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The Research on the Interactivity between Teachers' Teaching Ability Competition and Classroom Teaching in Chinese Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: **The research on the interactivity between teacher's teaching ability competition and classroom teaching in Chinese higher vocational colleges can be approached from their inherent correlation. On one hand, teacher's teaching ability competition, as a significant event in the field of vocational education, serves not only as a competitive platform for teachers' pedagogical skills but also as a bellwether for the reform of classroom teaching. On the other hand, classroom teaching provides a practical foundation for the competition and acts as a testing ground and a source of refinement for the outcomes of the competition. The bidirectional interactivity between them forms a virtuous cycle of "promoting teaching through competition and nurturing competition with teaching".**

Keywords: **higher vocational college; teacher's teaching ability competition; classroom teaching; interactive research.**

I. INTRODUCTION

There exists a bidirectional interactivity between the teacher's teaching ability competition and classroom teaching in Chinese higher vocational colleges. The teaching ability competition typically encompasses contests in instructional design, implementation, and evaluation, aiming to elevate the educators' pedagogical proficiency. Classroom teaching, as the cornerstone of teachers' daily responsibilities, interacts with the teacher's teaching ability competition primarily through the competition's guiding influence on classroom practices and the classroom teaching's reciprocal enrichment to the competition.

II. THE GUIDING ROLES OF TEACHER'S TEACHING ABILITY COMPETITION ON CLASSROOM TEACHING

A. Updating Pedagogical Concepts

The fundamental mission of educators is to impart knowledge and cultivate virtue. However, in current teaching practices, some higher vocational college teachers lack a profound understanding of the essence of fostering virtue through education. They tend to focus excessively on the instruction of specialized knowledge, neglecting the integration of ideological and political elements, which results in a disconnection between ideological and political education and professional teaching. Furthermore, despite the continuous development of vocational education in China and the significant improvement in the

quality of faculty, challenges persist due to factors such as regional economic development levels and the historical context of vocational colleges. Issues such as limited channels for recruiting talent, a lack of vocational education concepts, and insufficient professional practical abilities among teachers severely hinder the healthy development of higher vocational education. In recent years, the teaching ability competition has made notable breakthroughs in the following areas, which offers insights for improvement.

1. Integrating Ideological and Political Education into the Curriculum

The competition's teaching teams have closely aligned themselves with the progression of the era and the fabric of social life, leveraging the characteristics of the curriculum, methodologies of thinking, and value systems to excavate and refine the ideological values and spiritual essence embedded within the professional knowledge framework. This has elevated the level of integrating ideological and political education into classroom teaching. Surveying the ideological and political elements present in the competition, it mainly includes the following categories. Firstly, elements related to "national policy strategies" such as the new energy strategy, the battle against poverty, the rural revitalization strategy, the intelligent manufacturing strategy, and the healthy China strategy. Secondly, elements of "Chinese spirit" that showcase national integrity, including the spirit of craftsmanship, the spirit of combating the pandemic, the spirit of model workers, the spirit of innovation, the national spirit, the spirit of exemplars, the humanistic spirit, and the spirit of scientists. Thirdly, elements centered around "Chinese national culture", such as ethnic poetry, ethnic songs and dances, ethnic paintings, and ethnic customs. Fourthly, elements of "social positive energy" such as the Chinese Dream, the glory of labor, and the core socialist values.

2. Building a Dual-Qualified Teaching Team

To transcend the limitations of individual participation and solitary competition, the teaching ability competition transitioned from individual to team-based participation starting in 2018. This shift encourages the formation of teams across disciplines, schools, and regions, and even in collaboration with industry experts. "In 2021, the average teaching experience of participating teachers was 12.1 years. 50% of the teachers holding senior professional titles, and the proportion of 'dual-qualified' teachers reached 79.3%. Both the teaching experience and the proportion of senior titles have increased compared with those in 2020." [1] The changes in teaching experience and professional titles reflect a more rational structure of teaching teams, showcasing the achievements in the construction of high-level, structured teaching teams across various regions, and fostering the growth of 'dual-qualified' teachers who are both articulate and proficient in practice. The competition has also attracted a considerable number of experienced and research-capable middle-aged and part-time teachers, which enhances the overall strength and competitive level of the teaching teams and optimizes the personnel structure of the participating teaching teams.

