



Chinese to English Translation Analysis of Discussions on the Methods of Moral Cultivation in “Guidelines for Children”

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Abstract

This translation practice report focuses on the Chinese-English translation process of the article *Discussions on the Methods of Moral Cultivation in "Guidelines for Children"*. Against the backdrop of promoting Chinese culture abroad, *Guidelines for Children* has been adopted by Confucius Institutes in many countries as a core introductory textbook and has become a prominent topic in the field of International Chinese Language Education; consequently, the translation of related academic research findings into English holds practical significance. The translator adopted the "Comprehension, Expression and Adaptation" (CEA) framework to analyze the translation of moral cultivation terminology and classical Chinese quotations in the source text. Through this practical experience, the translator has not only put the translation theories and skills she learned in the textbooks into practice, but also deepened her understanding of the moral cultivation system of *Guidelines for Children*.

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1. Introduction

The translator wrote this translation practice report in order to reflect on the experience of translating the academic article entitled *Discussions on the Methods of Moral Cultivation in "Guidelines for Children"* from Chinese into English, and to further fulfill the task. The body of the report is composed of five parts, giving a review of the translation process and analyzing representative examples of resolving translation difficulties. In the third chapter, by utilizing the "Comprehension, Expression and Adaptation" (CEA) framework proposed by Professor Li Changshuan, the translator selected representative examples to illustrate how she addressed the challenges of comprehending the source text, expressing the meaning in academic English, and making necessary adaptations.

1.1. Introduction to the Translation Task

• The Background of Subject Selection

With the "Chinese culture going global" strategy, *Guidelines for Children* has become a standard introductory text at Confucius Institutes and a subject of growing scholarly interest in International Chinese Language Education. The source article by Liu Jingwei and Bai Yunjiao offers a systematic analysis of the moral cultivation methods in *Guidelines for Children*, but no English version is currently available. Therefore, I chose to translate this article and write a practice report based on the CEA framework, with the aim of contributing to the cross-cultural transmission of traditional Chinese educational thought.

• The Source Text

The source text is an academic article entitled *Discussions on the Methods of Moral Cultivation in "Guidelines for Children"*, written by Liu Jingwei and Bai Yunjiao and published in a Chinese academic journal. The article analyzes five moral cultivation

methods drawn from the classic Chinese primer *Guidelines for Children*, including the integration of indoctrination with verbal guidance, rational education with perceptual education, moral theory with practical training, education with self-education, and moral norms with value guidance. The text blends classical Chinese quotations from *Guidelines for Children* with modern academic analysis, making it both culturally rich and conceptually dense. The translation task consists of two parts: translating the source text from Chinese into English, and writing a practice report based on the CEA framework.

• The Significance of the Project

This translation project has significance on two levels. On a professional level, the source text contains many culturally specific terms and classical quotations from *Guidelines for Children*. By working through these difficulties and applying the CEA framework, I can apply translation theory to practice and better understand how to handle similar texts in the future. On a practical level, completing this translation makes the moral cultivation methods discussed in the article accessible to English readers who are interested in traditional Chinese educational thoughts. This report also documents the specific challenges I encountered—such as understanding classical Chinese and finding appropriate English equivalents for moral cultivation terms—and the strategies I used to address them, which constitutes the core of this graduation project.

2. Translation Process

2.1. Preparation

Before translating, the translator made several preparatory steps. First, the textual features of the source text were analyzed. Lexically, many culture-specific terms related to traditional Chinese moral cultivation, such as the five pairs of methods discussed in the article, can be found in the source text. Syntactically, most sentences are in standard academic Chinese, but the article also quotes classical passages from *Guidelines for Children*, which are concise, rhythmic, and often omit subjects. From a cultural aspect, the source text embodies a distinct Confucian educational framework that may be unfamiliar to English readers. The cultural gap between Chinese and English needs to be bridged as much as possible, so flexible translation strategies should be adopted during the process.

