SOCIOLINGUISTIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JAPANESE AND ENGLISH AS SEEN THROUGH ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF MANGA

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Manga (Japanese comics) is a growing market in the United States that exposes American readers to Japanese culture and language in a way that is enjoyable and accessible. However, translating manga from Japanese to English provides an interesting challenge, as the Japanese language encodes features such as social relationships, power rankings, etc., while English does not have as many encodings. English readers who read translations of manga to gain insight into Japanese culture and language may miss the context and importance of the sociolinguistic encodings. How does manga show the difference between the Japanese and English languages? The two manga being compared are *D. Gray-Man* by Katsura Hoshino and *D.N. Angel* by Yukiru Sugisaki. First, the Japanese versions of the manga were compared to see if one displayed more encodings than the other. Then, the Japanese versions were compared to the English versions to determine how much of the sociolinguistic encodings from Japanese were kept in the translation, and if they were, the form they took. I found that neither of the Japanese versions could be considered "more Japanese" or "more Western" due to factors such as character personality, which affected usage of the language, and situations that the characters experienced. Overwhelmingly, the English translations of the manga dropped many of the sociolinguistic encodings, such as honorifics, sentence-ending particles, and polite language. Instead, they were replaced by bolding, extra punctuation, or tag words, or eliminated altogether.