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Translating Culture-Specific Words: A Comparative Study of Two English Versions of *San Guo Yan Yi*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Translation Studies



Supervisor: Dr. Lei Lai Cheng, Victoria

University of Macau

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the translation strategies for culture-specific words using Luo Guanzhong's *San Guo Yan Yi* as the source text and the two English translations, namely Charles Henry Brewitt-Taylor's version published in 1925 and Moss Roberts' version published in 1994, as the target texts. The author has identified more than 300 culture-specific words based on Baker's definition, and categorized them using Nida's method of classifying culture-specific words. Applying Baker's theory, the thesis explores the similarities and differences between the two translators in terms of translation strategies. The study also tries to reveal some possible factors, such as the background of the translators, the change of language, the rise of the international status of China, and the technological advancement of the mass media that might have influenced the two English translations.

Keywords: culture-specific word, Three Kingdoms, translation strategy