Conflict and Reconstruction of Foreign Language Teachers' Professional Identity in Human-Machine Collaborative Teaching Models

Qiaohui Sun

Shandong Technology and Business University, Yantai, Shandong Province, China

Abstract

With the deep integration of artificial intelligence into foreign language classrooms and the rapid proliferation of human-machine collaborative education models, some foreign language teachers are experiencing professional identity conflicts, including weakened professional authority, confused role positioning, digital competence anxiety, and emotional alienation. This paper examines the practical conflicts faced by foreign language teachers in human-machine collaborative scenarios from four dimensions—role, competence, value, and emotion—analyzes their underlying causes, and proposes reconstruction pathways for teachers' professional identity from four aspects: cognitive renewal, competence rebuilding, role transformation, and institutional support. The study argues that human-machine collaboration is not a replacement of teachers by technology but a process of reconstructing teachers' professional identity. Teachers should uphold the humanistic core of foreign language education, achieve complementary advantages between humans and intelligent technology, and provide human capital support for the high-quality development of smart foreign language education.

Keywords

Human-machine collaboration; foreign language teachers; professional identity; identity conflict; identity reconstruction.

1. Introduction

Today, artificial intelligence technology is developing with remarkable momentum. Its advent has influenced every aspect of human social life, propelling human society toward a new era of intelligent technology. In the age of artificial intelligence, education has undergone significant changes accordingly: AI is gradually being integrated into every stage of teaching, and human-machine collaborative teaching has emerged as a new educational paradigm. In this situation, teachers' traditional authority over knowledge, their leading role in teaching, and even their educational functions are all facing reconstruction. Most importantly, their role positioning is facing fundamental reflection.

In the field of foreign language teaching, the deep integration of continuously developing artificial intelligence has triggered a crisis of professional identity among foreign language teachers. Compared with other disciplines, one of the core aspects of foreign language teaching is the acquisition of language skills, and another is the cultivation of cross-cultural communication abilities. However, these communication and learning activities in foreign language teaching have a high degree of functional overlap with the technical advantages of artificial intelligence in natural language processing, scenario simulation, and real-time interaction. Faced with these circumstances, this inevitably prompts us to examine a fundamental question in depth: In the face of the development of artificial intelligence, how should the professional identity of foreign language teachers be redefined? Therefore, it is very

necessary to study what conflicts foreign language teachers face in terms of professional identity in response to technological development under the human-AI collaborative teaching model, and how these conflicts arise. On this basis, in response to the new teaching environment, it is necessary to further explore methods to solve these problems and help foreign language teachers better adapt to the new environment. This can help solve the difficulties encountered by foreign language teachers in their professional development and, most importantly, provide substantial support for the development of intelligent foreign language education.

2. Practical Conflicts in Foreign Language Teachers' Professional Identity Under Human-Machine Collaborative Teaching Models

2.1. Role Identity Conflict

In the traditional foreign language teaching model, teachers' main work is to take on the roles of knowledge transmitters and skills trainers, and they are the leaders of the entire classroom teaching activities. However, with the rapid development of the deep integration of artificial intelligence technology and foreign language teaching, the human-AI collaborative teaching model forces teachers to shift from teaching to the top-level design of learning. Teachers need to transform into "knowledge architects" and "human-AI collaborative learning designers," and become "guides" who lead the development of students' higher-order abilities [1]. Facing these changes and the need to adapt to educational development, this role transformation has brought great challenges to foreign language teachers. As foreign language teachers' uncertainty about role transformation increases, they may question their own dominant position and role in teaching, which further intensifies their crisis of professional role identity.

2.2. Competence Identity Conflict

With the continuous development of technology, human-AI collaborative teaching has also put forward new requirements for the competency structure of foreign language teachers. In the face of artificial intelligence, this means that traditional foreign language teachers are no longer the only holders of professional knowledge. In terms of the amount of language knowledge possessed, the accuracy of processing complex information, and the rapid conversion of cross-language information, it has become very difficult for foreign language teachers to compete with artificial intelligence. These are sufficient to shake foreign language teachers' confidence in the positioning of their own professional roles.Meanwhile, in the process of human-machine collaborative teaching, AI can simulate realistic social scenarios that allow students to engage in immersive interaction with virtual characters, thereby achieving, to a certain extent, the construction of and substitution for authentic language environments. As a result, the professional function traditionally performed by teachers in foreign language teaching—creating authentic language environments and organizing and participating in effective interpersonal dialogue—has been diluted and displaced. This situation, in which traditional competencies are gradually becoming ineffective, gives rise to a strong sense of "competence panic" among foreign language teachers and develops into a pronounced crisis of competence identity.

