

Semiotics Interpretation of spirit of educators

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ABSTRACT

Semiotics is a discipline that studies the system and meaning of symbols. The collision between semiotics and the spirit of educators will undoubtedly produce a wonderful chemical reaction. In fact, spirit of educators itself is a special symbol in language philosophy or discourse communication. Based on the basic principle of Pierce's ternary symbol model, this paper reinterprets the concept of the meaning of spirit of educators, and attempts to interpret the spirit of educators symbolically. Finally, combined with the requirements of building a strengthening education country and a high-quality teaching staff in the new era, the significance of the semiotic interpretation of educators' spirit is briefly explained. It is hoped that through the production and dissemination of symbolic meanings, the spirit of educators can be promoted, which will help the personal development and growth of teachers and will also be of great significance to the long-term development of education.

KEYWORDS

spirit of educators; symbol; semiotics; pedagogy; sign

Education is the foundation of a century-long plan. Teachers are the foundation of an education plan. It is an urgent task for the development of China's education to strive to cultivate a large number of first-class teachers and continuously improve the overall quality of the teaching staff. Understanding the profound connotation of the spirit of educators is crucial to building an educational power and a high-quality and professional teaching staff, and it has a far-reaching impact on educational practice and the realization of educational goals. At present, the academic community has conducted a relatively rich study on the spirit of educators. Some have demonstrated the generation logic of the spirit of educators from the dimensions of theory, history, and practice, some have deeply explained the connotation of the spirit of educators from the perspective of basic implications and characteristics of the times, some have analyzed the contemporary value of the spirit of educators from the dimensions of history, reality, and the future, and some have explored the way to promote the spirit of educators around the fundamental theme of "being a good teacher". In conclusion, most scholars mainly focus on the generation logic, essential connotation, contemporary value, and promotion path of the spirit of educators from a macro and holistic perspective. Few scholars have conducted a concrete interpretation and explanation of the meaning of the spirit of educators from the perspective of semiotics.

Semiotics, as an effective theoretical tool, can deeply analyze and explain the complexity of cultural and social phenomena. (Zhao Yiheng, 2011) It has important potential to be applied to interpreting the spirit of educators. Semiotics covers the entire field of what is today called the humanities and social sciences. Anything that can reach a consensus and express ideas can become a symbol, such as patterns, objects, scenes, etc. Symbols are perceptions that carry meanings, educators are a carrier of symbols, and spirits have symbolic meanings. This study will systematically

explain the spirit of educators and explore the symbolism and cultural significance it carries. The main questions of this study include: What are the core characteristics of the spirit of educators? How to understand these characteristics from a semiotic perspective? And what kind of symbolic meaning and cultural symbolic value does the spirit of educators have in the actual educational process? The answers to these questions will help deepen the understanding of the spirit of educators and provide theoretical support for their practice in contemporary education.

1 Pierce's "ternary symbol model" and the spirit of educators

Charles Sanders Peirce is one of the most important philosophers of the 20th century. He proposed a broad trichotomy of symbols, emphasizing the relationship between symbols, objects and interpreters. The core of Peirce's semiotics is the "three-element model of symbols", which determines that the production and dissemination of symbolic meanings are the central perspective of his semiotic theory. Peirce believes that any symbol is composed of three items: representamen, object and interpretant. Peirce's "three-element model of symbols" has had a profound impact on the development of humanities and social sciences. Dewey, William James and other educators have been inspired by this idea. From this perspective, this section will use Peirce's three-element model of symbols to analyze the spirit of educators.

