of a two-part verb (the verb and the accusative pronoun). It includes the following verbs:

**Table 3**

*The First Group of German Reflexive Verbs*

Reflexive Verb in German	Arabic Equivalent	English
Sich ausruhen	يرتاح	To rest
Sich bedanken	يشكر	To thank
Sich beeilen	يسرع	To hurry
Sich befinden	يجد نفسه/يشعر	To find oneself
Sich beschweren	يتذمر	To complain
Sich einigen	يتفق	To agree
Sich entschließen	يقرر	To decide
Sich ereignen	يحدث	To happen
Sich erkälten	يصاب بالبرد	To get cold
Sich erkundigen	يستفسر	To inquire
Sich freuen	يسعد بـ	To be happy
Sich irren	يخطئ	To make a mistake
Sich verabreden	يتنازل	To surrender
Sich verlieben	يقع في الحب	To fall in love
Sich wundern	يتساءل	To wonder

Each reflexive verb will be analyzed and explained how its meaning is conveyed into Arabic. An example will also be given in German, and the example will be translated into the natural Arabic to see how the reflexive meaning is conveyed into Arabic.

The first reflexive verb “Sich ausruhen” means “يرتاح” (to take a rest) in Arabic. It is used in German as in the following sentence: Meine Augen müssen (**sich**) ein wenig **ausruhen**.

The Arabic translation would be: نحتاج عيني أن ترتاح قليلاً (My eyes need to rest)

In this example, the reflexive verb „sich ausruhen“(rest oneself) is translated into Arabic without any reflexive word; in other words, using **Almasder Almuawwal** in Arabic "أن ترتاح" (to take a rest) is the equivalent to convey the meaning. There are definitely other ways in Arabic to express the meaning.

The verb “Sich bedanken“(thank) is mentioned above and the sentence “Ich bedanke mich.” (Thank you) is translated into Arabic as “أنا اشكر”. One can see here a difference between German and Arabic in the expression of thanks through using different pronouns; in German the reflexive verb uses the reflexive self-pronoun “mich” (me) whereas in Arabic the accusative connected pronoun “ك” (you: to show the accusative object) is used as equivalents.

The German verb “Sich beeilen“means in Arabic: يُسرِع (haste) and it is used in German as in the following sentences:

Sie muß **sich** mit ihrem Einkauf **beeilen**. The translation in Arabic would be:

عليها أن تسرع في التسوق ( She should haste in shopping). Thus, here again **Almsadar Almuawwal** in Arabic is used as an equivalent to the reflexive verb (sich beeilen)

The verb (sich befinden) means in Arabic يجد نفسه (find himself). It is used in German as in the example below:

Wie **befinden** Sie **sich** heute? Which can be translated into Arabic as:

كيف تجد نفسك اليوم؟ (How do you find yourself today?)

In this example, we find that the word (نفسك) (yourself) is used in Arabic, and it is similar to the German expression because this is a “self” word in Arabic like the word “sich” in German. So, this German verb can be translated into Arabic using the same construction of the German language.

The verb (sich beschweren) means in German sich beklagen (complain) and in Arabic أو يَتَذَمَّر (نفسك) and it is not used in Arabic with any reflexive word like (نفسك). For example, the sentence:

Nichts gegen Frank, aber regelmäßig **beschweren sich** Frauen über derartig taktlose

لا يوجد شيء ضد فرانك، ولكن النساء يشتكين بانتظام من هذا التصرف غير اللائق

(There is nothing against Frank, but women complain regularly about this impolite behavior)

The reflexive verb beschweren sich is translated simply into Arabic by the word يشتكين without any other words. If the German learner of Arabic wants to use such a sentence, he might make a common mistake saying:

لا يوجد شيء ضد فرانك، ولكن النساء يشتكين أنفسهن بانتظام من هذا التصرف غير اللائق

(There is nothing against Frank, but women complain **'themselves'** regularly about this impolite behavior)

And the meaning will be vague in Arabic or even ambiguous as someone might think that they are complaining about themselves not about Frank's behavior.

