

Research and Practice on the Innovation of Experimental Teaching Mode of Ideological and Political Theory Course in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract. The traditional teaching of ideological and political courses is a one-way indoctrination style with the teacher as the main body. In order to improve the quality and level of teaching, this study attempts to combine the knowledge points of ideological and political theory teaching with modern technology such as computer multimedia simulation, and develop a specialized software system that can simulate situations and interact with humans and machines. It is applied in the teaching of ideological and political courses in universities through experiments, And conducted a questionnaire survey and interviews with students participating in the experimental courses, reflecting on the effectiveness of simulated experimental teaching in ideological and political theory courses in universities, and it explores the research and practice of innovation of experimental teaching modes of the ideological and political theory course.

Keywords: ideological and political theory course, experimental teaching, mode, practice

1 Introduction: Exploration of a New Model for Experimental Teaching of Ideological and Political Theory Courses

The ideological and political theory course serves as the primary vehicle for ideological and political education in colleges and universities. The exploration of simulation experiments on contextual teaching of ideological and political education in colleges and universities is not only an important breakthrough in the teaching reform of the ideological and political theory course but also the key to filling the gap of experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course.

The exploration of the new mode of experimental teaching of ideological and political theory courses is to let every student actively participate in teaching, learn to learn, learn to innovate, internalize knowledge and enrich their own knowledge framework in the interaction between teachers and students and between students, so as to change the passive teaching mode of ideological and political theory courses in colleges and universities into active teaching mode. It is conducive to the cultivation of the innovative personality of college students and the organic unity of educational philosophy, teaching environment, and teaching methods. In order to explore the innovative mode of experimental teaching in ideological and political theory courses, we mainly continuously improve and enhance the teaching quality and effect of ex-

perimental teaching, and focus on cultivating students' collaborative ability, innovation, and cooperative consciousness.

2 Research Background: Overview of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

At the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that “the ideological and political work in colleges and universities will help us grasp the fundamental problems of what kind of people to cultivate, how to cultivate and for whom to cultivate.”^[1] The development of contextual simulation experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course at our university has been at the forefront in China. The key educational reform project “Innovation and Practice of Contextual Simulation Experiment Teaching of Moral Education in Colleges and Universities”, which is presided over by Professor Luo Shi from Shenzhen University, has been applied to the experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course throughout the university in succession, and is now officially included in the teaching plan for full implementation. Accordingly, the university established the first experimental teaching institution for the ideological and political theory course in China, Shenzhen University Experimental Teaching Center for Ideological and Political Theory Course, which is equipped with a specialized computer laboratory for conducting experimental courses, actively supporting further expansion of the application results.

2.1 Significance of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

The traditional teaching of the ideological and political theory course is still a one-way cramming type with the lecturer as the main body, and the communication and interaction between teachers and students are far not sufficient. “This inflexible and cliched teaching method obviously cannot cultivate the overall quality of the students, and is not conducive to opening up their creative potentials.”^[2] The exploration of contextual teaching simulation experiments of moral education in colleges and universities embodies an essential breakthrough in the teaching reform of the ideological and political theory course, but also the key to filling the gap of experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course. It is an essential aspect to ensure the success of the experiment by using experimental means to effectively improve moral education teaching in colleges and universities and significantly improve the quality and level of teaching, and reasonably designing experimental projects and experimental processes on the basis of clear scientific principles of experimental design and on the premise of more mature experimental techniques.