The translator also read background materials before translating. This included studying the original *Guidelines for Children* in Chinese, consulting several existing English translations to see how key concepts and rhymed passages have been handled, and looking up academic articles on traditional Chinese moral education to understand how similar ideas are expressed in English. Special attention was given to the classical quotations that appear throughout the source text, such as “冬则温·夏则清” and “凡是人，皆须爱”，in order to find appropriate English equivalents that are both accurate and readable. A glossary of key moral

cultivation terms was also compiled to ensure consistency throughout the translation.

2.2. Translating and proofreading

During the translation process, the translator did not adhere strictly to the sentence structure of the source text. Attention was paid to the differences between Chinese and English academic writing. For classical quotations from *Guidelines for Children*, an effort was made to preserve the rhythmic feel while ensuring the meaning was clear in English. For the five pairs of moral cultivation methods, key terms were kept consistent throughout the text. After completing the first draft, the translator reviewed the entire translation for grammar errors and awkward expressions. Each classical quotation was compared with the original to confirm accuracy. In the second draft, some sentence structures were adjusted and necessary conjunctions were added to improve cohesion. A fellow student translator was then asked to review the translation and give feedback, which helped catch a few remaining issues. This proofreading process not only improved the quality of the translation but also deepened the translator's understanding of how to handle culturally loaded academic texts.

3. Analysis Framework

A. The “Comprehension, Expression and Adaptation” (CEA) Framework

The “Comprehension, Expression and Adaptation” (CEA) framework was proposed by Professor Li Changshuan to describe the process of translating from a source language to a target language. This framework is used in this report to analyze the translation cases.

3.1. Comprehension

Comprehension means understanding the source text correctly and thoroughly. This includes not only the literal meaning of words and sentences but also the cultural background and the author's intention. The translator needs to read carefully, pay attention to details, and analyze the context.

3.2. Expression

Expression is about conveying the understood meaning in the target language in an accurate and natural way. This involves choosing proper words, adjusting sentence structures, and making sure the translation reads smoothly in English. The goal is to express the original meaning without adding, omitting, or distorting it, while following the conventions of English academic writing.

3.4. Adaptation

Adaptation refers to making necessary changes to the literal information of the source text. This could mean adding, omitting, or adjusting certain elements to fit English expression habits or to better achieve the translation purpose. The overall principle is that the translation purpose determines the method.

4. Case analysis

4.1. Comprehension

Table 1: Translating “灌输” as Indoctrination: Staying Faithful to the Source Text’s Rhetorical Strategy

ST	一味灌输而忽视了德育的疏导，并且学校德育与家庭、社会脱节，没有做到理论与实践的统一，导致了德育效果不佳。
TT	It relies solely on indoctrination while neglecting the educative dimension of moral cultivation. Moreover, school moral cultivation remains disconnected from family and society and has failed to achieve the unity of theory and practice, resulting in suboptimal outcomes.

TT It relies solely on indoctrination while neglecting the educative dimension of moral cultivation. Moreover, school moral cultivation remains disconnected from family and society and has failed to achieve the unity of theory and practice, resulting in suboptimal outcomes.

Analysis:

“灌输” is one of the central concepts in this academic article. The translator chose “indoctrination” as its English equivalent, rather than alternatives such as “instilling” or “inculcation.” This choice needs to be understood within the rhetorical context of the source text.

The authors of the source article are not simply using “灌输” as a neutral term. They are attempting to redefine it through the lens of traditional Chinese pedagogy. They argue that the rhythmic verses of Guidelines for Children, function as a form of “verbal guidance”—children absorb moral lessons naturally through recitation and memorization. In this way, “

灌输” is transformed from a unidirectional, coercive transmission into a more artful, cognitively sensitive mode of value cultivation.

