Translating Cultural Default: A Study of Two Chinese Versions of Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*

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Master of Arts in Translation Studies

by

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents ............................................................................................................ i

Declaration ....................................................................................................................... iii

Acknowledgements .......................................................................................................... iv

Abstract ............................................................................................................................ v

1. INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 Background .............................................................................................................. 1
   1.2 Objectives of the Research .................................................................................... 2
   1.3 Research Questions ............................................................................................... 3
   1.4 Significance ............................................................................................................ 3

2. RELATED CONCEPTS ............................................................................................... 4
   2.1 Culture ..................................................................................................................... 4
   2.2 Cultural Default .................................................................................................... 5
      2.2.1 Coping with Cultural Default .......................................................................... 6
   2.3 Culture Specific Items ......................................................................................... 7
      2.3.1 Coping with Culture Specific Items ................................................................ 8
   2.4 Slang and Coarse Language and Cultural Default ................................................. 13

3. METHODOLOGY ........................................................................................................ 14
   3.1 Introduction of the Data ....................................................................................... 14
   3.2 The Author .......................................................................................................... 14
   3.3 The Two Translated Versions ............................................................................... 15
3.4 Method of Analysis

4. CASE ANALYSIS

4.1 Slang and Coarse Language

4.1.1 Slang

4.1.2 Coarse Language

4.2 Proper Nouns

4.2.1 Names of Objects

4.2.2 Names of Places and People

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 What are some of the factors that can result in cultural default?

5.2 What kinds of translation problem does cultural default cause?

5.3 What translation strategies and methods are used to translate culture-specific elements? How do different translated versions tackle specific problems?

5.4 Further Research

BIBLIOGRAPHY

TABLES

ii
ABSTRACT

As translation is an activity which ultimately involves two different languages and cultural traditions, there often exists a problem caused by the cultural disparity between the source language (SL) and the target language (TL) readership. This study aims to provide some implications on the influences of cultural default on the process of decoding the source text (ST) and the encoding of the target text (TT). Using two Chinese translation versions of J.D. Salinger’s *The Catcher in the Rye* as data, the researcher aims to explore the connections among cultural default, slang and coarse language, culture-specific items, as well as the translation strategies used to solve the problems caused by these cultural factors.

After analyzing the data from the two translated versions, it is found that slang and coarse expressions, as well as culture-specific items, contribute to the existence of cultural default in translation. The phenomenon of cultural default can jeopardize the readability of the TT, but there are effective strategies proposed by scholars of translation studies that a translator can use to cope with the problem.

Keywords: cultural default, *The Catcher in the Rye*, culture, slang, coarse language, culture-specific item