B. Improving Teaching Methods

Teaching methods are the pathways and means for teachers to implement curriculum teaching. Both teaching reform and textbook reform need to be realized through teaching method reform. Reflecting on the current classroom teaching in higher vocational education, some of the teaching methods adopted are not suitable for the cognitive characteristics of vocational students and do not conform with the principles of "type education". In the practice of classroom teaching, a significant portion of teachers solely focus on the learning of theoretical knowledge, with "spoonfeeding" and "working behind closed doors" being quite prevalent. When organizing teaching activities, they fail to grasp the students' needs and specialties. The concepts of developing strengths and compensating for weaknesses, as well as teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, are hardly mentioned, which naturally leads to the neglect of the students' dominant position. In response to the aforementioned issues, the practices in the teaching ability competition provide us with valuable enlightenment and references.

1. Student-Centered Learning as a Core Focus

The entries in the competition consistently emphasized the centrality of students in the teaching and learning process. Drawing on the learning needs of students and the cognitive patterns of technical and vocational learners, the teaching teams aligned their instructional strategies with the demands of professional roles. By integrating the specific characteristics of the discipline, curriculum, and student profiles, a range of pedagogical approaches were adeptly utilized, such as project-based learning, task-driven instruction, scenario-based teaching, case study methods, role-playing, and issue-based learning.

These methods underscored the importance of contextualized, resource-enhanced, and personalized learning experiences, thereby effectively cultivating students' motivation and active engagement in the learning process.

2. Innovative Teaching Models

The competition incorporated advanced pedagogical frameworks, such as Constructivist Learning Design, Outcome-Based Education, Work Process-Oriented Theory, and Action-Oriented Teaching Approach, which provided a solid theoretical foundation for instructional innovation. In terms of teaching methodologies, the competition emphasized the implementation of blended learning models, integrating online and offline components. By extending the temporal and spatial boundaries of traditional teaching and leveraging modern information technologies—including virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), the competition enabled immersive and interactive learning experiences. These approaches fostered greater student engagement and facilitated personalized learning pathways. Furthermore, the competition promoted the development of a "dual-system" classroom model, where academic instructors collaborated with industry professionals in co-teaching sessions. This collaboration capitalized on the technical expertise of industry practitioners, thereby enhancing the quality and relevance of instruction.

C. Expansion of Teaching Resources

Textbooks in vocational education are a pivotal medium for achieving the objective of cultivating high-quality technical and skilled professionals. Textbook development represents the "final mile" in curriculum construction. However, current textbook development in vocational institutions is often plagued by issues such as outdated content, slow updates, a disconnect from real-world industry practices, and non-standardized selection processes. Notably, there is a lack of integrated online and offline textbooks that are adapted to the "Internet Plus" era. In this context, the teaching teams participating in the teaching ability competition have undertaken the following initiatives, and provides valuable insights for the field.

1. Integration of "Post-Course-Competition-Certification"

The teaching resources across all competition tracks are designed to achieve a deep integration of "post, course, competition, and certification", thereby optimizing the structure of course content. Specifically, the general education courses submitted for the competition are closely conformed to professional talent training plans and curriculum standards. These courses adopt a thematic and modular structure, emphasize the cultivation of core disciplinary competencies in their learning objectives, and integrate disciplinary knowledge with real-world industry applications in the content. In contrast, the professional courses focus on constructing authentic vocational contexts, presenting typical work tasks, aligning with actual work processes, and integrating new technologies, processes, and standards. The restructured courses are precisely tailored to job requirements, expanding the depth and breadth of the curriculum. They emphasize practicality, relevance, and innovation, thereby elevating students' job readiness and improving the pertinence and adaptability of talent training programs.

2. Development of Digital Resources

To be in line with the emerging trend of "Internet Plus Vocational Education" and meet the demands of innovative teaching models such as blended learning and flipped classrooms, the teams participating in competition have proactively developed complementary digital teaching resources. These efforts have resulted in the creation of a series of new-format integrated textbooks that utilize modern information technologies. The resources embrace a wide range of formats, including animations, micro-lectures, video tutorials, case study libraries, virtual simulation training platforms, Q&A databases, test banks, skill training modules, work guides, and evaluation forms. These diversified digital resources effectively address students' personalized learning needs and support the implementation of contemporary pedagogical approaches.