2.2 Basic Concepts of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Courses

Liik for moral education falls into the category of liberal arts experiments. The experiments can be broadly and narrowly defined. Experimentation in a broad sense is understood internationally as the process of solving one or more well-conceived problems.^[3] This is similar to the explanation of “experiment” in the *Contemporary Chinese Dictionary*, that is, “an operation or activity performed in order to test a scientific theory or hypothesis.”^[4] Experiments in a broad

sense usually include field experiments and laboratory experiments. Experiments in the narrow sense mainly refer to laboratory experiments. Experimentation is a learning and research activity in which people observe and explore the essential laws of things according to certain scientific research and teaching needs, using various instruments and equipment means, breaking through the limits of natural conditions, and under the condition of artificial control and intervention of objective objects.^[5] Moral education also has a broad and narrow sense. Moral education in the broad sense includes education in ideology, politics, morality, and law, which corresponds to the conceptual categories of intellectual education, physical education, and aesthetic education; while it in the narrow sense refers to moral education only.^[6] Contextual simulation is one of the types of context creation in contextual teaching, and it was systematically proposed by Mr. Li Jilin, the first creator of contextual education in China, who said that “according to the actual needs of teaching, the main characteristics of things are seized and reproduced by certain means to reflect the characteristics of matters imaginatively.”^[7]

The contextual simulation experiment class for moral education of the ideological and political theory course now has 12 experiments for the course of *Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Fundamentals of Law*, and the number of student hours involved in the experiment reaches 72,000 per semester, which has fully spread in freshmen and sophomore undergraduates, and the development of the experiment class has been effective for several years. However, there are some issues with the moral education contextual simulation experimental class of ideological and political theory course after several years of the actual implementation. Therefore, it is of great reference significance to make the teaching practice of contextual teaching simulation experimental class of ideological and political theory course play a greater role through the innovative research of experimental teaching mode in order to promote its more in-depth development and exploration.

3 Status: Implementation of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

3.1 Design of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

The simulation experiment is not only different from the general contextual teaching that usually uses language and teaching aids as the main means to create “context”, but also different from the one-way multimedia presentation teaching that lacks interactive participation. Instead, it combines the modern education mode of contextual teaching with computer multimedia simulation technology, develops a special software system that can carry out contextual simulation and human-computer interaction, and then applies it to the teaching of the ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities in an experimental way, so as to create a new interactive and experiential way of teaching simulation experiments in the contextual teaching of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities. Following the rapid development of the network, the role of some commonly used forms in the past, such as lectures, listening to reports and other teaching methods, is gradually weakened. Nowadays, mainly by means of computers and multimedia, the teaching material is demonstrated in pictures, texts, sounds and images, which greatly enhances the delivery of instructional information. The effectiveness and attractiveness of ideological and political theory teaching are greatly im-

proved, which injects new vitality into the teaching of the ideological and political theory course.^[8]

The experiments of the ideological and political theory course rely on the open virtual simulation experimental teaching management platform to achieve a continuous data interface and the recording and tracking of the whole process of experiments. The open virtual simulation experiment teaching management platform is technologically supported by computer simulation, multimedia and network, developed with service-oriented software architecture, integrating physical simulation, innovative design, intelligent guidance, automatic review of experiment results and teaching management, which is a well-established platform with great autonomy, interactivity and scalability(see Figure 1).