1.1 Symbolic carrier: the spirit of educators

As the carrier of symbols, the representamen is the perceptible part of the symbol and the initial contact point for the exchange and communication of meaning. The symbolic representamen has a direct or indirect connection with "matter". Its characteristics influence the smoothness of the meaning exchange process to a considerable extent. In the field of education, the role of "educator" in the concept of spirit of educators constitutes the representamen of this symbol. Whenever the spirit of educators is mentioned, the vivid image of educators or specific and perceptible situational fragments will involuntarily emerge in the mind of individuals. These representamens play a bridging role, leading people to go beyond the appearance and deeply explore the deep spiritual qualities behind the educators. Therefore, the understanding of symbols should not be limited to the intuitive level of their representamen, but should be a comprehensive grasp of the overall picture of the symbol and the meaning it carries. Taking classroom teaching as an example, teachers skillfully use video materials and image displays to vividly reproduce the glorious deeds of many outstanding educators. Such teaching methods, as a medium for exploring the spirit of educators, effectively stimulate students' imagination and critical thinking ability, prompting them to go beyond the superficial stories and touch the core value and deep meaning of the spirit of educators. This process not only enriches the dimensions of teaching content, but also promotes students to have a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the spirit of educators.

1.2 Object: educator

The establishment of a symbol essentially depends on the process in which the interpreter successfully connects the symbol with the corresponding object. The core of this process is that what the symbol carries is the object it points to. It is the basis for communicating meaning and then sharing meaning, and it deeply reflects the internal logic of symbol communication. Take the term "red veil" as an example. In Chinese culture, it is a specific symbol that widely refers to the red silk covered on the head of a bride when she gets married. The rich cultural connotations behind it are widely spread through this symbol, thus promoting the profound exchange and sharing of

meaning between the sender and the receiver of the symbol. Regarding the concept of "object", Pierce's interpretation shows its wide inclusiveness, which not only covers perceptible entities in the material world, but also extends to abstract concepts in the spiritual world and the field of thinking. In the field of education, this understanding is particularly profound. Educators, as concrete objects, can be directly observed and learned; while the spirit of educators covers a series of abstract and noble qualities, such as moral demeanor as a model of behavior, educational wisdom of enlightening wisdom and personalized teaching, diligent practice and innovative attitude towards scholarship, and love for education and selfless dedication. These are all concrete manifestations of the spirit of educators in the world of thinking, and also constitute an indispensable object element in symbolic communication.

1.3 Interpretant: The significance of spirit of educators

Peirce's introduction of the third element of a symbol, the "interpretant", is a brilliant stroke of his pen. (Zhao Yiheng, 2011) This insight profoundly reveals the inner workings of the symbol system. He repeatedly stated that it is the existence of the interpretant that gives life to the symbol, making it dependent on the receiver's interpretation. In other words, the key to a symbol being a symbol is that it can be interpreted and given meaning. In the "ternary symbol model" constructed by Peirce, the interpretant acts as a bridge, connecting the symbol, the object, and the interpreter's understanding. It not only regulates the input and output process of the symbol's meaning, but also defines the boundaries of the meaning. (Peirce, 2014) As for the symbol of "spirit of educators", its core is to promote the public's deep understanding of its spiritual connotation. Therefore, it is particularly critical to construct an accurate common interpretation of this symbol between the sender (such as state power and the media) and the receiver. It is directly related to the effectiveness and influence of the educator's spiritual agenda communication. In the era of smart media, as the main body of symbol senders, their media literacy has been significantly improved, and they can preset and convey core concepts more precisely. At the same time, the public, as interpreters, have their cognitive and information processing abilities enhanced, and their study and exploration of outstanding educators have become more in-depth and detailed. This process has undoubtedly promoted the enrichment and expansion of common interpretation items, allowing the spirit of educator to be more widely and deeply understood and accepted by society.

2 Symbolic Interpretation of "spirit of educators"

2.1 The symbolic expression of the educator's spirit in different cultures and educational systems.

The spirit of educators, as the noble professional ethics, spiritual outlook and personality qualities accumulated and precipitated by educators in long-term educational practice, has rich and profound connotations, and manifests itself in various symbolic expressions in different cultures and educational systems.