D. Optimization of Teaching Evaluation

The implementation of scientifically valid and effective teaching evaluation serves as a critical mechanism for improving instructional quality and fostering student learning and development. "Current classroom evaluation practices in higher vocational education are characterized by limitations such as a singular evaluative authority, insufficient attention to individual student progression, inadequate formative assessment frameworks, and delayed feedback mechanisms." [2] The teaching evaluation strategies showcased in the teaching ability competition entries demonstrate innovative approaches that hold significant implications for refining routine pedagogical practices.

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1. Development of Multidimensional Evaluation Frameworks

The competition reconceptualizes traditional evaluation paradigms by decentralizing the evaluative authority traditionally held by instructors. It introduces a tripartite evaluation system involving teacher-student assessments, peer evaluations, and feedback from industry mentors. The diversified stakeholder participation contributes to ensuring evaluative comprehensiveness, objectivity, and equity. Apart from that, the competition advocates the integration of formative and summative assessments, quantitative metrics and qualitative analyses, as well as self-assessment and external evaluation mechanisms. This multidimensional approach not only enables students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, strengthen their self-regulated learning capabilities, but also achieves diversification in evaluation methodologies. Finally, the evaluation criteria for competition entries transcends conventional focus on knowledge and skill acquisition, and even incorporates broader dimensions such as student competencies, learning attitudes, as well as professional literacies. This shift establishes a pluralistic framework for evaluative standards.

2. Integration of Advanced Technologies

The competition guidelines stipulate: "Educators should appropriately employ technological platforms, tools, and resources to design instruction, conduct assessments, and implement ongoing pedagogical diagnostics and refinements."[3] In this context, teaching teams have effectively exploited course management platforms and modern information technologies such as big data analytics and artificial intelligence (AI). These tools collected behavioral data throughout the learning process, including online course participation rates, assignment completion metrics, offline attendance records, and group activity performance. By employing big data analytics and AI algorithms, detailed student "data profiles" are constructed, which reveal individual learning habits, knowledge gaps, and developmental trajectories. This approach enables educators to accurately monitor learning progress and the attainment of learning objectives, facilitating tailored instructional adjustments.

III. THE RECIPROCAL ROLE OF CLASSROOM TEACHING IN ENHANCING TEACHING ABILITY COMPETITIONS

Classrooms serve as "a critical medium for students to acquire cultural knowledge, develop practical social competencies, and cultivate professional literacies." [4] Classroom teaching constitutes the foundation of daily pedagogical practice. However, teaching ability competitions prioritize the demonstration of instructional design and implementation capabilities. In higher vocational colleges, the feedback effect of classroom teaching on teachers' participation in teaching ability competition is multifaceted.

A. Accumulating Practical Experience to Optimize Instructional Design

The core components of instructional design in teaching ability competitions contains learner analysis, formulation and evaluation of learning objectives, development of pedagogical strategies, selection and application of information technologies, and reflective teaching evaluation. Learner analysis includes learning background, needs, tasks, and learner profiles, essentially answering the three fundamental questions—What to teach and learn? How to teach and learn? How to evaluate teaching and learning outcomes? In higher vocational education, excluding the components of corporate practice and internships, classroom teaching is the mainstay of daily teaching activities, functioning a testing ground for educators and students.

In routine teaching, educators iteratively experiment with diverse pedagogical approaches. These approaches include blended learning, combining online resources (micro-lectures, MOOCs, virtual simulations) with offline activities (hands-on practice, discussions); action-oriented methods, such as project-based learning, case studies, and role-playing to simulate authentic workplace scenarios; differentiated instruction, designing tiered tasks tailored to vocational students' heterogeneous skill levels.

These practices enable educators to identify what strategies are more effective and what need improvement. This experience can be directly translated into the highlights of instructional design in competitions. On the other hand, classroom teaching provides teachers with a rich repository of case materials for competition. Authentic student feedback and accumulated outstanding examples of overcoming teaching difficulties in the classroom can serve as empirical evidence in competitions, effectively enhancing the persuasiveness of competition submissions.

