

As a manuscript

**HE JIANYU**

**ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION IN THE SPIRIT OF  
CONFUCIANISM (BASED ON THE MATERIAL OF THE ENGLISH AND  
CHINESE LANGUAGES)**

**АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ВОСПИТАНИЯ В ДУХЕ  
КОНФУЦИАНСТВА (НА МАТЕРИАЛЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО И  
КИТАЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКОВ)**

Scientific Advisor:  
Shisyr I.S. , doctor of philology, professor

Бишкек, 2024

## ABSTRACT

This dissertation presents a comparative study of three major English translations of *The Analects of Confucius*, focusing on the works of James Legge, D.C. Lau, and Roger T. Ames. *The Analects*, a foundational text of Confucianism, has significantly influenced educational practices and moral philosophy throughout history. This study aims to explore the interpretive frameworks and translation strategies employed by these three prominent translators, highlighting how their respective backgrounds and philosophical inclinations have shaped their interpretations, particularly regarding educational values and principles.

Grounded in hermeneutics, the research analyzes how each translator navigates the cultural and linguistic challenges inherent in translating this classical text. By applying hermeneutical principles, the study examines how each translator's approach to key Confucian concepts—such as jūnzǐ (君子), rén (仁), and lǐ (礼)—affects the overall educational implications of *The Analects*. The research also considers how these translations have impacted global understandings of Confucian philosophy and ethics within educational contexts.

The literature review provides an overview of *The Analects'* historical significance and its influence on both Chinese and global educational thought. It includes a detailed examination of the major English translations and the translators' backgrounds, establishing a foundation for the comparative analysis.

In the main analysis, the dissertation delves into the nuances of the three translations, comparing how Legge, Lau, and Ames interpret key Confucian terms and concepts in relation to education. Legge's translation, influenced by his missionary background, emphasizes moral and ethical instruction, aligning with Christian educational values. Lau's translation aims for linguistic precision and neutrality, reflecting a commitment to scholarly rigor in educational contexts. Ames, conversely, offers a philosophical lens, focusing on the relational aspects of Confucianism relevant to contemporary educational challenges.

The dissertation concludes by summarizing the major findings, emphasizing the diversity in translation approaches and their implications for educational practice and cross-cultural understanding. It acknowledges the limitations of the research, such as the focus on only three translators, and suggests areas for future research, including comparative studies of other translations and an exploration of *The Analects* in modern educational contexts.

This study contributes to the broader field of education and translation studies by offering insights into how classical texts can be reinterpreted and reshaped to inform contemporary educational practices. It underscores the importance of understanding the cultural and philosophical contexts that inform translation, particularly when dealing with texts as influential as *The Analects of Confucius*.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Confucius, a central figure in Chinese history, is celebrated as the founder of Confucianism. His teachings have profoundly influenced not only Chinese cultural and philosophical development but also global intellectual thought. In an effort to promote Chinese traditional culture worldwide, many educational institutions in China have established Confucius Institutes abroad, encouraging international audiences to engage with this rich heritage. At the heart of this tradition lies Confucianism, with *The Analects* being its key text. This work encapsulates fundamental Confucian philosophy and plays a significant role in shaping contemporary educational practices and moral discourse.

Given its significance, translating *The Analects* is vital for making Confucius' teachings accessible to international readers and informing educational frameworks inspired by these principles. The classical Chinese language used in the original text carries profound philosophical meanings that can be challenging to convey in other languages. Each translation attempts to bridge this gap, yet inevitably introduces variations in meaning, interpretation, and cultural understanding. Therefore, examining and comparing these translations is essential for enhancing global understanding of Confucian educational ideals and their relevance in today's world.