The verb (sich einigen) means in Arabic يتفق مع (agree) and here one can see that the preposition مع in Arabic which means (with) is used to compensate for the meaning of the reflexivity in the German verb as in the example below:

Beide Parteien müssen **sich einigen**, um weitere Konflikte zu vermeiden.

يجب على الطرفين الاتفاق مع بعضهم البعض لتجنب المزيد من الصراع.

(Both parties should agree to avoid more conflict).

There can be more than one translation for such a sentence, but this is a natural translation in which the preposition is used to compensate for the reflexive verb sich einigen.

The verb (sich entschließen) means in Arabic يقرر (decide) and it is used in German as a reflexive verb as in the following example:

Wir **entschließen uns**, es in der uns empfohlenen Herberge zu versuchen.

In Arabic, the reflexivity disappears whereas its meaning remains in the internal meaning of the Arabic verb and it is in this case similar to the previously explained verb (sich beschweren). The translation of this example in Arabic would be:

قررنا تجربة النزل الذي أوصى به لنا.

(We decided to try this hotel that he recommended).

The verb in Arabic قررنا means we decided, and there is no translation of German reflexive verb (uns) here. The reflexivity is included in the meaning of the Arabic verb.

The reflexive verb "sich ereignen" (to happen) has the Arabic equivalent (يحدث/يقع); it is used as in the following sentence:

Sie müssen doch fürchten, daß **sich** jederzeit eine Katastrophe wie bei dem Brand in der Schweizer Chemiefirma Sandoz 1986 **ereignen** kann. (Adopted from Der Spiegel)

لا بد أنك تخشى أن تقع في أي لحظة كارثة مثل الحريق الذي اندلع في شركة ساندوز السويسرية للكيمياويات عام ١٩٨٦.

(You are afraid that a disaster might happen at any time like the fire which happened in the Swiss company for chemicals 1986)

This example shows that the German verb "sich ereignen" has no reflexive equivalent in Arabic. In this case the context or the verb itself conveys the reflexivity in addition to the context itself.

The next verb is (sich erkälten) (to catch a cold) which means in Arabic (يُصاب بالبرد). This verb in Arabic comes usually with the word (يُصاب) (catch). So, here, it is a collocation in Arabic that conveys the meaning of the German verb. The example below shows this equivalency:

Wer nass wird, könnte **sich erkälten**, wer **sich erkältet**, ist weniger leistungsfähig, braucht Pflege und konsumiert weniger (Adopted from Neue Zürcher Zeitung (1994))

أي شخص يتبلل قد يُصاب بنزلة برد، ومن يُصاب بها يكون أقل إنتاجية، ويحتاج إلى رعاية، ويستهلك أقل.

(Any person getting wet might catch a cold and then he will be less productive and need care)

The reflexive verb erkälten is translated into Arabic as يُصاب بنزلة برد and so here the collocation in Arabic يُصاب بالبرد compensates for the meaning of reflexivity.

The verb (sich erkundigen) (to inform about sth) means in Arabic يستفسر عن. The equivalent verb in Arabic is usually accompanied with the preposition عن (about) so the collocation in Arabic which consists of the verb and the preposition is used to compensate for the reflexivity in German. This can be illustrated through the following example:

Ausländer aus der ganzen Stadt, vor allem Afrikaner, kamen zur Brandstätte, um sich nach Freunden und Verwandten zu erkundigen (Adopted from Die Tageszeitung (1996))

ثَوافِدَ أَجَانِبٍ مِنْ جَمِيعِ أَنْحَاءِ الْمَدِينَةِ، وَخَاصَّةً أَفَرَقَةً، إِلَى مَوْقِعِ الْحَرِيقِ لِلِاسْتِفْصَالِ عَنْ أَصْدِقَائِهِمْ وَأَقْرَبِهِمْ.

(Foreigners from all the cities especially Africans came to the place of fire to inquire about their friends and relatives)

The strategy used here in this example is the collocation consisting of the verb and the preposition عن.

The next reflexive verb is (sich freuen) (be happy). The Arabic equivalent is يسعد. This is a common verb in German that is used with the reflexive pronoun as in the following example:

Ich **freue mich** dich kennenzulernen.

