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The Development and Application of Modern Educational Technology: Exploration and Reflection

He rui an

Graduate University of Mongolia Ulaanbaatar,Mongolian education studys PHD

Corresponding Author: He rui an

Graduate University of Mongolia Ulaanbaatar,Mongolian education studys PHD

ABSTRACT

Modern educational technology, as a core driving force for educational reform, plays a pivotal role in optimizing teaching processes and enhancing learning effectiveness. This paper systematically examines the evolution, current application status, influencing factors of teaching effectiveness, countermeasures, and future trends of modern educational technology. It first sorts out the development course of modern educational technology at home and abroad, then analyzes its multi-dimensional applications in teaching (e.g., multimedia teaching, online teaching, distance education, and virtual reality-based teaching) and its transformative impact on traditional educational models. Furthermore, focusing on the teaching practice of Modern Educational Technology—a compulsory course for normal university students—this paper explores factors that hinder teaching effectiveness, such as outdated teaching materials, inadequate teaching strategies, and insufficient student attention, and proposes corresponding solutions. Finally, it forecasts the future development direction of modern educational technology, emphasizing its trends toward intelligence, personalization, and integration, aiming to provide theoretical reference and practical guidance for the high-quality development of educational technology applications.

KEY WORDS: Modern Educational Technology; Educational Reform; Teaching Effectiveness; Application Exploration; Development Trends

1. Introduction

With the rapid advancement of information technology, modern educational technology has transcended the traditional definition of "audio-visual education" and evolved into a comprehensive discipline that integrates modern educational theories, information technology, and teaching practice. It not only enriches teaching methods (e.g., multimedia, networks, and virtual reality) but also expands the boundaries of teaching space, making personalized learning and lifelong learning a reality. For normal universities,

Modern Educational Technology is not only a distinctive compulsory course but also a foundational curriculum that directly affects the professional quality of pre-service teachers. However, practical feedback shows that the teaching quality of this course is not satisfactory—many graduates lack the ability to apply modern educational theories, operate educational technology equipment, or design multimedia teaching courseware. Against this backdrop, exploring the development law, application paths, and effectiveness optimization strategies of modern educational technology is of great

significance for promoting the modernization of education and improving the training quality of pre-service teachers.

2. The Development Course of Modern Educational Technology

The development of modern educational technology is closely linked to the progress of science and technology, showing distinct 阶段性 characteristics both at home and abroad.

2.1 Foreign Development Course

1. **Initial Stage (1920s):** The emergence of slide-based education, silent films, and radio education marked the beginning of modern educational technology. These technologies broke the limitations of traditional "chalk-and-talk" teaching and introduced audio-visual elements into the classroom for the first time.

2. **Preliminary Development Stage (1930s-1940s):** The application of sound films and audio recording teaching promoted the upgrading of educational technology. Meanwhile, Edgar Dale's "Cone of Experience" theory provided a theoretical framework for audio-visual education, clarifying the relationship between different teaching media and learning effects.

3. **Rapid Development Stage (1950s-1960s):** The invention of television, programmed teaching machines, and computer-assisted instruction (CAI) pushed educational technology into a period of rapid growth. CAI, in particular, realized the initial integration of computers and education, laying the foundation for subsequent digital learning.

4. **Systematic Development Stage (1970s-1980s):** The introduction of system theory, information theory, and cybernetics expanded the research scope of educational technology—from a single focus on media to the systematic design of teaching processes (including design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of teaching resources). During this period, the "Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT)" was renamed, reflecting the discipline's shift toward comprehensiveness.

5. **Network Development Stage (1990s-present):** The widespread application of multimedia technology, artificial intelligence (AI), and network technology (especially the Internet) revolutionized educational concepts and methods. Online courses, virtual classrooms, and intelligent teaching systems have become mainstream forms of educational technology application, promoting the transformation of education from "teacher-centered" to "student-centered".

2.2 Domestic Development Course

1. **Germination Stage (1920s-1949):** Before the founding of the People's Republic of China, modern educational technology was mainly applied in social education and school teaching through slide shows, radio broadcasts, and films. For example, some cities used radio to popularize basic knowledge, laying a preliminary foundation for the development of educational technology.

2. **Preliminary Development Stage (1949-1960):** In November 1949, the Audio-Visual Education Division was established under the Science and Popularization Bureau of the Ministry of Culture, taking charge of national educational technology work. Cities such as Beijing and Shanghai launched Russian radio schools and television universities, promoting the large-scale application of audio-visual technology in education.

3. **Stagnation Stage (Cultural Revolution Period):** Due to the impact of the Cultural Revolution, audio-visual education work was completely suspended, and the development of domestic educational technology suffered a severe setback.

4. **Re-start and Rapid Development Stage (1978-present):** In 1978, Deng Xiaoping emphasized accelerating the development of modern educational means such as television and radio at the National Education Work Conference, which became a turning point for the revival of domestic educational technology. The Ministry of Education established the Audio-Visual Education Bureau and the Central Audio-Visual Education Center; China Radio and Television University was founded, and China Education Television (CETV) was established. With the popularization of multimedia personal computers and the formation of the educational software market, information technology has been increasingly integrated into teaching, promoting the leapfrog development of domestic modern educational technology.

