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Exploration of the Development of the "Television Program Planning" Course in the Context of Distance Education

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Abstract: ***The methods of distance education evolve continuously with media changes, currently relying mainly on internet video to meet students' educational needs. The specialized course "Television Program Planning" in the Broadcasting and Hosting Art major provides planning for both long and short videos as well as live broadcasts for distance education and prepares for the next generation of virtual reality. Under the guidance of distance education technology, the course teaching has gradually achieved a transition between online and offline modes. In the context of the audience separation that exists in both distance education and television programs, effectively utilizing the "sense of object" in the Broadcasting and Hosting Art major can enhance teacher-student interaction and guide student participation, providing a better emotional experience and improving teaching effectiveness.***

Keywords: Distance education, Television program planning, Broadcasting and Hosting Art major, Sense of object**.**

1. Introduction

There is a rich connection between the content carriers of distance education and the "Television Program Planning" course. Both can mutually promote each other from the perspectives of current development and future trends. In terms of teaching effectiveness, the "Television Program Planning" course also provides insights for distance education.

2. Increasing Demand for Television Programs in Distance Education

The founder of communication studies, Schramm (1982), once said, "All television is educational; the only question is, what is it teaching?" With the development of the times, the meaning of "television" has expanded to screens of various sizes, educating their audiences. The demand for television programs is increasing with each passing day. To produce a good television program, meticulous planning is required, including market research, theme selection, content arrangement, and script writing. Guiding students to complete program planning is the teaching goal of the "Television Program Planning" course.

In the classification of television programs, those in distance education are usually categorized as "social education programs," a key content in "Television Program Planning." On the one hand, numerous excellent programs can serve as examples for students; on the other hand, through this course, students can develop the ability to plan a social education program, preparing them for future employment. Compared to the uncertainties in the drama and variety show markets, the supply of distance education television programs is long-term and stable:

2.1 National-Level Distance Education Institutions

Currently, China has set up 68 modern distance education pilot universities and 45 open universities, primarily staffed by part-time and full-time teachers from universities and former radio and television universities, serving as the main force in national distance education and issuing nationally recognized academic qualifications.

Currently, distance courses are usually conducted via the internet, consisting of recorded and live lessons. For recorded lessons, teachers systematically teach a specific course through recorded videos. Program planners need to understand both the teaching process and the principles of television broadcasting, using systematic thinking and appropriate presentation techniques to achieve good teaching results. For live lessons, program planners assist teachers in transforming their expression styles, creating broadcast-friendly and interactive language styles, helping to build teachers' distinctive "character traits," better attracting student participation, solving issues of learning initiative and self-discipline, and enhancing learning outcomes.

2.2 Specialized Distance Education Platforms in Various Industries

To meet the development needs of in-service staff, specialized training institutions exist across various industries. The distance education offices under local official agencies (referred to as "distance education offices") are traditional institutions with clearly defined educational targets. These offices were established to broadly conduct organizational knowledge education and various production and living skills guidance. They maintain close ties with local specialized schools to develop annual training plans, and their teaching content is typically produced by local radio and television stations. Currently, there is a lot of convergence between distance education offices and the theoretical education business of the publicity department. An example of their application is the extensive use of online training websites and apps, which significantly meet the diverse, autonomous, and

convenient learning needs of people under internet conditions. Similarly, various online training platforms for professional and technical talents (usually named "XX Network Continuing Education Center") have subsequently emerged, serving the continuing education needs of in-service personnel in specific industry organizations. Universities have also established dedicated teacher development centers to coordinate such work, while in enterprises, this is typically managed by the human resources department.

On distance education platforms, television programs usually appear in the form of micro-courses. These micro-videos typically last 5-15 minutes, meeting the requirement for in-service personnel to learn a specific knowledge point in a short time. The target audience's needs are clear, closely tied to industry hotspots, and characterized by distinct contemporary features and strong professional guidance. In program planning, the focus is on professional content narration, appropriate use of technical terminology, and concise planning methods to meet the need for employees to complete their educational tasks during breaks.

