Research on Improving the Quality of Ideological and Political Smart Classrooms from the Perspective of Interaction Ritual Chain

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Abstract: In promoting the digital and intelligent transformation of ideological and political education, smart classrooms face the problem of declining teaching quality caused by technology. Existing research mostly focuses on technological innovation while ignoring ritual disruption in teaching. Based on the interaction ritual chain theory, this paper analyzes problems in scenarios, emotions, focuses, and symbols, and proposes improvement paths from four dimensions: teaching field, emotional energy, students' attention, and symbol system. It aims to bridge the gap between technology and values and assist the high-quality development of ideological and political education.

Keywords: Interaction ritual chain; Ideological and political education; Smart classrooms; Teaching quality; Improvement paths

1. Introduction

With the development of digital technology, the digital and intelligent transformation of ideological and political education has become an inevitable trend. As a product of the integration of technological development and classroom teaching, smart classrooms are new-type intelligent and efficient classrooms built with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data [1]. Existing research mostly focuses on technology application but ignores its impact on the transmission of ideological and political values. Drawing on Randall Collins' interaction ritual chain theory, this paper regards ideological and political teaching as an organized interaction ritual, and analyzes the ritual disruption in smart classrooms from four dimensions: ritual space, emotional connection, symbol system, and group solidarity, so as to explore paths to improve teaching quality.

2. Deconstruction dimensions of the interaction ritual chain theory

Proposed by sociologist Randall Collins, the interaction ritual chain theory emphasizes that social interaction

can generate emotional energy and symbolic capital through ritualization. The so-called interaction ritual chain refers to a chain structure formed by countless interaction rituals occurring in specific "encounters" [2]. In educational scenarios, teaching interaction rituals is the core mechanism for knowledge transmission and value internalization. The interaction ritual chain is deconstructed from the following four dimensions:

2.1. Dual fields of ritual space

Ritual space includes physical venues and psychological atmosphere. Successful rituals rely on group gathering, barriers to outsiders, shared focus of attention, and shared emotions [3]. Co-presence is the basic premise of ritual effects. Modern teaching space has developed into a mixed form integrating physical and virtual environments. Circular layouts and intelligent terminals break the physical boundaries of traditional teacher-student interaction and promote the transformation of teaching towards collaboration. Lefebvre holds that space is not an abstract natural substance or a static "platform" external to human activities; it arises from purposeful social practice and is a product of social relations [4]. The new-type teaching space not only enhances students' sense of presence but also provides a practical carrier for value transmission.

2.2. Dynamic mechanism of emotional connection

Emotional connection is the dynamic mechanism of interaction rituals, referring to the flow of emotional energy formed by participants through rhythm synchronization, shared focus, and emotional resonance. The core driving force of the interaction ritual chain is "emotional energy" [5]. Collins points out that interaction rituals generate group solidarity through the accumulation of emotional energy. Introduced into teaching scenarios, the emotional connection between teachers and students directly affects teaching effects. Teachers create a classroom atmosphere through embodied expressions such as eye contact and body language to stimulate students' learning interest. Students' positive responses in turn motivate teachers, forming a virtuous cycle.

2.3. Meaning medium of symbol system

Symbols are the medium for transforming collective consciousness into individual cognition. Durkheim proposed that symbols usually carry collective emotional values to arouse the same emotional resonance among group members [6]. The teaching process is a process of transmission and internalization of symbolic meanings. Teachers transform disciplinary knowledge into an understandable symbol system, and students achieve knowledge internalization through understanding. Group symbols are generated on the basis of emotional energy in the interaction ritual chain; they are symbols combining emotional energy with physical representations and realistic carriers of emotional energy [7]. Through symbolic expressions such as specific gestures and disciplinary terms, teachers repeatedly strengthen the authority of knowledge transmission and the rationality of teaching norms.

2.4. Coupling the outcome of group solidarity

As a ritual outcome, group solidarity maintains intersubjectivity in the interaction process [8]. Solidarity in the teaching field is gradually constructed through repeated interaction rituals. In this process, interaction participants form a shared focus of attention, and under the premise of strongly feeling each other's consciousness, they continuously strengthen the rhythmic connection of words, body movements, and emotions, thereby stimulating participants to further improve their subjectivity in mutual participation [9]. Rhythm synchronization, shared focus, and clear boundaries in teacher-student interaction enable teaching rituals to produce emotional connection effects, and form a teaching community through group cooperation and role division to enhance students' sense of group

identity.

