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By Lu Zizhen

Nanjing Normal University

Abstract- The quantitative method has occupied the dominant position for a long time in the field of educational evaluation. However, currently, the excessive praise of people for it has buried the richness and complexity of educational phenomena in the generalization and simplification of instrumental rationality. This paper mainly adopts the case and literature research methods. It analyzes the general resistance in the practice of aesthetic-oriented evaluation paradigm, mainly including the insufficient real empirical educational understanding of teachers, the limited aesthetic and evaluation literacy of educators, and the contradiction between aesthetic privateness and evaluation publicness. Also, it reviews the educational connoisseurship and educational criticism theory of Eisner, which is an aesthetic-oriented evaluation paradigm, and uses the cases in practice to enlighten people on the feasibility of guiding educational evaluation to value rationality and the real world.

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Abstract- The quantitative method has occupied the dominant position for a long time in the field of educational evaluation. However, currently, the excessive praise of people for it has buried the richness and complexity of educational phenomena in the generalization and simplification of instrumental rationality. This paper mainly adopts the case and literature research methods. It analyzes the general resistance in the practice of aesthetic-oriented evaluation paradigm, mainly including the insufficient real empirical educational understanding of teachers, the limited aesthetic and evaluation literacy of educators, and the contradiction between aesthetic privateness and evaluation publicness. Also, it reviews the educational connoisseurship and educational criticism theory of Eisner, which is an aesthetic-oriented evaluation paradigm, and uses the cases in practice to enlighten people on the feasibility of guiding educational evaluation to value rationality and the real world.

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I. Introduction

Since the 1960s, with the promotion of curriculum aesthetics and concept reconstruction movement, introducing aesthetics into the field of educational evaluation and making up for quantitative limitations with qualitative research has become a new trend to reshape the educational evaluation system. In the journey of introducing relevant theories into practice, the theory of educational connoisseurship and educational criticism was firstly raised by Eisner in the 1980s, which is representative and still has momentous value for current practice. In recent years, education reforms in China have paid particular attention to educational aesthetics and educational evaluation. For example, in 2020, China State Council issued *The Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era* and *The Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era*. In 2021, Chinese 1st National Professional Committee was established by Education Ministry for aesthetic education in primary and secondary schools. Under this background, reviewing the curriculum vision raised by Eisner, using qualitative methods for educational evaluation, fully respecting personality and details can help education eliminate the "ghost" of control and embark on the developmental road of aesthetic orientation.

This paper reviews educational connoisseurship and educational criticism theory of Eisner, presents practical cases from four aspects of descriptive, interpretative, evaluative, and thematic, to show the operation path of integrating this theory into daily instruction, and prove the practical value of this theory in the current era is enhanced, rather than out of date, or lies only in promoting new concepts with old ones and sporadic practical enlightenment.

II. Common Resistance to Paradigm Practice

a) *The Insufficient Reflective Education Experience of Teachers*

At present, there are many obstacles to the implementing aesthetic-oriented educational evaluation in daily instruction. The first point is the lack of the reflective education experience of discipline teachers, which emphasizes reflective behaviors in everyday instruction. Reflection is an important step to turn the quantitative shift in education experience into the qualitative change of education experience beneficial to others. Many young teachers have such hidden worries: the short length of service as a teacher limits the accumulation of education experience. Education experience is the basis of connoisseurship, so they are not qualified for connoisseurship and criticism. Oppositely, teachers and students who have spent time on school life all have a certain level of educational connoisseurship, which only needs to be improved. From this point of view, there are many competent persons for it. Young teachers are not "a piece of white paper". They can participate in education events in a more focused, sensitive, and purposeful way at college, including listening to lectures, formal or informal academic discussions and the internship of class instruction, after-school student management, family-school communication, etc., ... Old teachers are accustomed to their experience of pursuing efficiency and unified educational evaluation. The praise of later generations makes them indulge in it and lack the consciousness of reflection. They may reflect and encourage the authoritative school culture, and the

Author: Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing, Jiangsu, 210023, China.
e-mail: christina_lzz@foxmail.com

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development potential of individuals and schools is suppressed due to the lack of self-evaluation.