2.1.1 Symbols of the spirit of ancient educators

In ancient China, the spirit of educators was mainly reflected in the career norms of "moral educators". Confucius' classic judgments such as "If one's conduct is upright, he will act without being told; if one's conduct is not upright, he will not obey even if he is told" have become important benchmarks for teachers' professional ethics. Teachers in this period were not only the transmitters of knowledge, but also the role models of morality and behavior. "The great teacher Yin, the people are all looking up to you" in *The Book of Songs-Xiaoya* depicts the noble image of teachers

and emphasizes that the morality of teachers should be as admirable as a mountain. Yang Xiong of the Western Han Dynasty clearly proposed that "teachers are models of people", positioning teachers as moral role models of society. In ancient Greece, the spirit of educators was manifested in the pursuit of wisdom and truth. Socrates inspired students to think through the "question-and-answer method" and emphasized that the purpose of education is to guide people to know themselves. In his *Republic*, Plato constructed an ideal society with philosophers as kings and emphasized the importance of education in cultivating future rulers.

2.1.2 The evolution of the spirit of modern educators

Entering modern times, with the gradual improvement of the education system and the renewal of educational concepts, the spirit of educators has also shown new characteristics. In China, Cai Yuanpei proposed that "education is the cause of cultivating personality", emphasizing that teachers should pay attention to the cultivation of students' personality, oppose rigidity, and advocate aesthetic education, health education, personality education, etc. Mei Yiqi advocated cultivating students' team spirit and social responsibility through group sports. In the West, Dewey's pragmatic educational thought emphasizes that education should be closely integrated with social life and cultivate students' ability to solve practical problems. Piaget's cognitive development theory reveals the laws of children's cognitive development and provides a scientific basis for teaching students in accordance with their aptitude.

In contemporary China, in order to build a solid foundation for a strengthening education country, the country is comprehensively and systematically promoting the promotion of the spirit of educators and the cultivation of a high-quality and professional teaching team. The core of the spirit of educators lies in: the lofty belief of cherishing the country and being determined to serve the country, the moral style of setting an example for the world, the educational wisdom of enlightening wisdom and teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, the pragmatic and innovative spirit of diligent study and courage to explore, the selfless dedication of loving education and educating people, and the cultural responsibility of being broad-minded and carrying the truth with literature. This series of characteristics together outlines the unique spiritual outlook of Chinese educators, which is not only the ultimate pursuit of personal cultivation, but also an inexhaustible driving force for promoting the high-quality development of education. This series of deployments and requirements is not only a profound interpretation of the spirit of educators, but also a clear direction for the construction of the future teaching team, aiming to cultivate a high-quality and professional teaching team that can support China's dream of becoming a strengthening education country.

2.2 The external and internal symbols of spirit of educators

2.2.1 External symbols

The external symbols of educators' spirit are mainly reflected in language, behavior and image. In terms of language, educators can convey knowledge and wisdom and enlighten students' minds through inspiring and appealing language. Their words are usually concise and philosophical, which can inspire students' interest in thinking and exploration. In terms of behavior, educators' behavior is a direct reflection of their spirit. They set an example, work diligently and dedicatedly, care for students, and become mentors, teachers and helpful friends of students. Through practical actions, educators demonstrate noble moral sentiments and professional ethics. In terms of image, educators are usually noble and great in the public's mind. They not only have profound knowledge and outstanding teaching ability, but also have noble personality charm and selfless dedication. This

image becomes the moral benchmark and spiritual beacon of society.

2.2.2 Internal symbols

The internal symbols of the educator's spirit include its core values and educational concepts. In terms of core values, the core of the educator's spirit lies in its firm ideals and noble moral sentiments. They have a great sense of self and serve the country with sincerity, and closely link individual teaching and educating work with social progress, national rejuvenation and national prosperity. This kind of patriotism and social responsibility is the core value of the educator's spirit. In terms of educational concepts, the educator's spirit is also reflected in its unique educational concepts. They focus on teaching students in accordance with their aptitude, enlightening their minds and nurturing their hearts, and pay attention to students' individual differences and all-round development. At the same time, they emphasize the innovation and practicality of education, and advocate lifelong learning and independent learning. These educational concepts not only guide the teaching practice of educators, but also promote the progress and development of education.