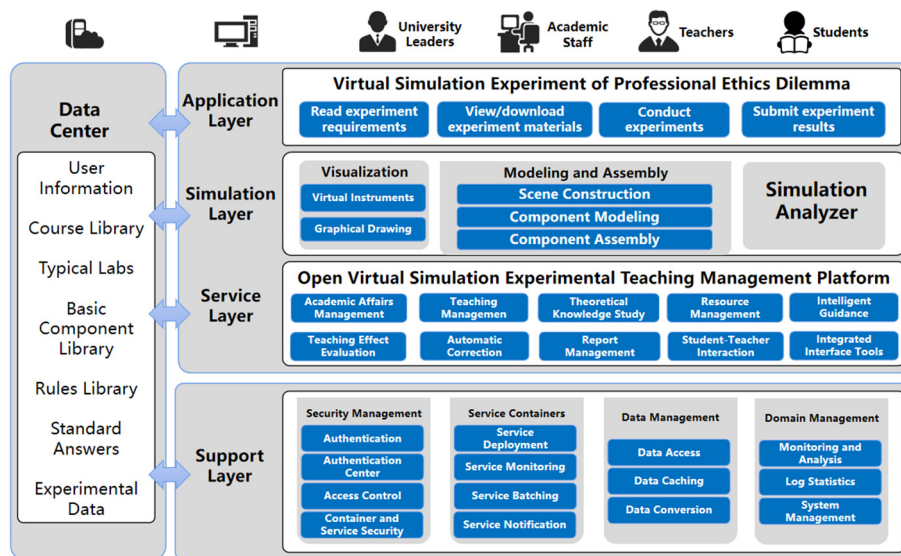


Fig 1 System architecture diagram

As shown in the figure above, the platform supporting the project operation and its architecture are divided into five layers, and each layer provides services for its upper layer until the construction of a specific virtual experimental teaching environment is completed.

The Ideological and political theory course may provide college students with various kinds of perceptual materials through the media, and it may also design teaching sessions and create teaching situations with the help of the media.^[9] The contextual simulation experiment for moral education is conducted through specially developed experimental software, and the basic process is divided into four sections. (1) It begins with the introduction of experimental operation rules and experimental background, setting specific experimental purposes and tasks. (2) Students participate in specific episodes of experimental situation interpretation by playing human-computer interaction roles, and depending on the different choices or answers to specific questions in a given situation, lead to different processes and different outcomes of case development. (3) Through the comparison and reflection of different processes and results, students are guided and inspired to understand and appreciate the teaching content and improve their ability to analyze and solve practical problems in specific situations. (4) In combination

with the experimental process and experimental results, we will generate an experimental report on the key issues or main choices, and further elaborate their supporting ideas or applied theories.

3.2 Development of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

“The nature, status and function of ideological and political theory course are concentrated in that it is political education, ideological education and moral education in three aspects.”^[10] Based on the guiding principle that the design of the experimental projects should address the key points, difficulties and doubts of the syllabus and teaching materials, the experimental projects in the course of *Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Fundamentals of Law* are mainly designed around the two directions: morality and law. The experimental projects in the moral direction include the origin and development of morality, the concept of relationship, competition and cooperation, public morality, professional morality, life values, etc. The experimental projects in the legal direction include procedural justice and substantive justice, labor law, intellectual property law, civil law, public security management punishment law, marriage law, and inheritance law, etc. The teaching content echoes the textbooks, and experimental teaching is used to cooperate with the teachers to complete the theoretical teaching.

In order to get a true and comprehensive understanding of the teaching status of the contextual simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory course at Shenzhen University, the author conducted anonymous random research on undergraduates at Shenzhen University and designed a questionnaire, which covered the satisfaction from students in the contextual teaching simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory course, their recognition in the contextual teaching simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory course, and their suggestions in the contextual teaching simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory course, etc. to ensure the research is more in-depth. On the basis of the questionnaire, random interviews were conducted with some students to understand more truly the current ideas of students' participation in the contextual teaching simulation experiment of ideological and political theory course and their personal feelings and ideas on improving the contextual teaching simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory course.

The questionnaire showed that 119 freshmen (26.4% of the total), 116 sophomores (25.8%), 113 juniors (25.1%), and 102 seniors (22.7%) were surveyed(see Figure 2).