3. The Core Connotation and Application of Modern Educational Technology

3.1 Core Connotation

According to the definition of AECT and domestic academic circles, modern educational technology refers to the theory and practice of optimizing teaching by applying modern educational theories and information technology to design, develop, utilize, manage, and evaluate teaching processes and resources. Its core goals include: improving teaching efficiency with minimal input (time, energy, and materials); enhancing teaching effectiveness to achieve specific teaching objectives; and meeting the educational needs of individuals and society. The "three-effectiveness" (effectiveness, utility, and efficiency) is the core criterion for measuring the value of modern educational technology.

3.2 Main Application Forms in Teaching
3.2.1 Multimedia Teaching

Multimedia teaching integrates text, images, audio, video, and animation into teaching content, making abstract knowledge concrete and boring content vivid. For example, in biology classes, 3D animations can be used to demonstrate the process of cell division; in history classes, documentaries can be played to restore historical scenes. This not only stimulates students' learning interest but also improves the efficiency of information transmission, helping students better understand and master knowledge.

3.2.2 Online Teaching

Online teaching relies on network platforms to break the temporal and spatial limitations of traditional classrooms. Students can access learning resources (e.g., online courses, teaching videos, and electronic books) anytime and anywhere, and interact with teachers and peers through discussion boards, instant messaging, and video conferences. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching became the main form of education, verifying its irreplaceable role in ensuring the continuity of teaching.

3.2.3 Distance Education

Distance education focuses on providing educational opportunities for groups in remote areas, rural areas, or with special needs (e.g., working adults) through long-distance communication technologies (such as satellite TV and the Internet). China Radio and Television University (now Open University of China) is a typical example—it has covered nearly all regions of the country, enabling millions of people to realize their dream of higher education and promoting educational equity.

3.2.4 Virtual Reality (VR)/Augmented Reality (AR) Teaching

VR/AR technology creates an immersive learning environment by simulating real scenes. In medical education, VR can simulate surgical operations, allowing medical students to practice repeatedly without risking patient safety; in engineering education, AR can overlay virtual models on real objects, helping students understand the internal structure of mechanical equipment. This technology effectively solves the problem of "difficulty in practicing" in traditional teaching and improves students' practical ability.

4. Factors Influencing the Teaching Effectiveness of Modern Educational Technology (Taking Normal Universities as an Example)

As a compulsory course for normal university students, the teaching effectiveness of Modern Educational Technology directly affects the professional development of pre-service teachers. However, current teaching practice faces three main challenges:

4.1 Outdated Teaching Material Construction

1. **Slow Update of Content:** Many teaching materials still retain the content system of audio-visual education in the 1980s, taking outdated media (e.g., old slides, projectors, and video recorders) as the main teaching content. These media have been almost eliminated in actual teaching, leading to students' loss of interest in learning.
2. **Single Form of Materials:** Traditional paper-based teaching materials have advantages such as systematic knowledge and stable information but are limited by slow updates, lack of vividness, and disconnection from practical operations. At present, there is a lack of supporting electronic teaching materials for Modern Educational Technology—teachers can only prepare electronic resources based on their sense of responsibility, which easily leads to perfunctory teaching (e.g., "teaching according to the textbook") and affects classroom teaching effectiveness.

4.2 Inadequate Teachers' Teaching Strategies

Teachers are the key to ensuring teaching effectiveness, but some teachers still have problems in teaching methods:

- **Rote Teaching:** Some teachers read the textbook directly in class, with no vivid examples or interactive links, making the classroom boring.
- **Single Teaching Model:** The "teacher-centered" cramming teaching model is still prevalent—students are treated as "containers for knowledge", and their initiative and creativity are ignored.
- **Formalized Use of Multimedia:** Projectors are only used as "electronic blackboards", and important concepts are skipped with a mouse click. Although the information volume seems large, students gain little.

- **Disconnection from Practice:** Teachers focus on the systematization and standardization of disciplinary knowledge but ignore the connection between theories and the actual needs of pre-service teachers (e.g., how to design courseware for primary and secondary school classes), resulting in students' "inability to apply what they have learned".

4.3 Insufficient Student Attention

Most normal university students regard Modern Educational Technology as a "public course" and pay insufficient attention to it:

- **Misunderstanding of Course Value:** Students believe that professional courses (e.g., pedagogy and psychology) are more important for their future teaching careers, while public courses are only for passing the final exam.
- **Ignorance of Practical Significance:** Students think that the principles and methods of modern educational technology can be learned after work, and there is no need to invest too much energy in university.
- **Negative Learning Attitude:** Due to the boring teaching content and single teaching method, students lack enthusiasm for learning, and the classroom is in a state of "low participation" or "no participation".

5. Strategies to Improve the Teaching Effectiveness of Modern Educational Technology

To solve the above problems, targeted strategies should be formulated from the three dimensions of teaching materials, teachers, and students.

