

Cultivating Translation Learning Beliefs in the AIGC Era: Exploring an Innovative Pedagogical Model Based on Teaching Practice

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Abstract: In the era of Artificial Intelligence Generated Content (AIGC), learning beliefs among translation major students have been reshaped. Instead of merging linguistic competence with translation skills and AI usage in translation teaching, translation teachers should cultivate students' proper learning beliefs from the perspective of AI-mediated translation competence. This paper proposes the Belief-oriented Human-AI Collaborative (B-HAC) Model, an innovative pedagogical framework developed from teaching practice in undergraduate translation courses. The model combines belief diagnosis and reconstruction, REAL order-driven translation teaching, human-AI collaborative learning, and assessment. Putting learning beliefs at the core of the design, this model aims to build translation competence. This study contributes a belief-oriented perspective to translation teaching and provides practical implications for cultivating competent translators in the AIGC era.

Keywords: Learning beliefs; AIGC; Translation competence; Translation teaching

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1. Introduction

With the rapid development of AI and its ripple effects in the translation industry, changes in learning beliefs are trickling down to translation major students. With the help of AI tools, terminology retrieval, draft translation, and language polishing become easier and more efficient, which reduces students' engagement in language acquisition and translation skill training. It also affects learning beliefs about developing translation competence. Schäffner conceptualizes translation competence as a complex integrity^[1], involving linguistic competence, translation competence, strategic competence, textual competence, research competence, and professional competence^[2]. In the AIGC era, technological proficiency is a crucial part of translation competence. As translation competence evolves with ever-advancing AI technologies, it boils down to the core question of whether students can accomplish real-world translation tasks.

As new demands for translation competence arise, translation learning beliefs should be reconstructed. In the AIGC era, there are some differing features among translation major students across different academic years, based on the author's frontier teaching in translation programs and her observation of the grade-based divergence of translation learning beliefs can be verified by Wang ^[3]. Firstly, first-year students are vaguely aware of translation competence, believing good English speakers can naturally become good translators. They tend to prefer language training over development in translation skills, research, and professional judgement. Moreover, translation students may grow into divergent beliefs toward AI. Some students overly rely on AI-generated translations, while some other students go to another extreme of AI rejection, fearing that AI could undermine their translation competence. In addition, given that some job opportunities are being slashed due to AI replacement in the translation industry, more first-years have been assigned to translation programs through major adjustment. They become translation major students not for their interest in language or translation-related professions, compared with students who voluntarily chose to major in translation several years ago. Translation-related employment is not included in most first-year students' career plans, as shown by Chen ^[4]. However, as they are more involved with translation learning, some of them begin to find their passion in translation and have a clearer sense of professional identity as translators. Therefore, fostering would-be translators starts from reconstructing learning beliefs among translation major students.

Considering AI-induced changes in both translation competence and the learning beliefs of translation major students, this paper aims to propose a belief-oriented pedagogical model. It further discusses the practical implications of this model for translation teachers in the AIGC era.

2. Theoretical foundations

Since the 1980s, learning beliefs in second language acquisition have come to the focus of academia. Learning belief is defined as a learning construct based on the learner's understanding of learning activities, which involves a set of attitudes and opinions concerning learning and education by Flavell ^[5]. Wenden explains from the angle of metacognition that learning beliefs are relatively stable and constitute narrative knowledge in the process of language acquisition, even though sometimes this kind of knowledge may be incorrect ^[6]. Cortazzi and Jin define learner beliefs in terms of how learners understand what constitutes normal and effective learning behaviors and processes ^[7]. Riley holds that learning belief reflects learners' expectations about language learning, which can directly affect learning behaviors ^[8]. All these researchers come to the same point that learning beliefs are subjective and can influence learning behaviors, strategy choice, and learning outcomes.

With the awareness of learning beliefs in learning activities, the academia started to look for ways to measure learning beliefs. Horwitz developed the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to scale learning beliefs and identify misconceptions about language learning among American students ^[9]. He measured learning beliefs about foreign language aptitude, difficulty of language learning, nature of language learning, learning strategies, motivation, and expectations. To further dive into learning beliefs, foreign language anxiety, and translation learning in the translation classroom, Wang developed the Beliefs About Translation Learning Survey (BATLS) on the basis of Schäffner and a pilot study ^[10,11]. Wang and Yan also used the Beliefs About Translation Learning Survey (BATLS) with reference to Schäffner to survey the correlation between learner beliefs and translation achievement. Wu developed the

Beliefs About Translation Learning Inventory (BATLI) ^[12], covering the nature of translation, translation learning strategies, translation learning motivation, and the nature of translation learning, based on his own teaching experience in translation theory and practice and with reference to BALLI proposed by Horwitz. With the help of Wu's BATLI, Jiang shortened Wu's BATLI to measure the interconnections among translation learning beliefs, learning strategies, learning engagement, anxiety, and their effects on learning performance in China ^[13]. Sun measured Chinese English majors' translation learning beliefs and learning strategies under Schäffner's framework of translation competence ^[11]. All of these recent empirical studies support the view that learning beliefs could influence learning behaviors and outcomes. For translation major students, learning beliefs are learners' conceptions of how translation should be learned and what makes a competent translator. Yet, none of these studies include the new variables emerging in the AIGC era, and most of them focus on English majors rather than translation majors.