b) The Limited Aesthetic and Evaluation Literacy of Educators

The second difficulty is that the aesthetic quality and evaluation literacy of educators are relatively limited. The aesthetic literacy refers to "the basic process, quality, and ability of the perception, imagination, understanding, experience, appreciation, evaluation, performance, and creation of the beauty of things of teachers based on aesthetic experience accumulation"[1]. Evaluation literacy tests the grasp of educator, discipline teachers and education administrators, of many elements, such as understanding, planning, implementation, assessment, improvement, and ethics of evaluation. Aesthetic literacy is the basis of evaluation literacy and helps solve the primary problem of "what is valuable". It is not a gift. It needs to be learned. However, present teacher education pays little attention to this aspect, so that teachers understand too less. As a result, many schools shift all the responsibility of aesthetic education to art courses, so many teachers fail to take the responsibility of further study. Secondly, educational evaluation is coerced by technical rationality, and teachers are willing to become instruction tools, or develop dependence and superstition on it and become slaves of machines. In addition, "due to the weakness of normal education and teacher education in the teaching process and discipline setting, even if the learners receive the aesthetic experience and have a certain aesthetic perception, their ability to create beauty is still relatively weak"[2]. The valuable object concerned in the vision of education is "people", and each student is not "inferiors". However, if teachers do not have enough aesthetic and evaluation literacy, the process of value discovery and optimization of aesthetic objects will be simplified to the forced nesting of the value standards of aesthetic subjects, making evaluation a kind of violence. In 2020, China State Council promulgated *The Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era*, requiring "complete and improve aesthetic education teachers", which is a good start. However, the road to implementation is still very long.

c) The Contradiction between Aesthetic Privateness and Evaluation Publicness

Appreciation is a private and subjective art. Educators learn from art education and regard the class as a readable aesthetic text and an appreciative work of art. When interpreting, different interpretations (education connoisseurship and criticism results) occur due to the different levels of personal artistic views and concerns, such as paying attention to the social background (education background), personalities of artists (teacher, student, and the class style), comparison between meaning and self (reflection of mobilizing self-experience). "The key to perception is that it is a choice, and there is no observation mode with neutral values"[3]. Therefore, educational appreciation always has a personal tendency, which leads us to "deeply describe" the parts of self-interest or exceptional value. On the contrary, evaluation is public. The purpose of evaluation of students is to promote their development. They need to disclose their appreciation results to others through criticism, rather than hide the results in their hearts to obtain the pleasure of their mind. There seems to be a contradiction between the two. However, when they point to "symbiosis" together at the same time and make a firm response of "development" to the question of Benjamin Bloom, "selection or development", in educational evaluation, the contradiction will be eliminated. In other words, teachers not only see the existence of students as "others", but also always respect each other, take responsibility for each other, and tolerate differences, to achieve the vital test standard of "qualitative richness"[4] of the postmodern curriculum. After seeing through the challenges of educational evaluation, Professor Zhong Qiquan reiterated that this is not based on the subjective judgment of personal likes and dislikes, but a kind of "educational evaluation"[5]. Also, as Professor Cui Yunyu called for, "Teachers should learn to evaluate first and then learn to teach!"[6]

III. Review and Practice of Educational Connoisseurship and Educational Criticism Theory in Schools

a) Overall Review

In the 1960s, Eisner introduced the thinking mode of aesthetic criticism into educational evaluation, then put forward the evaluation mode of educational connoisseurship and educational criticism. Art criticism lies between the work and the viewer, and conveys the meaning and evaluation of the work grasped by art critics through language. Educational criticism is the grafting of "education" and "criticism". Some people believe that educational criticism "is the criticism of critics on certain educational facts according to certain theories to express their interest demands in education"[7]. This view can be regarded as "judicial criticism" from the perspective of the art criticism. It is a criticism of the inherent aesthetic value, and absolutist position. This view only regards education as "facts" and ignores "art". Eisner listed many similarities between art and education to show the possibility and necessity of educational evaluation by art method. He put forward the mode of educational connoisseurship and educational criticism for the first time in 1976. Then he wrote *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs* (1979), *Performance Essessment and Competition* (1999) and *What Does*

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It Mean to Say a School is Doing Well? (2001)、*Should We Create New Aim for Art Education?* (2001) and others, systematically discussed the ideological basis and operation guidance of this theory.

Educational appreciation, which is based on keen perceptions coupled with a large number of experiences, is necessary for practical academic criticism, requires the recognition ability of the daily details organizing the class teaching, requires a memory of past things to contrast, and requires perceiving the rules in which teaching life proceeds. It pursues something beyond precision, but rather the richness of phenomena, which culminates in multivariate foundation of beauty that helps people understand education situations more clearly and comprehensively.