The translator’s decision to retain “indoctrination” reflects an understanding of this rhetorical operation. In English academic discourse, “indoctrination” carries strong negative connotations, associated with closed belief systems and the suppression of critical thinking. A milder term might make the text more palatable to English readers, but it would also obscure what the original authors are trying to accomplish—namely, to reclaim and reframe a contested concept. By preserving the provocative term, the translator allows English readers to engage with the authors’ argument on its own terms, rather than through a sanitized version pre-filtered by the translator. As Li (2020: 8) notes, comprehension must go beyond dictionary definitions to grasp the author’s rhetorical intentions within a specific disciplinary context.

Table 2: Translating “德育” as Moral Cultivation: Distinguishing Chinese and Western Educational Concepts

ST	《弟子规》是我国传统儒家蒙学的经典著作，蕴含着丰富的德育思想，包括全面的德育目标、立体的德育内容和灵活的德育方法，具有德育的重要功能。
TT	Guidelines for Children is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education for children in China. It contains rich ideas on moral cultivation, including comprehensive objectives, multidimensional content, and flexible methods, and it performs important functions in moral cultivation.

TT Guidelines for Children is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education for children in China. It contains rich ideas on moral cultivation, including comprehensive objectives, multidimensional content, and flexible methods, and it performs important functions in moral cultivation.

• Analysis

The Chinese term “德育” appears frequently throughout the source text. While it can be translated as “moral education” in general educational contexts, this particular article requires a more nuanced understanding. The lead author is the dean of a Marxist academy, and the article is published in a journal titled Studies in Ideological and Political Education. In this institutional setting, “德育” refers not to moral education in the broad sense, but specifically to the moral dimension within the framework of ideological and political education. The translator chose “moral cultivation” over the more conventional “moral education.” This distinction matters for

two reasons. First, “cultivation” resonates with the Confucian tradition of self-cultivation, a process-oriented concept that emphasizes gradual internal growth rather than external imposition. This aligns naturally with the educational philosophy of Guidelines for Children, which seeks to nurture moral character through daily practice and rhythmic recitation. Second, “cultivation” subtly distances the translation from the Western dichotomy between “indoctrination” and “liberal education”—a binary that would immediately position the source text’s argument at a disadvantage.

Had the translator chosen “moral education,” English readers might automatically frame the article within this binary and dismiss its claims before engaging with them. “Moral cultivation” sidesteps this problem by anchoring the concept in a different cultural and philosophical tradition. Li (2020: 8) emphasizes that understanding specialized terms requires attention to their disciplinary and institutional positioning, and this case illustrates how such understanding shapes terminological choices at the cultural level.

Table 3: Translating “疏导” as Verbal Guidance: Cultural Metaphor and Academic Readability

ST	坚持灌输与言语疏导的统一，应以灌输客体为中心，在充分考虑灌输客体的认知规律的前提下，借鉴《弟子规》中通俗而不庸俗的言语疏导方式阐述道德理论，发挥我国传统文化的感染力，循循善诱，又要做到以理服人，实事求是，充分尊重客体，建立主体与客体平等的对话与情感沟通，使受教育者知其然，更知其所以然，从而达到教育者与受教育者双向互动。
TT	Upholding the unity of indoctrination and verbal guidance should center on the recipients. Taking full account of learners' cognitive patterns, educators should draw on the accessible mode of verbal guidance exemplified in <i>Guidelines for Children</i> to explain moral theory patiently and persuasively. Traditional Chinese culture, with its persuasive appeal, can convince learners through reasoning and guide them in seeking truth from facts. In this way, learners feel fully respected as the objects of education, and equal dialogue and emotional communication between the educator and the learner can be established. Consequently, learners may understand both the what and the why, thereby achieving genuine two-way engagement.

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• **Analysis**

The Chinese term “疏导” carries a rich cultural metaphor rooted in the legend of Yu the Great (Da Yu, 大禹) the ancient sage-king who tamed floods not by building dikes but by dredging river channels. This paradigm—governing through guidance rather than force—became deeply embedded in Chinese political and educational discourse. In the source text, “疏导” is positioned as the conceptual opposite of “灌输”: the former is associated with channeling

and facilitating, the latter with blocking and imposing.

