

Original Paper

Cultural Filter and Value Anchoring: Critical Discourse Practice of Values Education in AI-assisted Tourism Translation Courses

Hui Liu¹

¹ School of English Studies, Beijing, China

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Abstract

AI can improve the efficiency of translation teaching, but there are still hidden cultural risks. AI is primarily a system from the West that has difficulty understanding culture-loaded tourism texts in Chinese cultural discourse. There is a growing tension between technical empowerment and cultural awareness; thus, the inheritance of values has become a problem in the era of artificial intelligence. The research background of this paper is the AI-assisted Tourism English Translation course. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has found that there are two basic concepts: "cultural filter" and "value anchoring", and based on this, a three-stage circular teaching model has been created. After 16 weeks of teaching practice, it has been found that this model can help students better recognize cultural bias in AI translation and strengthen their own sense of cultural confidence. It can provide teaching ideas for the theory, introduce cultural literacy into translation evaluation, and achieve measurable results.

Keywords

AI-assisted translation teaching, values education, critical discourse analysis, cultural confidence, tourism English translation

1. Introduction

The introduction of artificial intelligence in higher education has changed foreign language teaching, and it is now a collaboration between people and machines. It is a problem in teaching. Most AI-assisted teaching aims to develop skills and does not solve the basic problem of cultural bias in machine translation. During the processing of tourism texts on traditional Chinese culture, red tourism and folk conventions are often interpreted in a Western-centric way by artificial intelligence, and the culture-laden language is simplified. There is no active "cultural filter" to guide the use of smart devices, so students tend to be over-dependent on them and lose touch with culture; they prioritize efficiency over independent value judgment.

With the promotion of values education, tourism translation is to act as a cross-cultural window and fulfil the mission of "telling Chinese stories well". As Hu (2023) pointed out, the purpose of tourism translation is to help foreign readers understand China better and form a good impression of the country. Artificial intelligence has raised the demands of teaching in tourism translation. Therefore, this paper will use CDA to examine the values education in an AI-assisted tourism translation course and put forward the two main ideas of "cultural filter" and "value anchoring". First, we need to identify the deviations in Chinese cultural discourse generated by AI. The former is about self-direction; after critically analysing the output, students rewrite the translated text according to their own understanding of the culture.

Wang et al. (2024) have put forward ways to address cultural hegemony, and Si (2021) has expanded the concept of values education in translation curricula. The three links of the chain of pedagogical logic are critical discourse analysis, cultivation of cultural awareness and value-anchored practice. The three stages of the teaching model put forward in this paper are perception, deconstruction and reconstruction; a teaching path combining technical practice, cultural subjectivity and value positioning has been formed.

2. Theoretical Framework and Values Education Connotation

The three main contents of values education in AI-assisted tourism translation courses are critical discourse analysis, the meaning of values education, and its teaching path.

2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis of AI Translation

Tourism translation can spread culture and values. Concepts such as traditional culture, the narratives of red tourism, local ethics, etc., are easy to misinterpret in machine-generated text. Modern cross-cultural communication no longer takes place in person; instead, people and machines are working together, so at present, in translation education, we need to address the problem of translation bias.

The theory of critical discourse analysis works well in this domain. Fairclough (2013) put forward the three-dimensional model of discourse, which consists of text, discursive practice and social practice. Micro-linguistic features need to be used in the larger environment for full understanding, and changes in society are occurring all the time.

Artificial intelligence translation is a typical type of discourse, so it will naturally contain cultural bias from its training data. Lexicon and syntax in machine-generated text have hidden cultural biases. The dimension of discursive practice is how the training data directs the translation preferences of algorithms, and the dimension of social practice shows the power relations at the bottom. With the rich data resources of the West, artificial intelligence systems have often failed to learn from the vast cultural expressions in China and have begun to spread Western-centrism via digital translation technology.

In recent years, CDA has been used more and more frequently to conduct research on AI translation.

Wang et al. (2024) have built a four-dimensional system of data, algorithms, values and discourses of hegemony to fight cultural hegemony. Albedah (2025) has carried out some research and found that LLM-generated content often contains widespread cultural stereotypes and values. Most of the research has addressed these problems but has not put forward a system of teaching strategies. The main content of this paper is the application of CDA theory to the construction of teaching plans.

2.2 Values Education Connotation: From Linguistic Conversion to Cultural Confidence

Critical Discourse Analysis has revealed the basic connection between language and power in the foundation of values education. All language activities contain values, so the teaching of translation should also strengthen value education in addition to training in technical skills. In accordance with the Guidelines for Curriculum Values Education in Colleges and Universities (Ministry of Education, 2020), value cultivation, knowledge transmission and ability formation are all necessary goals of the new curriculum.

Scholars have studied values education in translation teaching. Si (2021) believed that the purpose of translation is to spread culture and values, not only language. The lack of cohesive professional training and values education fails to address the problems in the classroom. Liu and Feng (2022) thought that the division was a problem in teaching. Miao (2023) proposed that the goal of values education should be to cultivate good character in students rather than transmit knowledge.