### **1.1 structural section.**

#### **Background of the Research**

Confucius, a monumental figure in Chinese history, is recognized as the founder of Confucianism. His teachings have profoundly influenced Chinese culture and philosophy, as well as global intellectual thought. As part of China's initiative to promote its traditional culture internationally, institutions such as Confucius Institutes have been established worldwide, facilitating the dissemination of this rich heritage. Central to this cultural legacy is Confucianism, with *The Analects* serving as its

foundational text. This work encapsulates Confucian philosophy and significantly influences both educational practices and moral discourse on a global scale.

In the era of globalization, cultural exchange has gained prominence, sparking international interest in Chinese traditional culture. *The Analects* is one of the most studied works in this context, representing Confucianism's ethical, political, and educational principles. Its translation into English is vital for introducing Confucius' ideas to a global audience and informing educational practices inspired by these principles. However, the classical Chinese language used in the original text presents challenges, often leading to variations in meaning and interpretation across different translations. Consequently, examining and comparing these translations is essential for enhancing global appreciation and understanding of Confucian educational ideals.

## **1.2 structural section.**

### **Research Premises**

The research on the English translations of *The Analects* is based on several key premises. Firstly, translation transcends mere linguistic conversion; it is a complex cultural endeavor that involves interpreting and conveying philosophical ideas across diverse languages and cultures. Given the profound impact of Confucius' teachings on Chinese civilization and educational practices, it is essential that translations accurately capture the depth and nuance of the original text.

Secondly, the study acknowledges the diversity of translations resulting from the distinct historical contexts, personal experiences, and cultural backgrounds of the translators. Each translator's unique perspective inevitably shapes their rendition of "*The Analects*," leading to variations that warrant close examination. This research is premised on the understanding that these differences provide valuable insights into the translation process and the dynamics of cross-cultural communication, particularly in educational contexts.

Finally, this study operates under the assumption that a comparative analysis of different translations can illuminate broader trends in translation strategies and cross-cultural interpretation. By critically analyzing the choices made by translators, this

research aims to identify effective methods for conveying Confucian educational ideals to an international audience.

### **1.3 structural section.**

#### **Relevance of the Research**

The relevance of this research is significant for both academic and cultural domains. From an academic perspective, this study enhances the understanding of *The Analects* by providing a comparative analysis of its English translations. This approach not only underscores the complexities involved in translating classical Chinese texts but also reveals how cultural and historical contexts influence translation practices, particularly within educational frameworks.

Culturally, this research plays a crucial role in promoting Chinese traditional culture on the global stage. By improving the quality and accessibility of translations, the study facilitates the bridging of cultural gaps and fosters mutual understanding between China and the international community. Furthermore, this research aligns with the ongoing initiatives of Confucius Institutes and other educational platforms to introduce Confucian educational principles to global audiences, thereby enhancing cross-cultural dialogue and academic exchange.

### **1.4 structural section.**

#### **Research Purposes and Objectives**

This research aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the English translations of *The Analects* by investigating how various translators have approached the text within the context of educational principles derived from Confucian thought. Specifically, the study seeks to uncover the nuances and complexities involved in translating Confucius's teachings from classical Chinese to English, particularly as they relate to educational practices. By comparing translations of key concepts and passages, the research intends to highlight variations in interpretation that arise due to cultural, historical, and linguistic factors. The ultimate objective is to deepen the understanding of the challenges faced in translating Confucian educational principles

and to contribute to the development of more effective strategies that faithfully convey the essence of *The Analects* to international readers.

Furthermore, the research aims to assess the impact of these translations on cross-cultural communication and the global understanding of Chinese traditional educational culture. By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of different translation approaches, this research endeavors to provide valuable insights for translators, scholars, and educators engaged in the translation and dissemination of Chinese classical texts. In doing so, it seeks to promote greater cultural exchange and mutual understanding between China and the world.