The translator rendered “疏导” as “verbal guidance.” This is a pragmatic choice. In English academic writing, “guidance” is a well-established term in educational psychology, compatible with student-centered pedagogies and the facilitator role of the teacher. English readers can immediately grasp its function in the argument—it stands in opposition to “indoctrination.”

What is lost, however, is the metaphorical resonance of the original. The image of water finding its natural course when properly channeled has no direct equivalent in English. An alternative such as “channeling” might better preserve this organic quality, but it is less commonly used in academic English and carries its own semantic limitations. The translator’s choice thus represents a trade-off between cultural depth and disciplinary communicability—the primary function of the term in the source text is to establish a conceptual contrast with “indoctrination,” and “verbal guidance” accomplishes this effectively. Li (2020: 8) notes that comprehension extends to the cultural and metaphorical dimensions of terms, but the practical constraints of translation mean that not all of these dimensions can be preserved in the target text.

4.2. Expression

Table 4: Translating “思想政治教育”: The Dilemma of Political Terminology

ST	当今社会中思想政治教育工作的展开面临着诸多挑战，遇到了青年思想政治教育的教育方法简单灌输而忽视疏导、知行难统一等诸多问题。
TT	In contemporary China, the implementation of ideological and political education faces numerous challenges, such as the simplistic indoctrination-oriented approach that neglects guidance in the ideological and political education of young people, and the difficulty in integrating knowledge with practice.

TT In contemporary China, the implementation of ideological and political education faces numerous challenges, such as the simplistic indoctrination-oriented approach that neglects guidance in the ideological and political education of young people, and the difficulty in integrating knowledge with practice.

• **Analysis**

“思想政治教育” is the most institutionally specific term in the entire source text, designating a core component of the Chinese educational system. The translator rendered it in full as “ideological and political education” and maintained this formulation consistently throughout the translation, never abbreviating it or substituting it with more reader-friendly alternatives.

The advantage of this choice is fidelity. The term’s institutional meaning is preserved intact, and English readers are given an accurate sense of what “思想政治教育” actually designates. The disadvantage lies in the word “ideological.” In English academic discourse, this word often carries negative associations—closed belief systems, intellectual conformity, resistance to critical examination. For some English readers, encountering “ideological and political education” in the opening lines may trigger resistance before they have even engaged with the article’s arguments.

The translator could have considered alternatives. “Civic and moral education” would be more palatable but would erase the specifically political dimension of the original. “Values education and citizenship development” would sound more neutral but would fundamentally alter the institutional

identity of the term. Each possible substitute trades accuracy for accessibility. This case illustrates a recurring dilemma in the translation of Chinese political discourse: the choice between domestication—adapting the text to target-culture expectations—and foreignization—preserving the source

culture’s distinctiveness. The translator opted for the latter, prioritizing terminological precision over reader comfort. Li (2020: 26) stresses that consistency in terminology is essential for academic credibility, and this principle is upheld here, even though the choice carries cultural consequences for reader reception.

Table 5: Restructuring Long Sentences: From Chinese Parataxis to English Hypotaxis

ST	《弟子规》是我国传统儒家蒙学的经典著作，蕴含着丰富的德育思想，包括全面的德育目标、立体的德育内容和灵活的德育方法，具有德育的重要功能。
TT-1	<i>Guidelines for Children</i> is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education for children in China. It contains rich ideas on moral cultivation, including comprehensive moral cultivation goals, multidimensional content, and flexible methods, and it performs important functions in moral cultivation.
TT-2	<i>Guidelines for Children</i> is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education in ancient China. Rich in ideas on moral cultivation, it encompasses comprehensive objectives, multidimensional content, and flexible pedagogical methods, all of which contribute to its enduring significance in moral education.