2.3. Value Identity Conflict

Professional value identity is the core source of teachers' sense of professional belonging. In traditional foreign language teaching, teachers' sense of achievement derived from students' knowledge acquisition, grade improvement, and classroom interaction feedback. Under the human-machine collaborative model, vocabulary, grammar, and oral training in foreign language learning can all be efficiently completed with the support of artificial intelligence. Teachers find it difficult to obtain the same professional sense of achievement from routine

teaching work as before, easily developing a perception of weakened self-worth and professional significance[2]. Consequently, they may easily fall into confusion over their professional values, which triggers a crisis of value identity.

2.4. Emotional Identity Conflict

Teachers' emotional identity depends on their acceptance of and adaptability to artificial intelligence technology. First of all, the continuous iteration of AI has given rise to technology replacement anxiety among many foreign language teachers, who worry that the value of their professional existence is diminishing, thus generating a sense of occupational crisis. For example, the rapid development of machine translation and AI at present has brought tremendous impact on traditional translation and interpreting teaching, intensifying teachers' concerns about their future career paths. Second, the profound transformation of roles and the continuous demand for new skills also expose some foreign language teachers to challenges such as adaptation difficulties, declining self-efficacy, and even a loss of occupational security, which can easily trigger anxiety and identity crises. In addition, the increase in human-machine interaction has weakened direct teacher-student communication, affecting the bonding and deepening of teacher-student emotional ties, and even threatening teachers' identity as emotional communicators. As teachers derive less happiness in nurturing students from teacher-student interaction, their sense of professional belonging declines, and their emotional identity is eroded[3].

3. Generation Mechanism of Professional Identity Conflicts Among Foreign Language Teachers Under Human-Machine Collaborative Teaching Models

3.1. Misalignment Between Technological Logic and Educational Logic

Artificial intelligence pursues the efficiency of teaching processes, the standardization of knowledge output, and the datafication of learning analytics. By contrast, foreign language education emphasizes the contextualization of teaching, the interactivity between teachers and students, as well as the roles of emotional resonance, value exemplification, and spiritual guidance in teaching activities. This collision between the two logics constitutes the fundamental root of teachers' identity conflicts.

3.2. Contradiction Between Iterative Teaching Models and Lagging Teacher Cognition

In recent years, a series of policy documents issued by the Ministry of Education have explicitly stated that teachers should proactively adapt to technological transformations such as artificial intelligence, improve their ability to apply information technology, enhance their competence in human-machine collaborative teaching, and carry out educational and teaching activities actively and effectively. However, some foreign language teachers remain wedded to the traditional lecture-based teaching model. Their rigid teaching mindset and educational philosophy are ill-suited to the human-machine collaborative teaching model, which triggers an all-encompassing identity conflict in terms of teachers' roles, competencies, values, and emotions.

3.3. Insufficient Adaptation of Teacher Training Systems

To ensure the teaching-enhancing effects of artificial intelligence and to support teachers' professional growth, systematic technical training should be carried out focusing on the application of intelligent foreign language teaching platforms, human-machine collaborative teaching, and AI technology application, with dedicated technical support teams in place. However, due to problems such as the intelligence divide and the uneven distribution of

educational resources, relevant training lacks systematicity and suffers from fragmented and formalistic content. As a result, some teachers have failed to achieve an upgrading of their AI-assisted teaching competence, which further aggravates the identity crisis of foreign language teachers.

3.4. Lagging Adaptation of Institutional Support and Evaluation Systems

In the current teacher assessment and evaluation system, traditional indicators such as teaching performance and the number of teaching hours are still used as the basis for evaluation. It is still a traditional evaluation model, and a new evaluation system adapted to human-machine collaborative teaching has not been optimized and established in a timely manner. In the process of human-machine collaborative teaching, it can be found that teachers' innovations in teaching design are very excellent, which also play an important role in providing personalized guidance to students. However, these aspects are difficult to be recognized under the traditional evaluation system. This is disproportionate to the actual value of teachers' work, making it difficult for them to obtain reasonable recognition and aggravating teachers' confusion about their own professional identity, which needs to be taken seriously.

4. Reconstruction Pathways for Foreign Language Teachers' Professional Identity Under Human-Machine Collaborative Teaching Models

4.1. Updating Educational Concepts and Reshaping Value Cognition

Teachers should establish a new teaching concept of human-machine symbiosis, which is the general trend. Teachers should divide the work in human-machine cooperation and regard artificial intelligence as an auxiliary means of teaching. Since technology is a tool that helps teaching, it cannot be regarded as a substitute for teachers. With the development of intelligent technology, teachers regard intelligent technology as a way to improve teaching quality and increase efficiency. "Education First" is the minimum standard for teachers' teaching, and attention should be paid to maintaining the essence of education. To adapt to the new educational methods, teachers should combine what technology provides with the preservation of humanistic values, strengthen their identification with professional values, and improve their own value [4].