B. Innovating Pedagogical Methods through Technological Integration

The national teaching ability competition for Vocational Educators aims to elevate educators' teaching capabilities in vocational colleges, promote vocational education reform, and cultivate high-quality skilled talents. Vocational education

emphasizes practical skills and vocational training, and students in vocational colleges often prefer hands-on practice to purely theoretical learning. Therefore, educators have to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical operations in classroom teaching, which involves the use of information technology tools. "The integration of information technologies into higher education prioritizes students' practical application of knowledge, which is exactly consistent with the goal of cultivating comprehensive technical talents."[5].Technological integration primarily refers to the utilization of digital tools, online platforms, virtual simulation technologies, artificial intelligence, and other similar tools. For example, many institutions take full advantage of online teaching platforms now, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) or Small Private Online Courses (SPOCs), as well as virtual laboratories, all of which promote the effectiveness of classroom teaching.

To transcend superficial technological adoption, educators ought to innovate pedagogically. Teachers can adopt blended learning approaches, combining online and offline elements by using MOOC or SPOC platforms to deliver theoretical videos, while reserving classroom time for project-based practice and discussions. Under the flipped classroom model, students learn basic knowledge with help of micro-lectures before class and focus on case analysis and skill training during class. By continuously innovating teaching methods and integrating technology in classroom teaching, teachers not only improve their proficiency in using information technology but also accumulate rich experience that can be transformed into highlights of information-based teaching in competitions.

Moreover, classroom teaching provides teachers with a space for innovative trial and error. The classroom allows for gradual experimentation with innovations, with possible adjustments after failures, whereas competitions demand polished solutions. This makes the Interactivity Between Teachers' Teaching Ability Competition and Classroom Teaching form a closed loop of "practice-extraction-presentation".

C. Enhancing Classroom Management, Adaptability, and Temporal Control

In recent years, the teaching ability competitions has required teachers to demonstrate classroom teaching videos within a specified number of class hours, and the final round also necessitates that teaching teams record classroom teaching display videos on campus. Vocational education emphasizes practicality and applicability. Therefore, teachers may need to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical operations, which requires more interactive and practical design elements in teaching. All of these are inseparable from the gradual efforts teachers make in classroom teaching. Teachers can enrich their classroom control skills through classroom teaching, such as managing classroom discipline and student engagement. Adaptive responsiveness refers to the ability to handle unexpected situations, such as student questions, sudden incidents (e.g., technical failures), and unexpected situations in classroom interactions. In practical training courses, equipment malfunctions or student operational errors may occur, which helps cultivate teachers' ability to quickly adjust their teaching strategies. Improved classroom control and adaptability skills contribute to teachers' calm and effective performance in competition settings, especially during the defense phase.

Moreover, teachers' pacing skills can also be trained through classroom teaching. Vocational classrooms typically focus on practical operations, and students' foundations may vary significantly. Teachers need to strike a balance between theoretical explanations and practical demonstrations. In classroom teaching, teachers may face the problem of chaotic rhythm, such as students' lack of concentration, inconsistent teaching progress, or unsmooth connection between theory and practice. These challenges prompt teachers to make more dynamic adjustments to classroom pacing. Since teaching ability competitions have strict time regulations for lessons, long-term training in classroom time management enables teachers to more precisely design the duration of teaching segments in competitions and to more meticulously break down the different stages of classroom rhythm control, such as pre-class preparation, in-class regulation, and post-class reflection. This helps avoid time overruns or content emptiness.

D. Promoting Reflection and Continuous Improvement

"The teaching ability competition involves multiple components and evaluation criteria, requiring teachers to conduct comprehensive reflection and summary of their teaching practices." [6]One of the key elements in the competition, the teaching implementation report, specifically includes a section dedicated to reflective practice. In vocational classrooms, which are oriented towards the cultivation of job-specific competencies, teachers need to transform abstract professional standards into actionable teaching activities. When discrepancies arise between teaching outcomes and industry certification pass rates, teachers are compelled to conduct a comparative analysis between "teaching effectiveness and industry standards", thereby forming a closed-loop reflection system. Classroom teaching helps teachers develop a habit of post-class reflection. Teachers can take advantage of real-life teaching cases, student performance, and feedback from enterprises

to facilitate this reflective process. By summarizing shortcomings after daily teaching sessions, and with the aid of teaching logs, peer evaluations, student feedback, and the use of technological tools, teachers become more adept at identifying flaws in their lesson plans and optimizing them quickly during the competition preparation phase.