Grade Distribution of Research Subjects

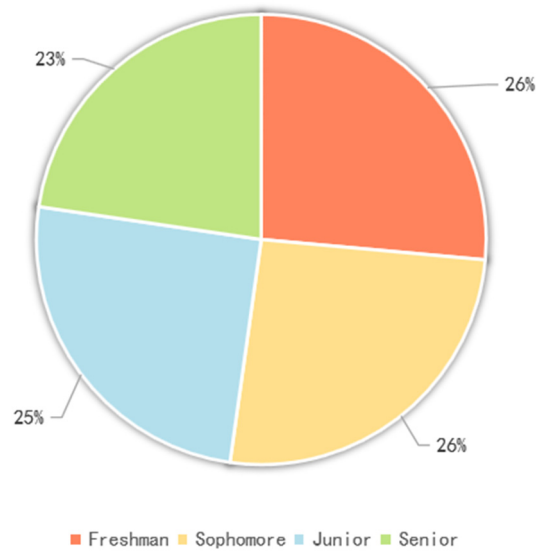


Fig 2 Grade Distribution of Research Subjects

The research subjects mainly majored in Science and Engineering, Liberal Arts and Art. In particular, 223 were science and engineering students, accounting for 49.6% of the total; 138 were art students, accounting for 30.7% of the total; 89 were art students, accounting for 19.7% of the total; 0 represented others, accounting for 0% of the total (see Figure 3).

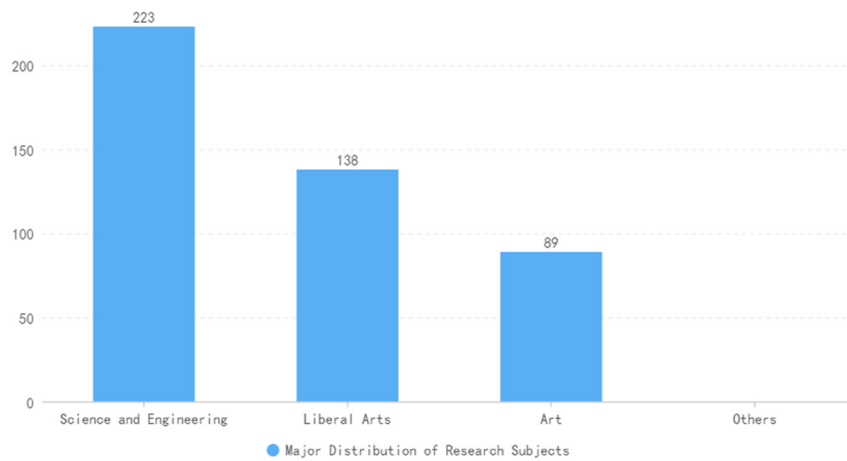


Fig 3 Major Distribution of Research Subjects

This contextual teaching simulation experiment was adopted for theological and political theory courses in colleges and universities, as shown in Fig. 1. Students who felt liked and liked it very much accounted for 79%, those who felt indifferent accounted for 16%, and those who felt disliked or disliked it strongly accounted for 4%(see Figure 4).

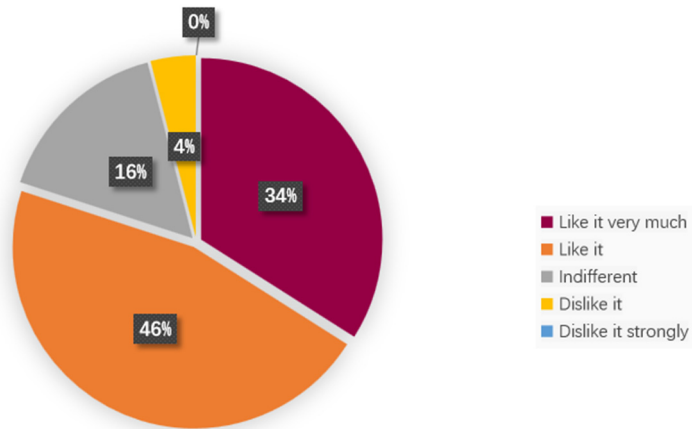


Fig. 4. Whether the College Students Like the Adoption of Contextual Teaching Simulation Experiments in Ideological and Political Theory Course

In the survey, the content of the case, the associated theory, as well as the design and animation of the story and interaction were widely recognized by the students, as well as the soundtrack dubbing and running rhythm, which also had the approval of some students(see Figure 5).