5.1 Accelerate the Construction of Teaching Materials

1. **Update the Content System of Teaching Materials:** Eliminate outdated media content (e.g., old slides and video recorders) and add cutting-edge technology content (e.g., interactive whiteboards, micro-teaching classrooms, and AI-assisted teaching). At the same time, strengthen the teaching of practical software (e.g., Photoshop for courseware design, Lectora for e-learning development, and Dreamweaver for webpage production) and increase the content of "integration of information technology and curriculum" to ensure that students' skills keep up with the development of educational technology.
2. **Develop Supporting Electronic Teaching Materials:** Relying on information technology and multimedia technology, develop a comprehensive electronic teaching system integrating electronic textbooks, virtual teaching aids, learning resources, and online communication functions. This system can not only break the limitations of paper-based materials but also facilitate interaction between teachers and students (e.g., online discussions and homework submission), enriching teaching forms and improving teaching efficiency.

5.2 Optimize Teachers' Teaching Strategies

The key to improving teaching effectiveness lies in transforming teachers' teaching concepts and optimizing teaching methods:

1. **Change Teachers' Roles:** In the information age, teachers should transform from "knowledge transmitters" to "facilitators, collaborators, and participants" of students'

learning. They should focus on cultivating students' active learning attitude, guide students to explore knowledge independently, and share learning experiences with students.

2. **Adopt Diversified Teaching Methods:**

- **Cooperative Learning Method:** At the beginning of the course, let students form cooperative learning groups based on similar interests. For each teaching task (e.g., "introducing modern educational technology environments"), assign group tasks and evaluate learning results based on groups. This not only improves students' communication and collaboration skills but also enhances their sense of participation and achievement.

- **Task-Driven Teaching Method:** Take specific tasks as the core to integrate knowledge and skills into task completion. For example, in the teaching of PowerPoint, set the task of "introducing group members"; in the teaching of Flash, set the task of "making a rolling ball animation". Students learn knowledge and master skills by analyzing tasks, solving problems, and completing tasks, which improves their ability to apply knowledge.

- **Build Thematic Learning Websites and Teacher Blogs:** Teachers can build online learning platforms to upload learning materials, multimedia courseware, and software operation tutorials. At the same time, use discussion boards and blogs to conduct online communication with students, expanding learning channels and cultivating students' autonomous learning ability.

5.3 Strengthen the Education of Students' Learning Purposes

Clear learning purposes are the internal driving force for students to learn actively. Teachers should strengthen the education of students' learning purposes through multiple channels:

- At the beginning of the course, explain the importance of Modern Educational Technology for future teaching work (e.g., "mastering educational technology is a necessary condition for becoming an excellent primary and secondary school teacher"), helping students establish a correct understanding of the course.

- Before each unit's teaching, present clear learning objectives (e.g., "after this unit, you should be able to design a primary school mathematics courseware using PowerPoint"), providing guidance for students' learning and helping them clarify the direction of efforts.

6. Future Development Trends of Modern Educational Technology

With the in-depth integration of information technology and education, modern educational technology will show the following development trends:

6.1 Intelligence

AI technology will be more widely applied in education, such as adaptive learning systems (which adjust learning content and difficulty according to students' learning progress) and intelligent evaluation systems (which automatically grade homework and provide personalized feedback). This will realize "precision teaching" and improve the efficiency and pertinence of education.

6.2 Personalization

Relying on big data analysis technology, educational technology can accurately grasp students' learning characteristics (e.g., learning speed, interest points, and weak links) and provide personalized learning plans and resources. For example, online learning platforms can recommend suitable courses for students based on their learning history, realizing "teaching students in accordance with their aptitude" on a large scale.

6.3 Integration

Modern educational technology will realize in-depth integration with other disciplines and technologies. On the one hand, it will integrate with subject teaching (e.g., "AI + mathematics teaching" and "VR + chemistry experiment"), promoting the innovation of subject teaching models; on the other hand, it will integrate with emerging technologies (e.g., 5G, metaverse, and blockchain), creating new educational forms such as "metaverse classrooms" and "blockchain-based academic certification".

6.4 Inclusiveness

With the optimization of educational resource allocation and the popularization of mobile learning, modern educational technology will further promote educational equity. It will provide high-quality educational resources for remote areas, rural areas, and disadvantaged groups (e.g., disabled students) through mobile terminals and low-cost network services, narrowing the "digital divide" in education.

7. Conclusion

Modern educational technology is not only a tool for optimizing teaching but also a core driving force for educational reform. Its development has gone through a long historical process and has formed a diversified application system covering multimedia, networks, and VR/AR. However, in practical teaching (especially the teaching of Modern Educational Technology in normal universities), there are still problems such as outdated teaching materials, inadequate teaching strategies, and insufficient student attention. To solve these problems, it is necessary to accelerate the construction of teaching materials, optimize teachers' teaching strategies, and strengthen the education of students' learning purposes. Looking to the future, with the development of AI, big data, and other technologies, modern educational technology will move toward intelligence, personalization, integration, and inclusiveness, making greater contributions to promoting the modernization of education and realizing the goal of "educating people for the future".

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