4.2. Building the Comprehensive Human-Machine Collaborative Capabilities of Foreign Language Teachers

In the process of human-machine collaborative teaching, teachers have changed from unilaterally imparting knowledge to students to guiding students on how to learn, which is a very important change. Teachers should attach importance to cultivating students' interest in learning, actively guide students in independent learning, and provide guidance when students encounter difficulties. Teachers should continuously strengthen their professional skills, design teaching content according to the actual needs of students, and improve their own innovative abilities. As artificial intelligence is increasingly widely used in teaching, a new educational method combining technology with education has been formed. In the face of artificial intelligence, teachers need to master certain AI technologies proficiently and skillfully use these auxiliary tools. However, they should also recognize the various problems caused by the application of AI technology in teaching. Teachers should strengthen their ability to identify and solve problems and enhance their technical skills [5].

4.3. Focusing on the Core of Nurturing and Shaping New Teacher Roles

In teaching, teachers need to reasonably arrange teaching activities before, during, and after class, and teachers should first clarify the teaching objectives of each stage themselves.

According to actual teaching needs, appropriate learning scenarios should be designed. To make technology truly serve teaching work, teachers need to reasonably use artificial intelligence technology to assist teaching, make them compatible with each other, and help students learn better [6].

When dealing with numerous AI-generated teaching resources, teachers need to actively screen them and judge whether these contents are accurate and whether they can truly help improve teaching quality during the teaching process. In actual use, in order to better meet the teaching objectives, teachers should also combine the content of textbooks and match the actual learning situations of students, and appropriately improve the AI-generated resources. Through these methods, students' personalized learning needs and humanistic education are both taken into account, and efforts are made to provide students with standardized and targeted foreign language teaching resources to meet the needs of modern teaching [7].

With the help of artificial intelligence technology, teachers can reduce the work of correcting homework, and tasks such as repeatedly answering students' questions will also become easier, allowing them to devote more energy to personalized guidance for students. Teachers can adopt different teaching methods according to the learning situations of different students, so as to help students solve problems encountered in learning more effectively. Teachers still need to focus on stimulating students' thinking abilities, strengthening emotional communication with students, and guiding students to master learning methods suitable for themselves, so as to better meet the learning needs of different students [8].

In the era of artificial intelligence, cross-cultural communication ability has become an important ability that students need to possess. This means that foreign language teachers need to focus on cultivating students' understanding of the cultures of different countries while helping students master language knowledge. In actual teaching, teachers cannot only focus on students' language skills training, but also need to help students form correct values and guide students to understand ways of thinking under different cultural backgrounds, which is very important. At the same time, teachers should also give full play to their own advantages in humanistic education, address the shortcomings of artificial intelligence, make up for the deficiencies of artificial intelligence technology in emotional communication, and improve value guidance, so that foreign language teaching can not only improve students' language abilities but also promote their all-round development.

4.4. Improving the Institutional Support System

1. With the participation of artificial intelligence technology in actual educational and teaching activities, schools and policymakers should also give teachers a greater voice. Teachers should be empowered to make reasonable professional choices, the creativity of teachers' work should be respected, and a technology-only approach should not be adopted. 2. To optimize the teacher evaluation system, it is necessary to reform the evaluation standards for the value of teachers' work, clarify the boundaries of rights and responsibilities, respect teachers, and ensure that teachers' creative educational work is recognized and supported. In the face of new forms of education, the traditional evaluation standards based solely on scores and teaching hours should be changed. 3. Schools should establish regular digital teaching and teaching research platforms. In response to the application of artificial intelligence in education, discussions on human-AI collaborative teaching should be held regularly. To reduce the pressure on teachers in carrying out human-AI collaborative teaching reform, an appropriate error-tolerance mechanism should be established to make teachers more motivated.

5. Conclusion

The proliferation of human-machine collaborative teaching models is an inevitable trend in the digital transformation of foreign language education. It has broken the traditional professional identity paradigm of foreign language teachers, triggering multi-dimensional professional identity conflicts across roles, competencies, values, and emotions. With the rapid development of artificial intelligence, foreign language teachers should actively exercise their subjective initiative in the educational context of responding to changes brought about by human-AI collaborative teaching. Teachers need to focus on innovating the ways to realize their self-worth and strive to achieve recognition of their professional identity. Only when teachers and artificial intelligence technology form a positive symbiotic relationship can the educational effectiveness of human-AI collaboration be truly and better realized, thereby promoting the higher-quality development of foreign language education in China.

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