2.3 General Knowledge-Based Educational Programs on Video Platforms

Take representative video platforms as examples: The long video platform Bilibili (B Station) has a user penetration rate of 82% among 985 and 211 universities, with 91% of video views coming from PUGV (Professional User Generated Video), and general knowledge content videos accounting for 45% of the views (Chen Rui, 2021). On the short video platform Douyin (ByteDance), CEO Liang Rubo announced in an internal letter (2021) that the employee development department's skills and career training functions would transition to vocational education, merging into the Dali Education segment. ZEBRA AI, a pure online education platform for children, has a renewal rate of over 60% (Blue Whale Finance, 2021).

The time constraints of these programs place specific requirements on television program planning. Educational programs are typically divided into long videos of 15-30 minutes, short videos of 3-5 minutes, and children's programs that usually include 4-6 sections within 20 minutes. Under these objective time constraints, the challenge for program planners is to control the pace, maintain user attention, and ensure the program's knowledge points are clearly explained, thus promoting effective completion rates.

In the context of network decentralization, the ancient saying "There must be one out of three who can be your teacher" is becoming a reality. The speakers of general knowledge programs are playing the role of teachers, blurring the boundaries of the teacher's identity as never before. Everyone can learn the content they need from different channels, and all these can be broadly considered "teachers" in distance education. These "teachers" may not all have officially recognized teaching qualifications, nor do they belong to any specialized teaching organization. However, they open accounts (channels) to share their professional knowledge, with some account owners (usually attached to commercial teaching institutions) selling paid courses, thus realizing the knowledge economy under the distance education context.

3. Advances in Media Methods in Distance Education and Their Preparation for Future Course Development

Distance education is highly dependent on technology, and its evolution has been rooted in the conveniences brought by scientific and technological advancements. According to the technological means of knowledge transfer between teachers and students, modern distance education in China has experienced four generations of development (Le Chuanyong & Ye Changsheng, 2023). The first generation was correspondence education, using letters as the medium. After the 1980s, radio and television entered thousands of households, leading to the rise of the second generation of distance education, primarily mediated by radio and television, and the establishment of a batch of radio and television universities. After the 1990s, with the emergence and development of information and network technology, the third generation of distance education based on information and network technology entered our lives. Entering the 21st century, radio and television could no longer meet the methods and means of distance education, and online platforms became the first choice for covering teaching content.

Currently, distance education has entered a phase where artificial intelligence and virtual simulation technology are highly involved. In 2024, XR products represented by Apple's Vision Pro began mass production [XR is a collective term for VR (virtual reality), AR (augmented reality), and MR (mixed reality) technologies, with Apple's Vision Pro being MR]. Its operational methods in real scenarios offer new possibilities for distance education. One of the criticisms of distance education has been its inability to conduct practical teaching. Under virtual simulation and other technological means, virtual laboratories and other scenarios may integrate into everyday life more quickly, providing learners with more affordable and convenient ways to receive distance education.

The development of radio and television universities is closely related to the abundance of television programs. Currently, distance education already includes virtual simulation laboratories. If the next stage fully embraces virtual reality, will the "Television Program Planning" course become obsolete? Researchers have varied opinions, but the form should no longer be confined to a screen; instead, it should broaden the background of program planning in the boundaryless virtual reality (Liao Wenrui, 2023). Program content will no longer be limited by budget or management to the campus or locality but can use virtual reality to create various scenes such as ancient times, space, or dungeons. The identities of teachers and students can quickly transform into scene roles, allowing the widely used game-based teaching methods in primary and secondary schools to more deeply realize "learning through entertainment."

4. Technology-Driven Transformation of Traditional Courses in Distance Education

The COVID-19 pandemic made the integration of distance education into traditional campus teaching at an unprecedented speed, prompting international discussions on

the changes brought by large-scale distance education initiatives. Distance education has reshaped traditional classroom teaching with new classroom scenarios, teacher-student interactions, and teaching methods. Three years later when the epidemic was over, as students returned to physical classrooms, the residual impact of distance education continued to influence the update of teaching strategies through technological means (Vagos, P., & Carvalhais, L. 2022). Increasingly, classrooms are adopting a blended model of online and offline teaching, using platforms like Rain Classroom and Learning Pass as supplements. These platforms facilitate the implementation of flipped classrooms, BOPPPS (Bridge-in, Objective, Pre-assessment, Participatory Learning, Post-assessment, Summary), and OBE (Outcome-Based Education) teaching designs. Distance education is transitioning from a relatively independent educational method to a regular auxiliary tool in conventional teaching.