2.3 The Signifier and Signified of Educator's Spirit

Saussure, one of the founders of semiotics, regarded symbols as a combination of signifier and signified. As a highly condensed and influential spiritual symbol in the field of education, the spirit of educators, its signifier (i.e. the form of expression of the symbol itself) and signified (i.e. the meaning and connotation represented by the symbol) together constitute an important force to promote educational progress. This section aims to explore how the spirit of educators plays a role in the field of education and becomes a bridge connecting teachers, students and society, and deeply analyzes the multiple interpretations it carries as a symbol - social expectations, professional ethics and personality role models, etc.

2.3.1 The signifier of spirit of educators : the symbolic power of building a bridge of communication

In the explicit expression of symbols, the signifier of the educator's spirit is reflected in a series of specific behaviors, speeches and educational practices. These explicit symbols, such as teachers' enthusiasm for imparting knowledge, respect and care for students' individual differences, and continuous exploration of educational innovation, are all external manifestations of the educator's spirit. These symbols are not only the embodiment of teachers' personal qualities, but also the transmitters of educational concepts. They build bridges of communication within the field of education and promote emotional exchanges and knowledge transfer between teachers and students. In addition to explicit symbolic expressions, the spirit of educators also influences the entire education system in an implicit way. This implicit influence is reflected in the creation of an educational atmosphere, the shaping of educational values, and the inheritance of educational culture. The spirit of educators is like an invisible force that permeates every corner of education, guiding teachers to set higher standards for themselves, motivating students to pursue excellence, and also influencing society's expectations and evaluations of education.

2.3.2 The Signified of spirit of educators : multiple interpretations and profound significance

As a concentrated expression of social expectations in the field of education, the spirit of

educators carries the society's expectations for education quality, the pursuit of educational equity, and the encouragement of educational innovation. It requires educators to not only impart knowledge, but also cultivate students' comprehensive qualities and pay attention to their all-round development. At the same time, the spirit of educators also reflects the society's high standards for educators' professional ethics, such as integrity, dedication, and devotion. These qualities are the cornerstones of building a good educational ecology.

The spirit of educators sets a brilliant example for educators in terms of professional ethics. It requires teachers to have a high sense of responsibility and mission, to take students' growth as their own responsibility, and to lead students forward with noble teacher ethics. The spirit of educators emphasizes teachers' self-cultivation and lifelong learning, and encourages teachers to constantly explore and reflect in practice to improve their professional quality and educational ability. This adherence to and pursuit of professional ethics is an important guarantee for the inheritance and development of the spirit of educators.

The spirit of educators is also reflected in the shaping of personality role models. Excellent educators not only win respect for their outstanding academic achievements, but also infect the people around them with their noble personality charm. They set an example, interpret the true meaning and value of education with their words and deeds, and become a permanent beacon in the hearts of students. The personality role models shaped by the spirit of educators not only inspire students to study hard and be positive, but also lead the moral customs of the entire society to develop in a more civilized and harmonious direction.

3 The practical significance of the semiotic interpretation of educators' spirit

3.1 The application of semiotics in education

3.1.1 Teachers' Behavior Symbolizes the Spirit of Educators

Teachers' words and deeds, as the most direct educational symbols, have a profound impact on students. The spirit of educators, such as selfless dedication, courage to innovate, and care for students, can be reflected through teachers' daily behavior. For example, teachers patiently answer every question of students in class, showing respect and pursuit of knowledge; taking the initiative to care about students' lives and emotions after class reflects their deep care for students. These behaviors not only convey the value of knowledge, but also shape students' values invisibly, guiding them to form a positive attitude towards life and behavioral habits.

Language is an indispensable symbol system in the educational process. Through precise, vivid and inspiring language, teachers can explain knowledge in a simple way and convey the core value of the educator's spirit. The teacher's encouraging language can inspire students' self-confidence and interest in learning, while the language of critical thinking can cultivate students' independent thinking ability. More importantly, the language used by teachers when communicating with students should be full of positive energy and humanistic care, so that students can feel the warmth and power of education. Such language symbols can not only promote the transfer of knowledge, but also plant the seeds of the educator's spirit in the depths of students' hearts.