TT-1 *Guidelines for Children* is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education for children in China. It contains rich ideas on moral cultivation, including comprehensive moral cultivation goals, multidimensional content, and flexible methods, and it performs important functions in moral cultivation.

TT-2 *Guidelines for Children* is a textbook of traditional Confucian elementary education in ancient China. Rich in ideas on moral cultivation, it encompasses comprehensive objectives, multidimensional content, and flexible pedagogical methods, all of which contribute to its enduring significance in moral education.

• Analysis

The Chinese source text follows a typical pattern of parataxis—clauses connected by commas, each adding a new layer of description in a linear sequence. Chinese readers are accustomed to this mode of writing: they infer logical relationships from the arrangement of clauses rather than expecting them to be explicitly marked.

TT-1 largely preserved this structure. It broke the Chinese sentence into two English sentences, but the internal organization remained linear. The phrases “It contains...” “including...” and “and it performs...” mirror the original’s

additive logic. While grammatically correct, the result feels somewhat flat and lacks the hierarchical organization that English academic readers expect.

TT-2 restructured the passage in three ways. First, “蕴含着丰富的德育思想” became the fronted participial phrase “Rich in ideas on moral cultivation,” giving the sentence a stronger opening. Second, the three descriptive dimensions—objectives, content, methods—were integrated under the single strong verb “encompasses,” creating a clear information hierarchy. Third, an em dash introduced a summative comment that explicitly connects the text’s features to their significance, a rhetorical move that Chinese tends to leave implicit.

These adjustments reflect a deeper shift from Chinese paratactic thinking to English hypotactic thinking. In Chinese, coherence often emerges from the sequence of ideas; in English, it must be built into the grammar through subordination, participial phrases, and explicit connective devices. Li (2020: 26) observes that the translated text should conform to the expressive habits of the target readers, and this revision achieves that goal by reorganizing information into a structure that feels natural to an English academic audience.

Table 6: Adjusting Abstract Noun Subjects: Conforming to English Academic Conventions

ST	感性教育是教育者通过一定的情境对受教育者进行潜移默化的教育，自然而然地使受教育者得到道德情感与心灵的熏陶，培养其道德品质并且使之得到升华与提高。
TT-1	Perceptual education refers to the educator’s use of particular situations to exert a subtle and imperceptible influence on learners, naturally nurturing their moral character and elevating their moral qualities.
TT-2	Perceptual education refers to the educator’s use of particular situations to exert a subtle influence on learners, naturally nurturing their moral character and elevating their moral qualities.

TT-1 Perceptual education refers to the educator’s use of particular situations to exert a subtle and imperceptible influence on learners, naturally nurturing their moral character and elevating their moral qualities.

TT-2 Perceptual education refers to the educator’s use of particular situations to exert a subtle influence on learners, naturally nurturing their moral character and elevating their moral qualities.

• Analysis

This case involves a relatively focused revision, but one that reflects a broader pattern in the translation of Chinese

academic prose. In TT-1, the phrase “subtle and imperceptible influence” contains a semantic redundancy. “Subtle” already conveys the idea of something gradual, understated, and not immediately obvious; adding “imperceptible” does not add new meaning but merely restates what “subtle” already implies.

TT-2 eliminates this redundancy. The revision is small, but it illustrates a more general tendency in English academic writing: the preference for precision and economy over the accumulation of near-synonyms. Chinese academic prose often employs paired modifiers to achieve rhetorical emphasis or rhythmic balance—a practice that can feel

overwrought when carried over into English. This case also connects to a broader issue in the translation of Chinese academic texts. Chinese frequently places abstract concepts in the subject position, as the source text does with “感性教育.” While this is acceptable in English, it can make sentences feel front-heavy. The translator retained the

abstract subject here, as “perceptual education” is the term being defined, but the principle of reducing unnecessary modifiers applies across the translation as a whole. Li (2020: 26) emphasizes that the translated text should follow target-language conventions, and the pursuit of concision is central to those conventions in English academic prose.