3. Manifestations of ritual disruption in ideological and political smart classrooms

Examining the problems of ideological and political smart classrooms, the following four disruption characteristics are found: temporal-spatial disembedding of teaching scenarios, asynchronous loss of emotional connection, discrete tendency of focus setting, and intergenerational estrangement in symbol construction, which constitute the contradictions that need to be resolved urgently.

3.1. Temporal-spatial disembedding of teaching scenarios

The obvious temporal-spatial separation between teachers and students in ideological and political smart classrooms directly affects teaching interaction and effects. On the one hand, the application of technology and mixed teaching models weakens the necessity of physical co-presence and changes the interaction rhythm. Online teaching often fragments discussions due to network delays and cumbersome operations, reducing the depth of ideological exchanges that ideological and political education should have. On the other hand, once the interaction between educational subjects and objects is separated from the original common space, it may lead to the so-called "disembedding" phenomenon proposed by Giddens [10]. In online teaching, although students achieve digital presence, physical absence leads to distracted attention. This separation between virtual and real spaces weakens the collective sense of immersion and the energy aggregation effect of the classroom.

3.2. Asynchronous loss of emotional connection

Technological intervention weakens the emotional connection and interaction quality between teachers and students in smart classrooms. On the one hand, the screen barrier limits teachers' emotional expression, resulting in the loss of on-site texture of voice and expressions, reducing the effect of emotional transmission, and weakening the unique emotional penetration and value guidance of ideological and political education. On the other hand, the quality of online interaction among students declines. Discussions are difficult to achieve in-depth collisions, and students tend to superficially agree rather than communicate sincerely, with insufficient emotional investment, affecting the generation of collective wisdom and value internalization.

3.3. Discrete tendency of focus setting

The excessive use of multimedia technology is likely to cause students' distracted attention and lack of focus, affecting the formation of interaction rituals and the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Meng et al. proposed that having a shared focus of attention is the premise and foundation for forming common meaning symbols and establishing emotional connections [11]. The lack of focus of attention is an important reason for the failure and emptiness of interaction rituals. While enriching teaching content, multimedia resources exacerbate cognitive fragmentation due to frequent interface switching, hindering in-depth thinking and knowledge construction. Formalized resource presentation further weakens the internal logic and persuasiveness of ideological and political education.

3.4. Intergenerational differences in symbol construction

There is a problem of weakening symbol systems in ideological and political smart classrooms, which is specifically manifested in the declining explanatory power of traditional discourse systems and insufficient integration of

emerging symbol systems, affecting the transmission of values and the construction of group identity. Durkheim emphasized that thoughts and emotions can only exist for a long time through symbols[12]. However, the traditional discourse system has insufficient explanatory power for emerging symbols, and students are more accustomed to expressing their views using emerging symbols, making classroom discourse lose practical support. On the other hand, the integration of emerging symbol systems in the interaction between teachers and students is insufficient. Teachers' use of youth subcultural symbols such as internet buzzwords and emoticons is awkward, and the design of smart platforms does not fully consider the complexity of value internalization, leading to symbol adaptation dilemmas and exacerbating intergenerational cognitive conflicts.

4. Paths to improve the teaching quality of ideological and political smart classrooms

Smart classrooms have injected new vitality into ideological and political education. Technologies such as intelligent terminals have expanded teaching space and reshaped the teacher-student relationship. However, technological empowerment has also brought new challenges. How to use technology to break the barriers of teaching fields, stimulate emotional resonance, focus on cognitive core, and innovate symbolic expression has become the key to improving the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

4.1. Reconstruct multimodal teaching fields
4.1.1. Integration of physical and virtual spaces
The construction of ideological and political smart classrooms requires the organic integration of physical spaces and virtual environments. Ideological and political education needs to give play to the advantages of technologies such as intelligent terminals and virtual reality to transform teaching content into a more interactive and immersive digital form. Teachers use VR technology to create historical scenarios, allowing students to deepen their understanding of red culture through immersive experiences. Use online platforms to integrate diverse teaching resources to help students build a systematic knowledge structure.