يسعدني التعرف عليك (I am happy to know you)

The reflexive pronoun (mich) does not have an exact equivalent in Arabic. Actually, the reflexivity is compensated in Arabic through using the connected accusative pronoun ي in the word يسعدني so we see in this example a new strategy represented by using the connected pronoun.

The next reflexive verb is (Sich irren) (make a mistake) which means in Arabic يُخطئ but it is in Arabic used without the self-pronoun compared to German as in the following example:

Jeder kann **sich mal irren**.

كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ يُمْكِنُهُ أَنْ يُخْطِئَ (Every person can make a mistake)

In this example, the reflexive verb (sich irren) has in Arabic the equivalent which consists of the word أَنْ and the equivalent verb يُخْطِئُ. The strategy used in this example is Almasdar Almuawwal consisting of أَنْ and the verb يُخْطِئُ the word translation of the German sentence would be: كُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ يُمْكِنُهُ نَفْسَهُ أَنْ يُخْطِئَ



In Arabic, such translation would be considered awkward and not natural or even wrong. It becomes natural and correct when the word **نفسه** is removed.

The next reflexive verb is (verabreden) (to make an appointment). This verb means in Arabic **يحدد موعداً**. The example below shows how the reflexivity is compensated in the Arabic equivalent:

Wir haben **verabredet**, dass wir **uns** um 5 Uhr treffen.

(We made an appointment to meet at 5) **اتفقنا على اللقاء في الساعة الخامسة**

In this example, the reflexive pronoun (uns) is translated into Arabic through the attached pronoun in the word **اتفقنا** which is (نا) (connected pronoun meaning we) in this word. The verb itself in German is translated into Arabic by using three words **اتفقنا على اللقاء**. So, the strategy used in Arabic to deal with reflexivity is the attached pronoun and the preposition **على**.

Similar to the verb (verabreden), the verb (verlieben) in German is considered a basic reflexive verb. The strategy used with (verabreden) is used with this verb. In other words, the attached or implicit pronoun in Arabic along with the preposition make a collocation in Arabic that compensates for the reflexivity meaning as in the following example:

Man lernt jemanden kennen und weiß am Anfang noch nicht, daß es diejenige Person ist, in die man **sich** einmal **verlieben** wird (Adopted from Die Tageszeitung, 1997)

**يقابل الإنسان شخصاً ما ولا يعرف في البداية أنه الشخص الذي سيقع في حبه.**

(Man sometimes meets a person he did not know before and he does not know that he is the person he will fall in love with).

The verb **sich verlieben** (fall in love) is in Arabic **يقع في حبه** and the implicit pronoun in Arabic along with the preposition **في** (in) convey the meaning of the reflexive verb in German.

The last reflexive verb in this group is the verb (sich wundern) (to wonder). The example below shows the reflexivity:

ich **wunderte mich** über seine schnelle Rückkehr

(I was surprised of his fast return) **لقد فوجئت بعودته السريعة**

The verb **sich wundern** is in Arabic **تفاجأ بـ** and there is no reflexive word. It is just the word **تفاجأ** (surprised) with the preposition. In other words, the reflexive verb in German is simply expressed through the verb and the preposition collocation.

### 3.2 The Second Group of German Reflexive Verbs

The second group of reflexive verbs include those that can be used with or without accusatives. This group includes the following verbs in Table 4.

**Table 4***The Second Group of German Reflexive Verbs*

Reflexive Verb in German	Arabic Equivalent	English
sich anmelden	يسجل	To register
Sich anziehen	يلبس	To get dressed
Sich ärgern	يغضب	To be angry
Sich aufregen	ينزعج	To be bothered
Sich beherrschen	يسيطر على نفسه	To control
Sich beruhigen	يهذا	To relax
Sich beschäftigen	ينشغل	To be busy
Sich bewegen	يتحرك	To move
Sich entschuldigen	يعتذر	To apologize
Sich fürchten	يشعر بالخوف	To be afraid
Sich hinlegen	يستلقي	To lay
Sich langweilen	يشعر بالملل	To feel bored
Sich treffen	يلتقي	To meet
Sich verabschieden	يودّع	To see off
Sich verletzen	يؤذي نفسه	To harm oneself
Sich verstehen	يفهم	To understand
Sich verteidigen	يدافع عن نفسه	To defend

The verb sich melden means to register or apply for registration. This verb is not common in Arabic with its German meaning and connotations due to many reasons. The example below shows one of the usages of this verb in German, which is related to the meaning mentioned here.