Secondly, the image of teachers, including appearance, dress, and manners, is also an important symbol of the spirit of educators. A teacher who is well-dressed and dignified can leave a good first impression on students and enhance their trust and respect for teachers. At the same time, the image of teachers should also be consistent with the educational philosophy they advocate. For example, a simple but solemn dress style can reflect the teacher's focus and rigor on education. More importantly, the image of teachers should be a role model, allowing students to feel the charm and power of the spirit of educators.

3.1.2 Semiotic analysis helps convey the spirit of educators

The core of semiotic analysis is to reveal the complex relationship between symbols and the meanings they represent. In the educational environment, every behavior, every word, and every image is a potential symbol. They not only convey superficial information, but also contain deep meanings and values. Through semiotic analysis, educators can deeply analyze the connotation of the spirit of educators behind these symbols, such as selfless dedication, courage to innovate, and care for students, so as to more accurately grasp the use of symbols in the educational process. The transmission and embodiment of the spirit of educators is not only the result of individual behavior, but also a reflection of the atmosphere of the entire educational environment. Semiotic analysis provides educators with a way of thinking and methods to build an educational environment rich in spirit of educators. By carefully designing and arranging symbolic elements such as campus environment, teaching facilities, and cultural activities, educators can create an educational atmosphere that is positive and pursues excellence, so that all educators can be subtly influenced and infected by the spirit of educators.

The combination of semiotics and education and the application process itself is a process of continuous learning and exploration. Through continuous analysis and practice, educators can continuously improve their professional quality and innovation ability, and more skillfully use semiotic principles to guide educational practice. This improvement in professional quality and innovation ability not only helps educators better convey and embody the spirit of educators, but also injects new vitality and motivation into the sustainable development of education.

3.2 Modern Challenges and Reconstruction of Educator's Spirit

The spirit of educators has a profound historical background and cultural accumulation. In the context of the new era, we should adhere to the evolutionary logic of "inheritance-development-innovation" and integrate the excellent elements of the traditional spirit of educators with modern educational concepts. For example, the traditional educators' "people-oriented" educational concept should be further expanded into a "student-centered" teaching practice in the new era, emphasizing students' subjectivity and creativity. The reshaping and renewal of the spirit of educators must be closely combined with the actual situation of education in my country and highlight Chinese characteristics. With the rapid development of science and technology, intelligent tools have become an important booster for education reform. The reshaping of the spirit of educators should make full use of modern scientific and technological means, such as artificial intelligence and big data, to promote the innovation and development of education and teaching. Through the empowerment of science and technology, the spirit of educators can be spread and promoted more efficiently, while improving the quality and efficiency of education.

The spirit of educators is a beacon for the professional development of teachers. It motivates teachers to constantly pursue excellence and improve their professional quality and teaching ability. By promoting the spirit of educators, we can guide the majority of teachers to actively and attentively teach, achieve their own high-quality educational life, and truly become guides on the road of student growth. The noble moral sentiments contained in the spirit of educators are an important support for the construction of teachers' ethics and style. It requires teachers to have not only solid professional knowledge, but also noble moral qualities and professional ethics.

In the context of the new era, the reshaping and updating of the symbols of the educator's spirit is an important task to promote the construction of a strengthening education country. Through the paths of inheriting traditions, integrating innovation, basing on national conditions, highlighting characteristics, and empowering science and technology, the connotation of the educator's spirit can be continuously enriched and developed. At the same time, promoting the educator's spirit

plays an important role in building a high-quality and professional teaching team to support strong country in education. It can not only lead the professional development of teachers, strengthen the construction of teachers' ethics and style, and promote educational innovation and practice, but also cultivate more new people of the times with innovative spirit and practical ability. Therefore, we should attach great importance to the reshaping and updating of the educator's spirit and contribute more wisdom and strength to promote the construction of a strengthening education country.

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