### **1.5 structural section.**

#### **Research Methods**

Given that *The Analects* is a seminal work of Confucianism that integrates elements of history, culture, philosophy, and education, a comprehensive study of its English translations necessitates a variety of research methods. In the comparative analysis of the translations by James Legge, D.C. Lau, and Roger T. Ames, several approaches are employed to conduct an in-depth examination:

**Exegetical Method:** This method involves drawing upon historical interpretations and analyses by scholars to gain a comprehensive understanding of the philosophical content in "*The Analects*." By examining the translations of Legge, Lau, and Ames, it is possible to compare their choices in translating key educational concepts, revealing different interpretations and understandings of the text.

**Cultural Translation Method:** Given that *The Analects* encompasses history, philosophy, and educational values, translating it requires not only linguistic conversion but also consideration of cultural backgrounds and the transmission of values. This method allows for an analysis of how these translators interpreted and conveyed Confucian educational culture, as well as how effectively they communicated the wisdom of *The Analects* to English-speaking audiences.

**Interdisciplinary Approach in Linguistics and Translation Studies:** This approach involves a comparative analysis of linguistic elements such as expression

and syntactic structures. By examining the translations of Legge, Lau, and Ames, this study analyzes their translation techniques at the linguistic level, including how well they conveyed the emotional and semantic richness of the original text.

**Historical Contextual Analysis:** Understanding the rich historical background of *The Analects* is crucial for this research. This method analyzes the historical and cultural contexts in which Legge, Lau, and Ames conducted their translations. By doing so, a deeper understanding of the characteristics and styles of their translations can be achieved, considering the specific historical periods in which they worked.

**Comparative Analysis Method:** This method involves directly comparing the translations of Legge, Lau, and Ames, focusing on their different choices for the same sections or sentences. Such analysis can reveal variations in how each translator presents the text, highlighting their distinct approaches and the compromises made during the translation process.

**Synthesis and Summarization:** By synthesizing and summarizing findings from the comparative research, the unique styles, strengths, and weaknesses of each translator can be identified. This analysis enables an objective evaluation of how well each translation conveys the educational values and cultural insights of "*The Analects*."

By applying these methods comprehensively, this research provides insights into the translation styles, philosophies, and interpretations offered by James Legge, D.C. Lau, and Roger T. Ames. The study not only contributes to the dissemination of Chinese traditional educational culture but also offers valuable academic support for preserving and promoting the values and wisdom encapsulated in "*The Analects*."

## **1.6. structural section.**

### **Outline of the Dissertation**

This dissertation begins with an introduction that presents the background and significance of the study. It emphasizes the role of *The Analects* as a cornerstone of Confucianism and discusses the relevance of its English translations in the context of education and cultural exchange. As a key work in Chinese cultural and intellectual



history, *The Analects* is pivotal in deepening global scholars' understanding of Confucian thought and promoting Chinese culture in a broader context. Additionally, this part outlines the research methods employed, such as comparative analysis, literature review, and translation theory, providing readers with a comprehensive understanding of the study's framework and structure.

The second part consists of a literature review that explores the historical and cultural context of *The Analects*. It reviews the existing research on English translations, focusing on the works of James Legge, D.C. Lau, and Roger T. Ames. This section highlights their translation styles and evaluates their effectiveness in conveying the philosophical and educational implications of the text.

Following this is a comprehensive analysis of the translations, focusing on key Confucian concepts and their educational significance. It compares the interpretations of Legge, Lau, and Ames, assessing how their approaches influence the understanding of virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, and propriety in an educational context. This analysis will culminate in a discussion of the implications for global education and the continued relevance of Confucian thought in contemporary society.

The conclusion summarizes the main findings of the research, highlighting the unique features and strengths of each translation of *The Analects*. It emphasizes the educational implications derived from the comparative analysis and discusses how the different interpretations contribute to a deeper understanding of Confucian values in contemporary educational contexts. This section also acknowledges the limitations of the study, such as the focus on only three translators, and suggests future research directions, including broader comparative studies and exploration of the text's impact on educational practices across cultures. Ultimately, the conclusion reinforces the significance of *The Analects* as a foundational text for fostering ethical and moral education, advocating for its continued relevance in global discourse on education and human values.