



Voices in *Deng Dai*: The Linguistic Devices in Translating *Waiting*

Melody Yunzi LI*

The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

This paper focuses on the problem of translating “Chineseness” peculiar to Ha Jin’s *Waiting*. In *Waiting*, the occurrence of translations from Chinese – as found in the names of characters and places, Chinese culture-specific terms, idioms and sayings –constitutes an aesthetic exoticism for western readers, which I term “Chineseness”. Indeed this presence of “Chineseness” in *Waiting* accounts for much of its popularity and a great deal of critical acclaim. When rendering Ha Jin back into Chinese, if the defamiliarized elements are naturalized, the “Chineseness” in the original richly experienced by western readers will be easily lost or weakened. In Jin Liang’s translation, several linguistic devices are used to make up for the loss of this effect, including Dongbei dialect, rhetorical questions, metaphors, idioms and culture-specific items. In this study, I will examine these examples under four headings: lexical, grammatical, phonological and rhetorical. In particular, engaging J.C. Catford’s theoretical framework of language varieties, this paper addresses how translation equivalence is set up between different language varieties in the English original and Jin Liang’s translation. It examines the special language varieties in the Chinese translation of *Waiting*, and shows what literary effect it creates, how the original and the translation differ in their presentation of the *dramatis personae*.