AI-assisted tourism translation teaching should be carried out reasonably, and one should not be too reliant on the intelligent tools. Cultural confidence is shown by keeping the original culture of the translation in the use of technology-assisted translation. The three levels of values education are: cognition (to be able to recognize cultural bias and discourse distortion in AI-generated text), attitude (to cultivate a sense of cultural confidence in analyzing cross-cultural communication from a Chinese perspective), and practice (to promote the construction of translational meaning). The two main ideas in this paper are the "cultural filter" and "value anchoring". Wang et al.(2024) mentioned the "cultural trap" and algorithmic bias; Wang thought that the cultural filter is to inspire students to think for themselves by providing a teaching resource. Value anchoring is a person's ability to actively construct meaning, and with cultural confidence, they can critically evaluate AI translations and give them different meanings in different situations. The three steps of the implementation are to determine the position of Chinese culture in tourism translation, use targeted translation strategies, and develop cultural literacy in translation skills.

2.3 Theoretical Connection: Construction of the Pedagogic Logic Chain

Critical Discourse Analysis reveals that the tools of technology have values and are the basis of this study's pedagogical logic. The teaching logic chain of this paper is: "AI output - critical deconstruction - value reconstruction". It is not a fixed, one-way process; rather, it will change with the changes in one's life. Therefore, in this round, a detailed critical deconstruction will be carried out to reconstruct values; thus, the improved value cognition will further promote the development of students' critical thinking.

AI Output is the beginning. Students use AI to do the first translation and feel the effect of the cultural filter through comparison. Nasution (2025) pointed out that most students do not use critical thinking in the application of intelligent tools and thus need targeted teaching intervention. "Critical deconstruction" should be employed as an intermediate step. Under the guidance of CDA, students can recognize lexical items and syntactic structures in texts, understand narrative expressions, etc. In line with Otai's (2025) model of cultivating critical language awareness, the final goal is "value reconstruction". With stronger cultural confidence, students can now edit machine-translated materials and are no longer passive users of technology but active participants in the construction of culture. The above logical system can be turned into practical teaching measures.

3. Teaching Design

In accordance with the idea of Wang and Lu (2023) that language, content and values education should be balanced, this paper puts forward a three-stage circular teaching model for the AI-assisted Tourism English Translation course.

3.1 The Three-Stage Circular Teaching Model

It is for junior English majors, and there are 32 classes in total (8 theoretical, 24 practical). Based on the cultivation of critical discourse awareness, the three stages of the framework are in line with the cognitive logic of "identifying problems - analysing problems - solving problems", and a closed teaching loop has been formed.

Stage One: Perception - Creation of "Cultural Conflicts" (8 hours)

At this time, the students will know that AI language modification is not neutral and will be motivated to study. The three kinds of teaching texts are traditional Chinese culture, red tourism and folk culture. The groups of students use the main AI tools for translation, and upon comparing the AI-generated results with the official authoritative edition, they find that there is a cultural bias in the AI's output. AI will generally translate "Zhongyong (中庸)" as "the Doctrine of the Mean", which is a Western idea of a "Golden Mean" and does not have Confucian moral connotations. The official translation is "the Way of Zhongyong" and includes notes to explain the Chinese culture of the original work. Finally, there will be an AI-translation comparison and analysis form to fill in.

Stage Two: Deconstruction - Critical Discourse Analysis Workshop (12 hours)

Now the students are learning CDA. Teachers give micro-lectures in three areas: lexical selection, syntactic arrangement and addition or omission of information. Based on the AI translation examples in Stage One, groups of students can find the bias and, according to that bias, determine the reasons for it (e.g., lack of Chinese cultural corpora in the training data) and put forward countermeasures. A CDA report will be issued at the end of this period. The three directions of analysis will serve as the basis for the evaluation in Stage Three.

Stage Three: Reconstruction - Value Anchoring in Human-Machine Collaboration (12 hours)

Students Revise AI Translations Critically. The three indicators of the teaching evaluation are:

consistency of political stance, novelty in cultural expression and acceptability in cross-cultural communication. Students can submit corrected translations and reasons for the modifications in the shared terminology library, and a summary of the patterns of AI mistranslation will be added to the warning list. "Zhongyong" is transliteration plus annotation for "Zhongyong". The final output will be the corrected translation, a terminology entry and a warning notice.

3.2 Design of Teaching Evaluation

The three aims of the teaching assessment are in a closed-loop manner. Formative assessment is 60% of the grade, which includes all three stages, and summative assessment is 40% and will be conducted in the form of a "real project". The weight of cultural processing and language accuracy is the same (40%), and the remaining 20% is for translation strategy selection. Specific Indices: Culture-laden term translation (15%), depth and appropriateness of cultural explanation (15%), choice of translation method (10%). The effect of the three-stage model on cultural treatment and strategy application will be verified experimentally in the next section.