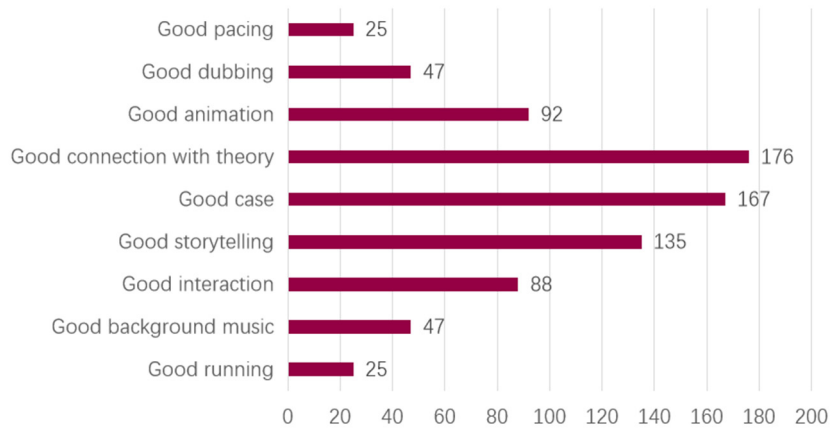


Fig. 5. Main Advantages of the Experiment as Perceived by the Students

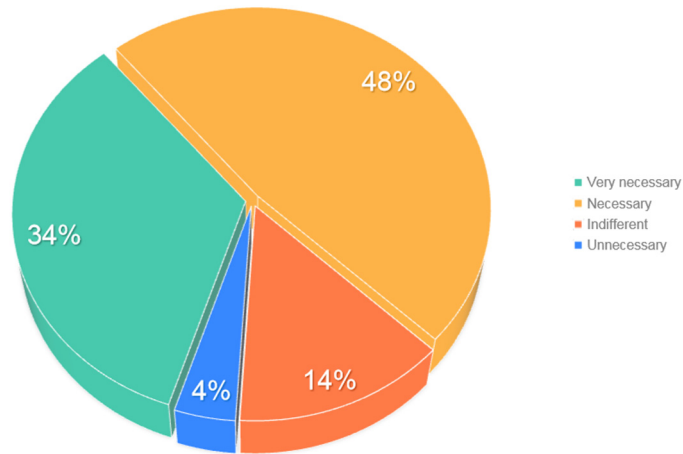


Fig. 6. Whether It Is Necessary to Introduce Contextual Teaching Simulation Experiments into the Ideological and Political Theory Course of Colleges and Universities

In the survey of whether it is necessary to introduce contextual teaching simulation experiments into the ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities, only four percent (4%) of students thought it was not necessary to offer this course, and more than eighty percent (80%) of students held it was necessary to introduce contextual teaching simulation experiments into the ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities(see Figure 6).

3.3 Shortcomings and Reflections of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

In the survey of the reasons why students disliked this type of experiment, the main focus was on the insufficient interaction of the experiment, the hard and rough presentation, and the poor pacing(see Figure 7).

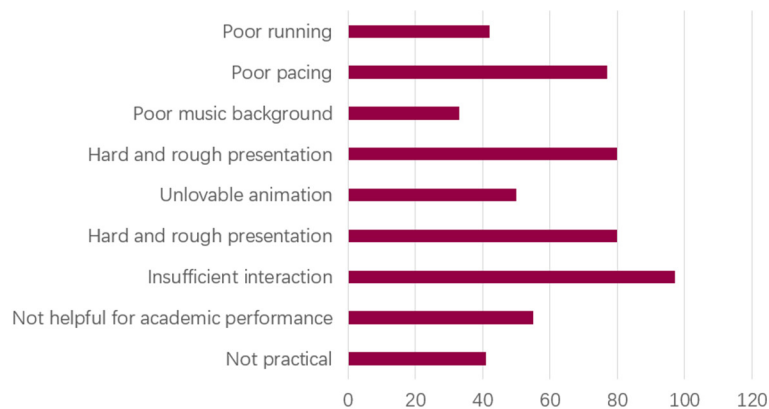


Fig. 7. Reasons Why Students Disliked This Type of Experiment

The students believed that the experiment needed to be improved mainly in terms of storytelling, interaction approach, presentation, and animation design and production(see Figure 8).