Criticism is the open aspect of appreciation. It is an art of revelation. It requires certain skills to make the representation from the "translation" of things in visual form clearer, and as Susan Langer (1957) said, it is also to "express our knowledge of emotional life". The language of criticism, like the language of art, is non-inferential. It does not convey information through facts, but through ideographic and abstract hints. This process requires collecting a large amount of relevant information, including observation logs, essays, interviews, videos, photos, homework, etc.,... Then on this basis, it is carried out from four aspects: descriptive, interpretative, evaluative, and thematic. The following is a review and practical case display of these four aspects.

b) Descriptive Aspect

The descriptive aspect is "an attempt to define, describe, narrate or express the relevant nature of educational life in language"[8], which is the most artistic aspect of criticism. This is not to show all things that exist in a specific situation, but to write what is essential and make tendentious choices, to find individual qualities outside universality. This choice is the result of perception and needs to be keenly captured. For example, a smile in class, a pause in speech, and the changes of a classroom layout. These can be seen through mediums like articles, pictures or videos. These may imply a particular education style, teacher-student relationship, school values, systematic support structure of school life, etc.

A teacher selected and shared a typical story in her educational essays that happened between two history classes in a teaching seminar:

There were two history classes in this early morning. After the first class, Helen and Nill had a dispute. Other students said it might be revenge. I thought, if so, when could they stop? So I advised them to use "Rock, Paper, Scissors, Shoot" to decide which one counts!" Nill accepted at once, but Helen was still fighting, so that suddenly ran out. The headteacher just passed by in time. I quickly told him about it and asked him to appease Helen after class. Because the bell was ringing, I had no time left to comfort her.

A few minutes later, Helen came back quietly. She did the same as before: she was the first to raise her hand, the first to answer correctly, with a loud voice. She is an example in the class! I was worried that the slight contradiction between classes would hurt her, but it may be like what students often say: "Miss Green, never mind, we forget quickly!" But if they do like this when reciting, that would make me laugh and weep all at once!

The second class ended on time. When I was about to walk out of the classroom, a student came running to me to make complaints about the contradiction between her and Helen, which were actually just two little things. There were mistakes on both sides. I said, "now it's even!" They also said together, "well, it's even!" So they took the initiative to shake hands and make peace.

When we walked out of the classroom together, Helen walked in front of everyone and said, "as a monitor, now I should lead you!" Others behind joked, "hum, you put on airs!" Then they all laughed. The cold in the morning has gradually shrunk back.The sunshine of March has brushed the smiling faces of the kids through the branches full of flowers on the side of the corridor. They soon left me behind. I looked at their backs turning away from the corner of the wall. With a big smile, I was relieved to turn back to the office.

From the above description, we can see the handling of the minor contradictions among students. Teachers cared in time, but did not intervene too much to avoid the escalation or transfer of contradictions, and guided students to find ways to deal with interpersonal relationships and learn communication skills. Finally, in a nice atmosphere, contradictions were solved. Metaphor and representational rendering are used to present the factual information rather than the indirect representation, which makes the scene appear in front of readers and arouse their profound thinking.

c) Interpretative Aspect

This aspect is a "deep description" of the previous one. It requires reference to ideas, concepts, or theories to clarify the meaning of the described situation. Usually, there is no clear boundary between it and description, which is directly connected or implied in the description that needs to be emphasized. This step is not simple work. First, we need to know enough about the theories, and then be able to sensitively judge which idea is suitable for which event or scenario.

An English teacher tried to teach students according to their aptitude in a large class with weak literacy, but he encountered difficulties. So after observing and describing the daily English learning, he focused on the dictations of students and "interpreted" them to his colleagues:

Today, I have finished the teaching of unit 2. I made a simple oral test in class. Everyone was very enthusiastic. Then, I left some time for students to review freely and independently, because there was a dictation in the afternoon.

The greater the space for students to learn freely, the greater the gap visible to the naked eye. For example, my student William has memorized all three texts in class, even the

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expansion part. However, Yang hasn't memorized the first text, and there was one more dictation waiting for him for his too many mistakes the last time. Nevil always looks casual, but I found that he had memorized them thoroughly. Sophie looked full of confidence and tried to teach others, but actually, there were a lot of mistakes in her work.

This teacher attaches importance to the concept of "student-centered", and pays attention to the adverse effects of "class democracy", that is, the expansion of differences and deviation from the goal of accurate instruction. In addition, combined with relevant theories, these students present differences in learning styles, which are related to cognitive style and multiple intelligence. Therefore, we can find many more profound thinking directions.

For another example, part of the interpretation originally written in the essay mentioned above by the history teacher has been hidden. Now it is presented here:

I learned from Helen's composition that her family was poor, her parents divorced, her mother brought her up alone, and when she was a child, she was so poor that she had to ask her neighbor for rice. Her unqualified father has done great harm to the family. She wrote: "I don't have many memories of my father in my childhood, and there are few good times I spent with him, so I barely love my father... No matter when or where I think about him, it is always the sadness and pain that hit my mind." I feel sad about this sensible kid. So, even if I am willing to tolerate her little willfulness, this does not mean the betrayal of equal treatment. Helen is always diligent and helpful. He is also the monitor elected by classmates and trusted by teachers. Therefore, I don't want to criticize her for such a small matter. I just analyzed the actual situation and provided her with simple solutions.