4. Research Results and Discussion

The three-stage cycle was achieved in the 16 weeks of teaching. The two parallel classes of junior English majors at the university took part. The experimental class (32 students) was taught in line with the proposed model, and the control class (30 students) was taught traditionally without CDA. Both classes had the same teacher and weekly time. The results of the pre-test did not differ in translation ability ($p > 0.05$). This paper is a quasi-experiment, and qualitatively, we have also analyzed the 62 reflective journals and group discussion records (inter-coder reliability = 0.89).

4.1 Promotion of Critical Thinking

Pre-test: The AI translation of culture-loaded words was the same in both classes. In the experimental class, 85 per cent thought that machine translations were basically accurate, and only 12 per cent could perceive the lack of cultural connotations. Post-test: The accuracy of the experimental class was 78.3%, and that of the control class increased from 13.8% to 41.2%. An independent-samples t-test was carried out, and it was found that there was a statistical difference ($t = 8.56$, $p < 0.001$). The three kinds of CDA that were observed in the students of the experimental group were lexical selection, syntactic structure and information addition/omission. These are the three dimensions of micro-lessons mentioned in Stage Two.

According to the four indicators of coding analysis (cultural bias, algorithmic limitations, discourse power and cultural filter), it was found that the experimental group produced 47 references to these concepts, and the control group produced only 12 ($\chi^2 = 22.34$, $p < 0.001$). A dialogue in the experimental class shows that students have begun to think about how the "Doctrine of the Mean" of AI can be used to apply a Western framework to a Chinese concept, and have pointed out what the teacher calls a "cultural filter".

4.2 Internalised Cultural Confidence

Sixty-two reflection journals from the experimental class show that the students have changed from being dependent on artificial intelligence to taking the initiative. The three themes are in line with the cognition-attitude-practice model in Section 2.

"AI Worship" to "AI Discrimination": 24 students said so. One wrote that he used to think artificial intelligence translation was fast and accurate, but now he has come to realize that what is "good" also has an exception. Another added that it is not about being right or wrong, but rather who will take advantage of it.

From "language conversion" to "cultural transmission": 19 students mentioned that translation is also about culture. One person has wondered whether foreigners can understand what we mean in this writing now, and another thinks that translation is a bridge, and we need to present Chinese culture.

From "passive acceptance" to "active construction": Now, 15 students do not think that AI is the answer, but rather a helper. One said, "My work is to correct errors and train the artificial intelligence as well." "Cultural subjectivity" and "Chinese position" were often mentioned in the journals of the experimental class; thus, values education had become endogenous.

4.3 Development of Translation Competence

The pre-test and post-test were the same tourism translation tasks. Language accuracy (40%), cultural handling (40%) and strategy use (20%) were the scores. The Intra-rater reliability is 0.91.

Table 1. Comparison of Translation Competence Between the Two Groups

Dimension	Experimental Group (n=32)	Control Group (n=30)	t-value	p-value
Language Accuracy	85.2	83.6	1.24	>0.05
Cultural Handling	78.5	62.3	7.89	<0.001
Strategy Use	76.8	70.1	2.49	<0.05

The experimental group had received sound cultural education and used strategies, though their language accuracy was the same as that of the control group. Therefore, the three-stage circular model can help students learn the culture and language together.

4.4 Problems and Limitations

Challenges in teaching implementation: Early introduction of CDA concepts causes cognitive obstacles for some students. In the future, micro-lectures will be used to divide the main ideas into three sections. Progress was also uneven in the process of deconstruction and reconstruction; therefore, the next step will extend the reconstruction time and introduce a "three-tier review and proofreading" system.

Limitation of research design: Only 62 students from the two classes at one university were selected, so it is not generalizable. The first 16 weeks will be for the initial effects, and then the construction of cultural awareness will be observed over time. Reflective journals are used in this paper to study cultural confidence, and in the future, objective instruments such as cultural consciousness scales will

be developed.

5. Conclusion

Problems in the value aspect of the AI-assisted Tourism English Translation course are studied in this paper. Critical Discourse Analysis has been employed to study the teaching of artificial intelligence translation, and thus a "cultural filter" and "value anchoring" have been put forward, as well as a three-stage circular model of perception, deconstruction and reconstruction.

Based on the results of the 16-week teaching experiment, there are cultural filter biases in the tourism translations produced by AI. In the process of dealing with materials related to Chinese culture, the AI tool is often based on a Western interpretation model and therefore misses characteristics of Chinese discourse. Thus, it can make the students know that there is a bias. The experimental class was better than the control class in some indicators. Critical Thinking about AI Translation helped the students develop a sense of culture.

Based on CDA, this paper will investigate the problem of AI-assisted translation teaching and focus on how to improve teaching rather than correct technical flaws. Practically, this model and evaluation system have provided answers to the problem of assessing values education. With the spread of artificial intelligence in translation education, technological development should be in line with values education, and human-machine cooperation needs to be based on cultural literacy. A three-step system has been built to provide a stable basis for AI-assisted translation teaching and to nurture students who are skilled in technology and proficient in Chinese culture.

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