4.3. Adaptation

Table 7: Translating the Title: Three Strategic Choices

ST	《弟子规》的德育方法探析
TT	Discussions on the Methods of Moral Cultivation in <i>Guidelines for Children</i>

• Analysis

The title is the first point of contact between the translation and its readers, and the translator made three deliberate choices that collectively shape the text’s rhetorical posture.

The first involves the rendering of “《弟子规》.” The Chinese character “规” means rules, standards, or regulations—a semantic field that reflects the Confucian emphasis on ritual propriety and behavioral norms. “Rules for Disciples” or “Regulations for Children” would be more literal, but either would risk making the text sound prescriptive and authoritarian to English readers. “Guidelines” softens this tone, suggesting flexible recommendations rather than binding prescriptions, and aligns the title with contemporary educational values that emphasize guidance over obedience.

The second-choice concerns “德育,” rendered as “Moral Cultivation” rather than “Moral Education.” As discussed in

A-ii, “cultivation” anchors the concept in the Confucian tradition of self-cultivation and distinguishes it from Western models of moral instruction.

The third is the translation of “探析” as “Discussions” rather than “Analysis” or “Exploration.” “Discussions” conveys a more modest, dialogic stance, consistent with the conventions of academic humility in English scholarly writing. “Analysis” might suggest a more definitive treatment than the article actually delivers.

Taken together, these three choices represent a coherent adaptation strategy. The translator adjusts the rhetorical register of the title to facilitate English readers’ entry into a text whose cultural and institutional context may be unfamiliar. Li (2020: 32) notes that adaptation may involve adjusting the literal information of the source text to better achieve the purpose of translation, and the title does exactly that—from the very first words the reader encounters.

Table 8: Adding Quotation Marks to Cited Verses: From Formatting to Strategy

ST	冬则温·夏则清；晨则省·昏则定
TT-1	A warm winter, A cool summer. A diligent morning, A reposed evening.
TT-2	“A warm winter, A cool summer. A diligent morning, A reposed evening.”

• Analysis

On the surface, this revision appears minor. The initial draft presented the translated verses from Guidelines for Children without quotation marks; the final version added them, following the supervisor’s explicit instruction. At the technical level, this is a straightforward matter of citation formatting.

The deeper significance of this revision lies in the choice it reflects. The translator did not simply add punctuation to an existing translation. The verses themselves are taken from Zhao Yanchun’s published English rendition of Guidelines for Children, which uses a three-word line and a rhyming couplet structure to mirror the original’s formal features. The translator’s decision to cite this particular version, rather than producing a prose translation, was a strategic one.

The source article’s central theoretical claim—articulated in its opening section—is that the rhymed, rhythmic form of

Guidelines for Children itself performs an educational function. The three-character meter and alternating rhymes make the text easy to recite and remember, thereby facilitating the “verbal guidance” that complements “indoctrination.” By quoting Zhao’s rhymed translation, the translator ensures that the English verses preserve this formal quality. The quoted lines do not merely illustrate the article’s argument; they embody it. The form of the quotation becomes evidence for the content of the claim.

The supervisor’s instruction to add quotation marks reinforces this strategy by signaling to readers that these are not the translator’s own words but a cited authority, lending academic weight to the textual evidence. Li (2020: 32) argues that adaptation may involve adjusting how information is presented to better achieve the translation’s purpose, and this case demonstrates how even a minor formatting change can be connected to a larger strategic consideration.

Table 9: Softening Ideological Language: The Translator as Cultural Mediator

ST	做出不符合伦理纲常的事来
TT-1	resulting in conduct that violates feudal ethical codes
TT-2	resulting in conduct that violates commonly accepted ethical norms

• Analysis

The Chinese phrase “伦理纲常” refers specifically to the Confucian ethical framework of the “Three Cardinal Guides and Five Constant Virtues,” the system that structured social relationships in imperial China. The word “封建” in Chinese academic discourse is a technical term from Marxist historiography, designating a particular stage of social development. When these terms are brought into English, they carry considerable historical and ideological baggage.