Schäffner tried to bridge the gap in measuring learning beliefs in translation major students by pointing out that translation competence does not just involve two languages and the competence to convey messages, but also involves a complex combination of linguistic competence, cultural competence, textual competence, subject competence, and transfer competence ^[14]. However, the AIGC era reshapes translation practice and training. Hence, translation competences adjust accordingly. Yang revisited previous translation competence models by identifying linguistic and cultural competences as the top priority, followed by adaptability and lifelong learning, cognitive and emotional abilities, professionalism and ethical standards, technological proficiency, project management, interpersonal skills, and domain-specific knowledge and specialization ^[15]. These competences are considered crucial to translation practice in the AIGC era, which poses new challenges for translation education.

3. Designing the B-HAC model: a belief-oriented human-AI collaborative translation learning model

As translation competences and learning beliefs evolve with time, it's high time that an updated translation pedagogical model should be proposed. Based on some features marking learning beliefs among translation major students, the writer proposes a Belief-oriented Human-AI Collaborative Translation Learning Model (B-HAC). This model seeks to reconstruct learning beliefs about translation competence in AIGC-mediated contexts.

3.1. Stage 1: Belief diagnosis and reconstruction

The B-HAC model starts with a Beliefs About Translation Learning Survey, with a scale adapted from Horwitz ^[9], Schäffner's conceptualization of translation competence ^[1], and AIGC-era competencies identified by Yang ^[15]. Before teaching, the translation teacher uses a modified BATLS questionnaire to identify learning beliefs concerning learning challenges, teacher dependence, AI attitudes, and professional identity. Then, students are asked questions such as: 1) What makes a good translator? 2) What is the relationship between AI and translators? Afterward, the teacher invites students to compare and discuss a student translation and an AI-generated translation to address both AI dependence and AI rejection. Lastly, the teacher asks students to map AI capabilities. Through this process, students will recognize AI's advantages and translators' value in ethical judgment, cultural interpretation, professional responsibility, and project management.

The diagnosis of translation learning beliefs is key to understanding dynamic belief constructs, which can be reconstructed through meaningful learning experiences. The writer found in her classes that freshmen tend to equate translation competence with linguistic competence and regard teachers as their major source of translation learning. Sophomores start to receive systematic translation training in both interpreting and written translation, but may feel overwhelmed by learning challenges. Juniors are more actively aware of strategic factors in translation competence when receiving massive translation practice. After taking part in several real translation tasks, such as working as volunteer liaison interpreters at local international events, seniors forge strengthened beliefs in professionalism and interpersonal skills.

3.2. Stage 2: REAL order-driven translation learning

To bridge the gap between classroom-based translation exercises and actual language services, the core of the B-HAC model is REAL order-based translation projects, building a full loop of learning, practice, and final application. REAL is the acronym for Research, Experience, Authenticity, and Listen. For Research, students conduct research on industry backgrounds so as to actively build domain-specific term bases and verify information, which can enhance their subject competence. Experience aims to engage students in authentic industry scenarios and comprehend the industry logic behind them through enterprise visits. Immersive experience of this kind facilitates comprehension of industry terms and internalizes industry logic. Authenticity means including non-standard accents and inviting diverse speakers to interpret teaching, which helps students develop on-site responsiveness and face real-world pressure scenarios. Listening to interviews with professional interpreters, translators, and dialogues with industry experts promotes professionalism and awareness of ethical standards.

Under the REAL framework, translation exercises do not just come from textbooks, but also from translation orders proposed by local enterprises and leading industries. In the B-HAC model, teaching activities should possibly focus on local socio-economic needs for international exchange. For instance, in order to meet foreign reception demands from a locally organized international exhibition, students take interpreting or written translation orders, while the teachers design lessons to guide students in acquiring domain-specific terms and concepts, combining industry knowledge with translation practice. These order-driven tasks provide authentic and practical experience, and nurture professional belief in promoting Chinese wisdom and solutions to the world.

