

MASTER'S THESIS

A study of the culture-oriented approach adopted by Robert Morrison in A dictionary of the Chinese language

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**A Study of the Culture-Oriented Approach Adopted by
Robert Morrison in *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language***

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Abstract

The subject of this thesis is Robert Morrison's *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language*, the first Chinese and English bilingual dictionary published in the world. Unlike the usual bilingual dictionary, which generally contains only translation equivalents and illustrative examples, *A Dictionary of the Chinese Language* gives a lot more. In an attempt to introduce Chinese culture to Westerners, Morrison adopted a culture-oriented approach in his dictionary — he incorporated information about Chinese culture into entries of the dictionary. The information incorporated was selected and translated by Morrison from original Chinese works.

Three factors accounting for Morrison's adoption of a culture-oriented approach in his dictionary are identified — the Protestant mission of Morrison, Morrison's view of cross-cultural communication between China and the West, and the patronage of the East India Company. These factors are found to have in turn governed the types of cultural information Morrison selected for translation and inclusion in his dictionary. In addition, it is found that the factors also had a direct bearing on the translation principle and translation strategies Morrison employed in his dictionary.

Finally, the implications of Morrison's culture-oriented approach for today's bilingual lexicography, with special reference to dictionaries dealing with Chinese and English, and the possibility of incorporating the culture-oriented approach into the production of interactive electronic bilingual dictionaries are explored.

Contents

Declaration		i
Abstract		ii
Acknowledgements		iii
Contents		v
Chapter One:	Introduction	1
	1.1 About <i>A Dictionary of the Chinese Language</i>	2
	1.2 About Robert Morrison	7
	1.3 Approach and Outline of Subsequent Chapters	12
Chapter Two:	Morrison's Adoption of a Culture-Oriented Approach in His Dictionary	16
	2.1 Main Information Contained in General Bilingual Dictionaries	16
	2.2 Types of Information Provided by Morrison's Dictionary	17
	2.3 Culture-Oriented Approach	21
	2.4 Tradition and Influence	22
	2.5 Conclusion	29
Chapter Three:	Factors Accounting for Morrison's Adoption of a Culture-Oriented Approach	31
	3.1 The Protestant Mission of Morrison	31
	3.2 Morrison's View of Cross-Cultural Communication Between China and the West	36
	3.3 The Patronage of the East India Company	44
	3.4 Conclusion	48
Chapter Four:	Morrison's Selection of Cultural Information for Translation and Incorporation into His Dictionary	50

	4.1 The Protestant Mission of Morrison	50
	4.2 The Patronage of the East India Company	58
	4.3 Morrison's View of Cross-Cultural Communication Between China and the West	62
	4.4 Conclusion	68
Chapter Five:	Translation Strategies Adopted by Morrison in His Dictionary	70
	5.1 Morrison's Translation Principle and the Resultant Translation Strategies	70
	5.1.1 Lexical Level	73
	5.1.1.1 Conceptual Terms	73
	5.1.1.2 Cultural Words	75
	5.1.1.3 Metaphors	77
	5.1.1.4 Other Figurative Expressions	80
	5.1.2 Syntactic Level	81
	5.1.3 Textual Level	84
	5.1.4 Conclusion	88
	5.2 Other Translation Strategies Adopted by Morrison	90
	5.2.1 Addition	90
	5.2.2 Editorial Remarks	92
	5.2.3 Illustration	95
	5.2.4 Conclusion	99
	5.3 Linking up: Factors, Approach, Principle and Strategies	100
Chapter Six:	Conclusion	103
	6.1 Intercultural Communication Today	103
	6.2 Types of Cultural Information to Be Included in Present-Day Chinese-English or English-Chinese Bilingual Dictionaries	109
	6.3 Translation Strategies	111
	6.4 Concluding Remarks	112
Appendix I		113
Appendix II		116

Appendix III	120
Works Cited	123
Curriculum Vitae	133