TT-1 rendered the phrase literally as “feudal ethical codes.” While accurate in a word-for-word sense, this translation poses two problems for English readers. First, “feudal” in English primarily evokes European medieval institutions, which do not map neatly onto Chinese historical structures. Second, “ethical codes” lacks the specificity of “三纲五常” and fails to signal the particular Confucian framework at issue.

TT-2 revised the phrase to “commonly accepted ethical norms,” a formulation that removes both the historical specificity and the ideological charge of the original. The rationale for this choice is pragmatic. Adding a lengthy footnote to explain “三纲五常” and its place in Marxist historiography would disrupt the flow of the argument and burden readers with contextual information that is not central to the article’s main claims. By using a more universal expression, the translator keeps the focus on the article’s pedagogical arguments rather than its historical references.

This kind of softening is a common strategy in academic translation, but it is not without cost. Removing “三纲五常” from the text also removes a layer of cultural specificity that is integral to the original argument’s grounding in the Confucian tradition. The translator’s choice reflects a judgment that the article’s primary value for English readers lies in its discussion of moral education methods, and that excessive historical detail would hinder rather than help communication. Li (2020: 32) notes that adaptation involves adjusting the literal information of the source text to better achieve the purpose of translation, and this case exemplifies the delicate balance such adjustment requires between cultural fidelity and reader accessibility.

5. Conclusion

This translation practice has been a valuable learning experience for the translator. Before starting the project, the translator had little experience of translating classical Chinese quotations from *Guidelines for Children* and the five pairs of moral cultivation methods into academic English. After selecting the source article, the translator spent weeks reading relevant reference materials, studying the CEA framework, and building a glossary of key terms. The source text not only deepened the translator’s understanding of traditional Chinese moral cultivation but also provided a real-world context for applying translation theories learned in class.

• Translation of classical quotations and moral cultivation terminology

In dealing with classical quotations from *Guidelines for Children*, the translator found that maintaining the rhythmic quality while ensuring clarity in English was a major challenge. For lines like “冬则温 · 夏则清” (A warm winter,

A cool summer), a literal translation would be awkward. The translator chose to convey the core meaning with short, parallel phrases. For the five pairs of moral cultivation methods (e.g., “灌输与言语疏导的统一”), terminological consistency was the key factor. The translator kept “indoctrination” and “verbal guidance” as fixed equivalents throughout the text. For example, “indoctrination” was consistently paired with “verbal guidance” within the framework of “the unity of indoctrination and verbal guidance”. Where a direct translation might mislead English readers, the translator added brief explanations or adjusted the wording. These strategies helped produce a translation that is both faithful and readable.

• Enlightenment for the translator’s future academic development

During the drafting process, the translator often struggled with word choice and sentence structure, spending much time consulting dictionaries and parallel texts. As a student majoring in translation, the translator realizes that her bilingual competence is still in urgent need of improvement. This project also showed that translating traditional Chinese educational texts requires not only language skills but also cultural and philosophical background knowledge. In the future, the translator will continue to improve both English and Chinese proficiency, read more on traditional Chinese culture, and practice applying the CEA framework to different types of texts. Only through sustained efforts can a translator faithfully convey the intended meaning of the source text author.

• The contemporary significance of the research topic

Guidelines for Children is not only a classic primer for children but also a rich source of moral cultivation methods that can inform contemporary youth education. The five pairs of methods discussed in the source article—such as integrating indoctrination with verbal guidance, rational education with perceptual education, and education with self-education—offer practical insights for ideological and political education in China at present. Translating these ideas into English helps make traditional Chinese educational wisdom accessible to a global audience. As interest in Chinese culture grows worldwide, the role of translators in bridging cultural gaps becomes increasingly important. The translator hopes that her trivial attempt will contribute, in some way, to the cross-cultural understanding of traditional Chinese moral education.

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