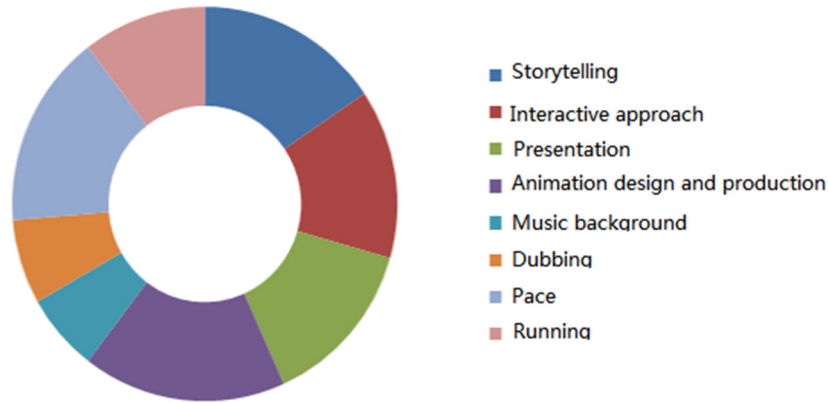


Fig. 8. What Students Thought the Experiment Needed to Improve

The students considered that the drawbacks of the experiment mainly focused on the running pace of the experiment. The author specifically questioned the students on this issue in the interview, and they explained that the running pace of the experiment was mainly expected to be improved in two aspects. The first is to allow the students to control their own progress in the experiment, and the second is to reasonably control the duration of the experiment(see Figure 9).

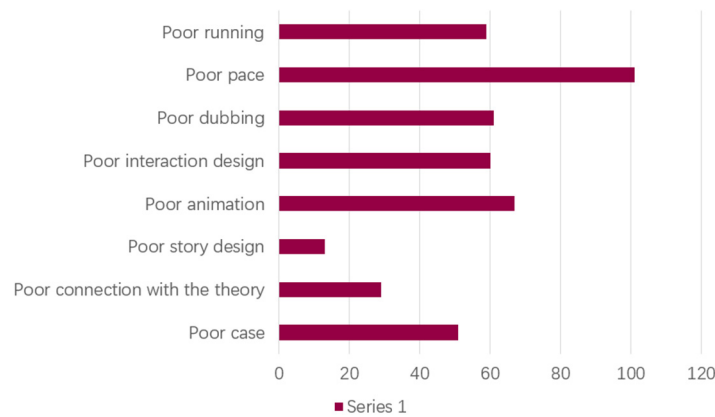


Fig. 9. Main Drawbacks of the Experiment as Perceived by Students

In view of the above deficiencies, the author believed that the only way to fundamentally change students' perception of insufficient interaction, single form of expression and the poor pace was to explore the innovative mode of experimental teaching and let each student actively participate in teaching, learn to learn, learn to innovate, internalize knowledge and enrich their own knowledge framework in the interaction between teachers and students and between students, so

as to change the passive teaching mode of ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities into the active teaching mode.

4 Conclusion: Effectiveness of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

In response to the results of the questionnaire survey and random interviews conducted for students, this section focuses on reflecting on the teaching effectiveness of the contextual teaching simulation experimental class of ideological and political theory classes in colleges and universities. The author mainly analyzes its effectiveness from three perspectives, such as practical effectiveness, theoretical results and methodological reflection.

4.1 Practical Effectiveness of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

From the results of the questionnaire, the development of the contextual teaching simulation experiment class of the ideological and political theory course has been approved by most students, over 80% of whom thought it was necessary to introduce this experimental course. Each experiment revolves around a theme chosen by the teacher in advance, and every student has been equipped with one computer and is allowed to make his or her own choice for the content of the experiment. This, for one thing, facilitates students' absorption of the course content; for another, it also enables teachers to have a clearer judgment of the results of their choices and their grasp of the knowledge points through each individual choice, thus improving teaching efficiency and education quality. Therefore, the development of contextual teaching simulation experiments in the ideological and political theory course is conducive to improving the efficiency of classroom teaching and the quality of education.