Sie können sich für 250 Mark pro Tag selber anmelden, werden dann nach Interessengebieten oder Branchen zusammengefaßt und können sich so mit dem Instrument vertraut machen.

Die Tageszeitung (1998)

يمكنكم تسجيل أنفسكم مقابل ٢٥٠ مارك الماني في اليوم، وسيتم بعد ذلك تجميعكم وفقاً لمجالات الاهتمام أو الصناعات وبالتالي يمكنكم التعرف على الأدوات

You can register yourself for 250 marks per day, will then be grouped according to areas of interest or industries, and can thus familiarize yourself with the instrument.

The reflexive word sich here in German has an equivalent reflexive word in Arabic which is أنفسكم (yourselves). The next verb in this group is sich anziehen which means get dressed or in Arabic يلبس أو يرتدي ملابس. It is used in a sentence like this example:

Ich muss mich anziehen

يجب عليّ أن أرتدي ملابس

I should get dressed.

The other verbs in this group are used in similar ways in Arabic as in the following examples (the sources of the examples are underlined in Table 5).

Table 5

*Examples for Group Two of Reflexive Verbs*

German	Arabic	English
Sich ärgern Du darfst <b>dich</b> darüber nicht so <b>ärgern</b>	ينزعج لا ينبغي أن تكون تُزعج نفسك جداً بشأن هذا الأمر	You should not bother yourself with this matter.
Sich aufregen Für mich ist das günstig, ich muß <b>mich</b> nicht <b>aufregen</b> , sie ist nicht allein dort in ihrem Haus; <u>WOHMANN, GABRIELE BITTE NICHT STERBEN</u> Sich beherrschen Sigrid konnte <b>sich</b> nicht mehr <b>beherrschen</b> und lachte laut los. <u>BREEST, JÜRGEN GROBES FINALE</u>	يقلق بالنسبة لي، هذا مريح؛ لا داعي أن اقلق؛ فهي ليست وحدها في منزلها.  يتمالك نفسه لم تستطع سيغريد تمالك نفسها وانفجرت ضاحكة.	For me it is convenient, I do not have to get upset, she is not alone there in her house;  Sigrid could no longer control herself and burst out laughing.
Sich beruhigen Jetzt liest er laut und kann <b>sich</b> gar nicht mehr <b>beruhigen</b> . <u>DIE TAGESZEITUNG (1995)</u>	يهذا الآن يقرأ بصوت عالٍ ولا يستطيع أن يهدئ نفسه.	Now he reads aloud and can't calm down at all.
Sich beschäftigen Es tut mir leid, ich kann <b>mich</b> jetzt nicht damit <b>beschäftigen</b> . <u>BREEST, JÜRGEN GROBES FINALE</u>	ينشغل أنا أسف، لا أستطيع أن أشغل نفسي مع الأمر الآن.	I'm sorry, I can't deal with it right now.
Sich bewegen Das Wohnzimmer des zweistöckigen Einfamilienhauses war so mit Möbeln vollgestopft, daß man <b>sich</b> darin nur mit Mühe <b>bewegen</b> konnte. <u>BREEST, JÜRGEN GROBES FINALE</u>	يتحرك كانت غرفة المعيشة في المنزل العائلي المكون من طابقين مكتظة بالأثاث لدرجة أنه كان من الصعب على الشخص أن يحرك نفسه.	The living room of the two-story detached house was so crammed with furniture that it was difficult to move around in it.
Sich entschuldigen Eine Beamten, die <b>sich</b> nicht <b>entschuldigen</b> kann, gibt kein gutes Bild. <u>DIE TAGESZEITUNG (1997)</u>	يعتذر الموظف الحكومي الذي لا يستطيع الاعتذار لا يُقدم صورة جيدة.	An official who cannot apologize does not present a good image.
Sich fürchten Und so, wie viele Jungen sich präsentieren, haben Mädchen oft auch allen Grund dazu, <b>sich</b> vor der blinden Gehetztheit der Jungen zu <b>fürchten</b> . <u>SCHNACK, DIETER &amp; NEUTZLING, RAINER DIE P</u>	يشعر بالخوف ونظراً للطريقة التي يقدم بها العديد من الأولاد أنفسهم، فإن الفتيات غالباً ما يكون لديهن كل الأسباب للخوف من الاندفاع الأعمى للفتيان.	And just as many boys present themselves, girls often have every reason to be afraid of the blind rush of boys.
Sich hinlegen Da <b>legst</b> du <b>dich</b> ( <b>lang</b> ) <b>hin!</b> Sich langweilen Aber wer keine besondere Affinität zur japanischen Kultur besitzt, der wird <b>sich</b> in diesem Film erbärmlich <b>langweilen</b> . <u>DIE TAGESZEITUNG (1995)</u>	يستلقي هناك تستلقي/تريح نفسك (لفترة طويلة)! يشعر بالملل لكن أي شخص لا يملك شغفاً خاصاً بالثقافة اليابانية سيجد هذا الفيلم مملاً للغاية.	There you lie down (for a long time)!  But anyone who doesn't have a particular affinity for Japanese culture will find this film miserably boring.
Sich treffen Wo können wir <b>uns</b> <b>treffen</b> ? Sich verabschieden Eine Woche noch, dann würden wir <b>uns</b> von Laville <b>verabschieden</b> . <u>FRANZETTI, DANTE ANDREA DAS FUNKHAUS</u>	يلتقي أين يمكننا أن نلتقي؟ يودّع أسبوعاً آخر، ونودّع مدينة لافيل.	Where can we meet?  One more week and we would say goodbye to Laville.