For instance, in the "Television Program Planning" course, instructors use the Superstar platform. Before class, the teacher provides the course PPT, and students upload related reference program materials, watch them, and provide comments. After completing the chapter teaching, the teacher assigns homework, which students submit through the system, including images and audio-video as evidence. During classroom teaching, the instructor utilizes functions such as random calling, quick responses, and discussions to enhance classroom interaction. Teachers and students, as well as peer evaluations, are conducted promptly, with transparent points systems contributing to regular grades. These functionalities offer greater convenience than previous manual methods, enabling multi-layered management of pre-class, post-class, extracurricular, and in-class activities. In the near future, the attributes of distance education may change, with simulated teaching scenarios creating new classroom experiences for teachers and students. This would dissolve the physical separation inherent in distance education, allowing both parties to feel the presence of a classroom environment. With the aid of artificial intelligence, interactions between teachers and students, as well as among students, can transcend language, time, and geographical barriers, fostering genuine cultural resonance and realizing the dream of shared education for all humanity.

5. Object Sensation: Insights from Broadcast and Hosting Arts Course for the Professional Development of Distance Education Teachers

The "Television Program Planning" course, as a professional course in broadcasting and hosting arts, focuses on pre-production abilities. However, during preparation, planners must always stand in the audience's position, breaking through the screen barrier to achieve simultaneous and localized experiences with the audience.

This need for interaction parallels the requirements of distance education. Teachers face specific challenges in maintaining students' attention and enhancing content presentation interaction, similar to those faced in live classroom settings (Ma Jiali, 2023). Broadcasting and television also involve equipment separation from the audience. Long-term practice in broadcasting and television has developed methods for maintaining audience attention and reducing distance, primarily through cultivating the presenter's "object sensation."

Object sensation refers to "the broadcaster or host's need to imagine and feel the presence and reactions of the audience, being psychologically aware of the audience's psychological needs, desires, emotions, etc., and thus mobilizing their thoughts and emotions into a dynamic state" (Fu Cheng, 2001). In a distance education classroom, both sides are separated by screens, establishing an equal relationship through the internet. The teacher-student relationship should be equal, sincere, and friendly. Under this premise, teachers would speak in a conversational tone, presenting knowledge engagingly, and using various methods to guide students. Being separated by a screen does not give teachers the authority to command or appease students. Establishing an equal relationship allows students to feel happiness from online education, enhancing their participation in classroom interactions, and improving teaching quality (Vagos, P., & Carvalhais, L. 2022). The need to cultivate teachers' object sensation extends beyond distance education. With the increasing need for recording lectures for competitions or projects, teachers frequently find themselves in distance-education-like scenarios. Instructors need object sensation to establish good communication with viewers, such as judges, by acknowledging, affirming, questioning, or discussing imagined reactions during the recording process. This enhances the warmth and trust that extends through the screen, further professionalizing teachers' skills. It aligns with the Ministry of Education's guidelines on promoting the healthy development of online education (Ministry of Education, 2019), aiming to cultivate high-level professionals proficient in technology and education, contributing to the construction of a learning society where "Anyone can learn anytime anywhere."

6. Conclusion

The inherent separation between teachers and students in distance education and the screen barrier in broadcasting and hosting arts share a similar underlying logic. In today's world, where screens are the primary medium of information dissemination, "Television Program Planning" can offer richer and more efficient expressive methods for distance education, establishing equal and friendly teacher-student relationships. Distance education provides the course with more direct teaching objectives, content sources, and methods. Both fields, when facing the challenges of virtual reality, can collectively enter a new stage of human knowledge sharing and emotional connection.

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