4.2 Theoretical Achievements of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

The theoretical results of the discipline have been enriched since the implementation of the experimental class on contextual teaching in the ideological and political theory course. It is impossible to replace the ideology class with specific teaching objectives by actual life, but it is necessary to link theory with reality, to "return" to life, to be close to life, and to realize "empathy" to the greatest extent. To this end, educators have summarized and created different teaching methods and approaches, such as case teaching, contextual teaching, multimedia teaching and practical teaching, and applied them fruitfully in teaching practice.^[11] Contextual teaching simulation experiment class of ideological and political theory class is different from the general contextual teaching which usually uses language and teaching aids as the main means to create "context", as well as from the one-way multimedia presentation teaching which lacks interactive participation. Instead, it combines the modern education mode of contextual teaching with the modern technology of computer multimedia simulation, develops a special software system capable of contextual simulation and human-computer interaction, and then applies it to experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course, thereby creating a new interactive and experiential way of teaching. In the survey, the content of the case, the connection theory as well as the design and animation of the story and the interaction were widely accepted by students.

4.3 Reflection on the Methods of Experimental Teaching in Ideological and Political Theory Course

As a result of the questionnaires and interviews with students in this project, we were pleased to see that students recognized and affirmed this new approach, but at the same time, some shortcomings and areas for improvement were also identified. Through the survey data, students' recognition of the experimental class mainly focused on the form and content of the experiment, indicating that this way of adding the experimental class to the ideological and political theory class, as well as the presentation of the experimental class, has been recognized by students. In the interview, many students also stated that "this kind of experimental teaching method which integrates animation, story, interaction and theoretical knowledge is very new and interesting to us, and is very conducive to our in-depth understanding and appreciation of theoretical knowledge." And they hoped that "the more such experimental classes, the better." The survey data showed that most students mainly thought that the pace and interaction of the experiments needed improvement. The author discussed this issue in depth in an interview with the students. For the running pace of the experiments, students mainly expected improvements in two aspects that is, first, to allow the students to control their own experiment progress, and second, to better control the experiment duration. The interaction mainly lies in the design of the experimental content, and it was expected that more interactive elements would be added. In view of the above shortcomings, the author believes that, at the beginning of the design of the experiment, the reason students are not allowed to control the experiment progress is mainly for the purpose of facilitating the teacher in grasping the progress and duration of the class, thus making better use of the limited time available in the experimental class to complete the tasks. However, in the future version of the update, the control initiative in some areas can be added so that students can better grasp the experimental progress according to their own situation and understanding of the experimental content.

4.4 Reflection: Exploration of Experimental Teaching Mode in Ideological and Political Theory Course

According to the guidance of Marxist theory, effectiveness will be affected by external factors. Contradictions will then be resolved after their emergence to achieve the unity of contradiction and reality.^[12] The exploration of the new mode of experimental teaching of the ideological and political theory course is to enable every student actively participate in teaching, learn to learn, learn to innovate, internalize knowledge and enrich their own knowledge framework in the interaction between teachers and students and between students, so as to change the passive teaching mode of ideological and political theory course in colleges and universities into active teaching mode. It is conducive to the cultivation of the innovative personality of college students and the organic unity of educational philosophy, teaching environment, and teaching methods. "The ideological and political education is a process in which the instructor exerts purposeful, planned and organized educational influence on the educated according to the ideological and moral requirements of a certain society and the law of the formation and development of the ideological and moral character of the educated, so as to induce the educated to produce an inner movement of ideological contradictions in order to form the ideological and moral character desired by a certain society."^[13] In order to explore the innovative mode of experimental teaching in the ideological and political theory course, we mainly focus on the four core elements of context, collaboration, dialogue and meaning construction, so as to con-

tinuously improve and enhance the teaching quality and effect of experimental teaching, and focus on cultivating students' collaborative ability, innovation, and cooperative consciousness.

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