Teachers can also employ data analytics on student performance and engagement in the classroom to drive data-informed improvements. For instance, smart classrooms can capture teaching data such as the frequency of teacher-student interactions and the trajectories of practical operation exercises. With the help of information technology software, teachers can identify teaching blind spots, such as when the average student gaze duration on a particular knowledge point is significantly insufficient. These digital-enabled reflective practices in the classroom allow teachers to more scientifically argue the effectiveness of their teaching strategies in competitions, thereby promoting their continuous improvement in teaching.

E. Team Collaboration and Resource Integration

Over the past few years, the teaching ability competitions have expanded their evaluation criteria beyond instructional design, implementation, and outcomes to emphasize team collaboration. A teaching team with weak collaborative capabilities is unlikely to achieve success in such competitions. With focusing on practical and applied learning, vocational education, often requires curriculum design to align with industry needs. This necessitates collaborative course development among educators and the integration of internal and external resources. For instance, faculty from different disciplines may need to co-design interdisciplinary projects and this demands robust teamwork and resource integration. If teachers are accustomed to teamwork and resource integration in their routine teaching, they are more likely to present these aspects in a natural and persuasive manner during the competition. Daily collaborative activities, such as co-authoring lesson plans, developing teaching materials, and producing instructional videos can enhance team efficiency during competitions. The competition requires the submission of a "Team Teaching Implementation Report", which should reflect rational division of labor and collaborative mechanisms (such as regular teaching research and collective lesson preparation). Classroom-derived collaborative experiences can be directly translated into empirical cases in the report. Besides, resources developed in vocational classrooms, such as micro-lessons and learning task sheets, can be optimized and directly utilized in the competition, thereby reducing the workload associated with competition preparation. The practical and complex nature of vocational classrooms compels teachers to shift from individual efforts to team collaboration, with resource integration being an inevitable byproduct of teamwork. Essentially, the teaching ability competition examines whether teacher teams can systematically address teaching challenges, thereby validating the concentrated display of collaborative and integrative capabilities cultivated in routine classroom settings.

F. Enhancing Psychological Resilience and Expressive Proficiency

Students in vocational education may place greater emphasis on practical skills, but their motivation for learning varies significantly. Thus, teachers are required to not only impart knowledge but also cultivate vocational skills. Consequently, teachers have to possess robust psychological resilience to address potential classroom challenges and have sufficiently engaging expressive competence to ensure effective teaching outcomes. Classroom teaching strengthens teachers' stress resistance. By routinely navigating the diverse challenges posed by heterogeneous student groups, educators become better equipped to handle the high-pressure environments typical of competitions, such as live teaching demonstrations. Moreover, the interactive experiences gained in classrooms, such as refining questioning techniques and using body language make it possible for educators to exhibit more captivating and impactful teaching styles during competitions. Over time, the iterative refinement of teaching practices in real classroom settings allows teachers to develop distinctive, personalized teaching styles, which is conducive to achieving better performance in competitions.

IV. CONCLUSION

The teaching ability competition in vocational colleges serves as a "catalyst" for classroom teaching reform. More precisely, it is imperative to amplify the radiating effects of the competition's outcomes, deepen the integration of competitions with teaching practices, and facilitate the transition of vocational education classrooms from "standardization" to "high-quality" paradigms. The reciprocal effect of classroom teaching on the teaching ability competition is essentially a concentrated manifestation of the "practicality" characteristic of vocational education. Only competition entries rooted in authentic classroom practices possess vitality and promotional value. Research on the interplay between the teaching ability competition and classroom teaching not only provides pathways for teacher's professional development but also offers practical support for the "three teachings" (teachers, textbooks, and teaching methods) reform in vocational education. Future studies had better further explore this dynamic to advance both theoretical understanding and practical implementation.

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