Sich verletzen  
Zünde eine Lampe an, bemerkte er gelassen, du könntest stolpern und **dich verletzen**.  
AHRENS, JUTTA DER KÖNIG VON ASSUR

يؤذي نفسه  
قال بهدوء أشعل مصباحًا، فقد تتعثر وتؤذي نفسك.

Light a lamp, he remarked calmly, you might trip and hurt yourself.

Sich verstehen  
wir **verstehen uns** (schon)  
Sich verteidigen  
Einen für ihn gestellten Berufungsantrag wies das Oberste Gericht jetzt ab - Hill konnte **sich** beim Prozeß nicht ausreichend **verteidigen**, weil er ohne Rechtsbeistand auftrat.  
DIE TAGESZEITUNG (1997)

يفهم  
نحن نفهم أنفسنا جيدا  
يدافع عن نفسه  
رفضت المحكمة العليا الآن استئنافاً قُدم نيابة عنه، إذ لم يتمكن هيل من الدفاع عن نفسه بشكل كافٍ في المحاكمة لأنه حضر دون محامٍ.

We understand each other.  
The Supreme Court has now rejected an appeal filed on his behalf - Hill was unable to adequately defend himself at the trial because he appeared without legal representation

It is noticed that in most of group two of the reflexive verbs in German there is also a reflexive word in Arabic which is نفس.

### 3.3 The Third Group of German Reflexive Verbs

The third group of reflexive verbs in German includes verbs that do not take an object. These verbs take the dative case of the pronoun, which is common in German but not common in Arabic with the same construction or verb. This list includes the verbs shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*The Third Group of German Reflexive Verbs*

German	Arabic	English
Sich etw. ansehen	ينظر إلى شيء	To look at something
Sich etw. ausdenken	يفكر في شيء	To think of something
Sich etw. merken	يتذكر شيئاً	To remember
Sich etw. rasieren	يحلّق	To shave
Sich etw. vorstellen	يتخيل شيئاً	To imagine
Sich etw. waschen	يغسل شيئاً	To wash

The verbs are used in context with the dative case, and the following examples show how they are used and how they are interpreted in Arabic regarding the reflexivity.

