

Emotions as Challenge to the Teaching of Technology

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ABSTRACT

Given the importance of teaching and learning of engineering, design and technology today, it is also important to consider the role of emotions in this process and furthermore for the development of human beings. The formation of feelings takes place in a historical and cultural context.

Keywords: Design and technology; Diachronic research; Human development; Historicity; Culturality.

ABOUT THE STUDY

Research in this area is characterized by a double historicity and culturality. On the one hand it is a question of the historicity and culturality of the emotions that are to be researched and on the other it is important to consider the historicity and culturality of the emotion research itself. Considering this double historicity and culturality leads to research on an emotion that has a historical and cultural basis becoming reflexive [1,2].

For the investigation of emotions, diachronic research approaches, methods and procedures that take history into account and synchronic approaches focusing on difference in cultures play an important role. By creating difference, both perspectives help to understand and explain the particular and relational character of emotions. Therefore, it is essential that we also consider historical examples and examples from foreign cultures in the discussion. The inclusion of historical examples and examples from foreign cultures often leads to historical and ethnographic methods being used to help to analyze the complexity of the emotions that are being studied. In the context of ethnographic research that does not only focus on studying the formation of emotion in foreign cultures, but which also examines the formation of emotions in early childhood, school, peer groups, work, the media and religion as focused ethnographic investigations, it is important to take into account the situatedness, relationality and contextuality of emotions.

In contrast to the extensive experimental research into emotions, which is often at risk of addressing emotions as being independent of their historical and cultural contexts and of universalizing their results in a way that is not always acceptable,

the focus of anthropological and historical research as well as historical-anthropological research is on the particularity resulting from the situation, the relation and the context. In other words the focus is on the specific character of the emotions. Emotions are not understood as essence, nor as mere social and cultural constructions. Emotions have a bio-social character. From such an understanding of emotion several problems arise that require further exploration. These include the relationship between emotion and body, in particular between emotion and movement, emotion and action, emotion and ritual, gesture and institution, emotion and memory, emotion and language, emotion and imagination.

While research into emotions is carried out intensively today, there is still very little research into the imagination and its significance for the development of emotions, for example [3]. How emotions are related to imagination is a new question, the study of which gives rise to new insights for research into emotion and the study of imagination. An example of how emotions are generated by the imagination is Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. When reading romantic novels, there arises in *Madame Bovary* the desire to experience the forms of love imagined in these texts and to realize them in her life. The novel shows that this desire is doomed to failure. In the experiencing of emotions, the imagination also plays an important role in less spectacular cases. For example, memories or anticipations of the future generated by the imagination can influence the quality and intensity of emotions.

Two contradicting approaches in the investigation of emotions can be distinguished today, both of which have an influence on the understanding of human emotionality. One tendency is based on the universal character of emotions, the other on their

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cultural diversity [4,5]. According to the first view, all people have emotions and are similar in this. This is especially true for the basic emotions of joy, surprise, fear, anger, disgust, and grief [6]. According to the second view, the similarity in the biological foundations in the experience of basic emotions is not disputed. However, it is emphasized that the social and cultural shaping of emotions begins very early and is very long-lasting. That is why the idea those basic emotions are biologically given and are only culturally reshaped in retrospect falls short of the mark. Even if the biological foundations of human emotions are largely the same for all people, cultural and social differences in the experience of emotions can already be seen in their early ontogenesis. According to the current state of knowledge, one must therefore accept the bio-cultural character of the emotions [7].

CONCLUSION

In addition to the biological conditions, the following are important for the quality of emotions today: the globalization of societies and cultures, the special character of social and cultural

communities and the specific events in the life of individual people. The intercultural character of the globalized world leads to new perspectives for research and understanding of human emotionality, which is also very important, when we focus the role of technology in education and human development.

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