Concerning the behavior Helen, combined with more background, we can further interpret the girl and her teacher, and produce a more objective, profound, and comprehensive understanding.

d) Evaluative Aspect

This aspect is to judge educational events. It naturally runs through the process of perception and is difficult to be separated, because "even if only because selective intuition has begun to operate, one will inevitably evaluate the value of a series of environments"[9]. Evaluators who have learned the critical ability of description and interpretation can be called critics. They have clear values they agree with, remain alert to them, and encourage and embrace different values. Slotting their values in advance or backward, these two ways of dealing with values are both reasonable. It is better to cause more discussions by different views. They can form compensation, multiple inspections, tension, and avoid autocracy.

For example, in the practice of reading learning, "there are a thousand Hamlets in the eyes of a thousand readers", teachers can fit a more prosperous and wonderful teaching path from the evaluation of different critics. For example, in the teaching of the short story *Oh, Xiangxue* in middle schools, four teachers shew four different designs. One expert acted as a critic and criticized the four designs. Among them, the first teacher focused on "mountain, train, and moon", three specific things in the story, which triggered the interpretation of the spiritual core of people in the social environment. The expert quoted the basic concept "environment makes people" of realistic stories. The second teacher, focusing on the question of "going out or coming back", inspired students to pay attention to the plot arrangement of the heroine jumping on the train and walking back to the countryside, which was interpreted according to the general rule of "the negation of negation". The third paid attention to the differences and complementarities among the groups of characters in poetic novels, which was found contacting the appropriate writing methods in the classical Chinese story named *A Dream in Red Mansions* and affirmed the typical "contrast technique". The last one introduced "mirror theory" to guide students to examine the profound relevance within the text, then the "discovery learning" theory J. S. Bruner was quoted to support this try.

It should emphasize here that even novice teachers can do the same. It encourages the perspective of "autobiography" and the compensation point of view triggered from many aspects. Analysis and debate are welcome. Many teachers have accumulated the specific theoretical bases and practical experience in higher education before entering the post. Besides more professional leadership, the role of "critic" can be generated by teachers who improved greatly.

e) Thematic Aspect

The last aspect is to define a theme. It is the "refining of main ideas and conclusions" of existing materials and "providing readers with a summary that can urge readers to grasp the key points"[10]. This tells readers the key points of criticism, and also urges people to take criticism as a way to understand other education situations.

For example, in the previous case, an expert evaluated four reading classes of *Oh, Xiangxue* and thought that the four designs had their emphases and highlights. Finally, the critic further sorted out the previous criticisms, summarized that they were closely combined with the characteristics of literary theory to form a theme "Reading Discovery Under the Guidance of Literary Theory", and shared this key point. Then, after reading this criticism, other teachers are able to not only quote the teaching designs when teaching the exact text, but also pay attention to "reference literature theory" in the teaching of different texts, and teachers of other disciplines can also get the enlightenment of "paying attention to theories".

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These four aspects of educational criticism are not presented separately to readers, but a qualitative whole. However, as evaluators, we need to clarify their construction forms, from shallow to profound, from redundant to concise, and from quantitative change to qualitative change. Finally, we can achieve the reliability and validity of this evaluation method through two crucial procedures: "structural corroboration" and "referential adequacy". For example, when reading other literary works, students enhance their understanding with the help of literary theory again, and teachers also get new teaching methods and ideas from serious participation, which can prove the value of criticism.

Nowadays, the idea of "subject-based" is still prevalent. Many schools hold regular lectures and evaluation activities with the theme of discipline instruction for teacher development. However, the evaluation content is often based on more refined evaluation dimensions. In the pursuit of refinement, it misses the natural, complex, and unique phenomena focusing on every student and the whole educational scene. When focusing on individual disciplines first, consciously and responsibly improve the ability of educational connoisseurship and criticism from a simple description, the process of discovering value is the process of harvesting beauty.

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, "educational connoisseurship and educational criticism" theory provides people with an aesthetic-oriented educational evaluation paradigm. After decades, with the rapid development of AI and the increasing expansion of instrumental rationality, it has the value of review, reaffirmation, and practice. Facing the practical resistance of the insufficient reflective education experience of teachers, the limited aesthetic and evaluation literacy of educators, and the contradiction between aesthetic privateness and evaluation publicness, people can carry out an aesthetic-oriented educational evaluation from the four aspects of descriptive, interpretative, evaluative and thematic. Some cases enlighten people to refer to the existing education and research habits and push the theory to be practiced, so as to return the educational evaluation to human-oriented and symbiotic activities of value discovery and optimization.

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