**Table 7**

*Examples for the Third Group of German Reflexive Verbs*

German	Arabic	English
Sich etw. ansehen Hast du <b>dir</b> den Film schon <b>angesehen</b> ?	ينظر إلى شيء هل شاهدت الفيلم بعد؟	Have you seen the film recently?
Sich etw. ausdenken Ich <b>denke mir</b> eine Geschichte aus.	يفكر في شيء أنا أفكر في قصة ما.	I am thinking of a story.
Sich etw. merken Ich habe <b>mir</b> ihren Vornamen sofort <b>gemerkt</b> .	يتذكر شيئاً تذكرت اسمها الأول على الفور.	I have remembered her first name fast.
Sich etw. rasieren Als Radprofi muss ich <b>mir</b> die Beine <b>rasieren</b> .	يحلّق كراكب دراجات محترف، يجب عليّ أن أحلّق ساقاي.	As a professional cyclist, I have to shave my legs.
Sich etw. vorstellen Du <b>stellst dir</b> die Sache zu einfach vor.	يتخيل شيئاً أنت تتخيل الأمور بسيطة للغاية.	You're making things too simple.
Sich etw. waschen Vor dem Essen wasche ich mir noch die Hände.	يغسل شيئاً أغسل يدي قبل الأكل.	Before eating I wash my hands.

In the third group, it is noticed that there is no reflexive word in Arabic at all and the reflexivity is understood in the internal meaning of the verbs.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

There are various strategies of conveying the meaning from German into Arabic (Gast & Haas, 2008; Köhl & Petersen, 2009). Strategies used in conveying reflexivity of the verbs presented above can be summarized into eleven strategies as follows:

- 1) Using different pronouns as in the verb "Sich bedanken" (Thanking someone)
- 2) Almasder Almuawwal such as the reflexive verbs Sich ausruhen, Sich beeilen and Sich irren (Taking a rest or being quickly or making a mistake)
- 3) Using different pronouns such as the verb "Sich bedanken" (Thanking someone)
- 4) Same construction of German as in the reflexive verb "sich befinden" (how one feels)
- 5) The equivalent word without any other words or additions such as the verb sich beschweren (complaining about)
- 6) Using the preposition to compensate for the reflexive verb such as the verb sich einigen (agreeing with someone)
- 7) The internal meaning of the Arabic verb compensates for the reflexivity as in sich entschließen (deciding)
- 8) The context or the verb itself as in the verb sich ereignen (happening)
- 9) Using the collocation in Arabic as in sich erkälten (having cold)
- 10) Using collocations consisting of the verb and the preposition as in sich erkundigen and sich verlieben (announcing something or falling in love)
- 11) Using the connected pronoun as in sich freuen, sich verabreden and sich wundern (being happy, having an appointment or wondering)

Such analysis of reflexive verbs in German and their interpretations in the Arabic language reveals significant insights with vital implications for language teaching and learning, predominantly for Arab learners of German and German learners of Arabic. Reflexive verbs constitute a substantial grammatical feature in German that does not have a direct equivalent in the Arabic language. This linguistic difference demands tailored pedagogical approaches to ensure learners develop accurate understanding and avoid confusion in both languages.

One of the key implications is the need for explicit instruction of reflexive verb forms and their syntactic roles in German. While reflexive verbs frequently appear with pronouns referring back to the subject (involving cases such as accusative and dative), learners must be channeled to recognize these structures and understand how meaning is encoded through reflexivity.

The present study highlights the importance of the teaching strategies that involve contextualized explanations and comparisons between the two languages. It is undeniable that translating reflexive verbs literally from German to Arabic can cause semantic and grammatical errors. Teachers need to prepare language learners to understand both the formal grammatical pattern and

also the pragmatic and semantic nuances. Furthermore, the eleven strategies that are presented for conveying German reflexive verbs in Arabic can serve as a valuable framework for curriculum designers and language educators. From a syllabus design perspective, attention should be devoted to sequencing the introduction of reflexive verbs by degree of complexity, before moving to more complex verbs where reflexivity is expressed through idiomatic or collocational means. Thus, the incorporation of authentic texts and communicative tasks that can feature reflexive verbs in meaningful contexts can help with the enhancement of learners' acquisition and retention. The implications of this study for language teaching and learning advocate the necessity for explicit grammar instruction, contextualized teaching methods, and strategy-based approaches.

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