3.3. Stage 3: Human-AI collaborative translation practice

The B-HAC model focuses on cooperative development between learners and AI tools in designing teaching activities, covering before-, during- and after- translation learning phases. For instance, in interpreting teaching, students conduct AI-supported preparation before interpreting tasks. The teacher introduces AI tools for term search, background information collection, and simulated speech material generation; meanwhile, the teacher needs to guide students to evaluate information, select reliable resources, and build their own knowledge framework, which can enhance students' research competence. The during-translation phase is featured by AI-supported performance. Students are encouraged to use AI tools for speech recognition, transcription, and reference support. Still, students appreciate their value in comprehension, decision-making and on-site adjustment. After translation, the teacher guides students to make full use of AI tools for self-review and reflection. Students can refer to AI feedback for error identification so as to improve linguistic

competence. Through the three-phase translation learning, a cooperative balance could be achieved between AI and students so that students can gain a more positive learner belief in technological proficiency.

3.4. Stage 4: Assessment in the B-HAC model

The B-HAC model combines qualitative and quantitative assessment to evaluate translation competence comprehensively. Positive qualitative assessment can construct learning beliefs so as to cope with high-stress scenarios in translation, especially interpreting. Quantitative assessment includes evaluation in AI proficiency and participation in REAL order-based activities. Besides, supplementary assessment modules are optional, including obtaining a translation qualification certificate, participating in a translation competition, or posting an original bilingual video displaying the local industries. This B-HAC assessment tends to empower students to become qualified translation professionals while enhancing their learning beliefs in professionalism, ethical standards, and on-site responsiveness, transforming them from translation learners to reflective translation professionals.

4. Pedagogical implications of the B-HAC model

The B-HAC model for translation major students is more than just a set of teaching activities, but a different way of designing teaching. It mainly contributes to the reconstruction of learning beliefs about translation competence in the AI-mediated era. Based on the REAL order-driven teaching approach and human–AI collaborative learning, it provides broader implications for translation education.

4.1. Reconstructing learning beliefs about translation competence

Conventional translation teaching pays too much attention to linguistic knowledge and translation skills, yet without proper awareness of translation students' learning beliefs. For instance, many students equate translation learning with language learning. Some of them believe translation practice can be replaced by the use of AI. Therefore, their learning beliefs affect their learning behaviors. Given the importance of learning beliefs in translation education, the B-HAC not only targets improving translation skills but also reshapes learning beliefs about translation from the perspective of translation competence. Translation students build up their learning beliefs that learning translation is more than just learning language transfer. Even with the help of AI tools, they still need to enhance their professional judgment, strategic thinking, and problem-solving. In a word, a clear and reconstructed learning belief improves students' learning behaviors, which will further help to build up their translation competence and foster their professional identity.

4.2. Developing human-AI collaboration

Rather than focusing on how to use AI, the B-HAC model tries to address students' over-reliance and rejection by guiding them to think about when to use AI, why to use AI, and when to refrain from using AI. The B-HAC model consists of three phases of collaboration, namely before, while and after translation. This three-stage framework develops AI operational literacy, critical thinking and collaborative competence to accomplish translation tasks in AI-mediated scenarios. It implies that students can reconstruct their learning belief that AI is a translation partner. They, as human translators, still take responsibility for professionalism, project management, interpersonal interaction, etc. The collaboration between humans and AI becomes a new part of translation competence.

4.3. Connecting classroom learning with professional practice

Conventional translation teaching confines students to classroom settings and textbook exercises. In such scenarios, students can hardly experience the on-site professional workflows of translators, hindering learning belief development about becoming professional translators. Instead, the B-HAC model empowers students through translation orders to work as translators. It includes genuine translation projects from the local government and enterprises for learning and practice. It implies that translation orders bring more educational value in reconstructing learning beliefs for students in the translation major. Through actual involvement and participation in these order-driven projects, students foster professional identity. This practical engagement shifts students' mentality from asking "how I finish my translation exercise" to thinking "How could I accomplish this project as a professional?"

5. Conclusion

The rapid development of AIGC brings new challenges. The writer of this paper argues that cultivating professional translators in the new era starts with reconstructing learning beliefs in translation major students. Under this approach, the B-HAC model inspires students to perceive translation learning and translation competence through the lens of AIGC. It builds up a belief-oriented teaching framework to encourage collaboration between students and AI tools by integrating field-trip research, hands-on experience, authentic working scenarios and listening to professionals through actual translation orders from local government and enterprises. It provides implications for translation teachers. Instead of focusing on training linguistic proficiency and AI skills, teachers should prioritize reconstructing translation learning beliefs to train would-be translators who can acquire translation competence in a human-AI collaborative working mode. As a teaching model summarized from the writer's own teaching practice, the B-HAC model lacks empirical support. In the AIGC era, reconstructing learning beliefs among translation students may prove higher priority than teaching students how to use AI, because learning beliefs decide how students are engaged in translation learning and competence achievement as a future translation professional.

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