4.1.2. Organic unity of synchronous and asynchronous interaction
The organic combination of synchronous and asynchronous interaction is the key to building a multimodal teaching field. Interpersonal interaction in teaching plays an irreplaceable role in promoting individual development, collaborative learning, and group wisdom enhancement[13]. Synchronous interaction facilitates teachers to obtain timely feedback, while asynchronous interaction makes up for the limitation of insufficient student expression in synchronous mode. By releasing topics and tasks through online platforms, students can arrange their learning flexibly. Reasonably allocate the two interaction modes, balance teaching efficiency and depth, and promote the systematic transmission of knowledge and effective internalization of values.

4.2. Strengthen teachers' and students' emotional energy
4.2.1. Multidimensional feedback to promote emotional resonance
Teachers use multidimensional feedback to build a positive cycle of emotional energy and promote the formation and deepening of emotional resonance. Instant feedback is the starting point for stimulating students' emotional resonance. Teachers integrate ideological and political theory education into emotional interaction through diversified instant feedback methods, transforming abstract political identity into perceptible emotional identity. In online interaction sessions, teachers can deepen value guidance through personalized comments and expand

the temporal and spatial dimensions of emotional interaction. This emotional feedback mechanism throughout the teaching process effectively strengthens students' sense of classroom belonging, elevating ideological and political education from mere knowledge transmission to emotional communication and resonance.

4.2.2. Hierarchical progression to gather emotional energy

According to students' cognitive levels and emotional development stages, teachers adopt a hierarchical and progressive approach to gradually gather emotional energy in the classroom. Giving full play to the positive role of emotions in ideological and political courses will help improve students' cognitive levels and enhance classroom teaching effectiveness [14]. First, stimulate emotional experience by creating scenarios to guide students to generate initial emotional resonance with ideological and political knowledge. Second, promote emotional identity through case discussions. Finally, guide the transformation of emotional experience into actions through progressive practice. This hierarchical and progressive way of emotional gathering promotes the gradual sublimation of students' emotions, making ideological and political education truly touch students' hearts.

4.3. Guide the return of students' attention

4.3.1. Construct knowledge graphs to promote the internalization of ideological and political theories

Systematically integrate teaching resources by building a structured knowledge graph system to improve students' cognitive focus and theoretical internalization effects. Teachers use knowledge graphs to integrate scattered teaching resources, form a clear knowledge framework, help students establish a stable cognitive focus, strengthen knowledge connections, and systematically grasp ideological and political theories. It helps students gradually realize the transformation from fragmented reception to systematic understanding, and ultimately achieve an in-depth grasp and internalization of ideological and political theories.

4.3.2. Set learning tasks to regulate attention allocation

To address the problem of distracted attention, teachers achieve precise guidance and dynamic regulation of students' attention by setting specific and measurable learning tasks. In the teaching design stage, transform abstract ideological and political value concepts into clear learning tasks to help students grasp learning goals and key points. At the same time, with the help of real-time data analysis from smart teaching platforms, teachers can dynamically optimize task settings and rhythm arrangements according to student feedback, respecting students' learning laws while ensuring the effective transmission of core ideological and political values, thereby improving teaching effectiveness.

4.4. Innovate the symbol system for value transmission

4.4.1. Strengthen the modern representation transformation of traditional discourse

Ideological and political education should promote the modern transformation of the symbol system, taking symbol innovation as a breakthrough to achieve intergenerational connection and improve educational effectiveness. The appropriate use of ritual symbols can strengthen the effect of ritual education [15]. Teachers use multimedia to transform abstract theories into concrete audio-visual symbols, enhance appeal through situational narratives, and reconstruct traditional discourse based on students' characteristics to make it closer to students' lives and language styles. It effectively bridges intergenerational cognitive differences, enhances the penetration of value transmission, and promotes the deep integration of cultural inheritance and educational goals.

4.4.2. Promote the positive transformation of youth subcultural resources

Relying on smart education platforms, teachers organically integrate youth subcultures into value education through dynamic monitoring and guided transformation. Establish a dynamic monitoring mechanism to grasp youth cultural trends, understand students' cultural preferences through classroom interactions, questionnaires, etc., and explore positive elements to combine with ideological and political content. It not only respects students' cultural subjectivity but also realizes the flexible transmission and intergenerational connection of mainstream values.

Disclosure statement

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