What about feelings? Elaboration on and consideration of the theoretical construct of emotions in practice and practice architectures

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What about feelings? Elaboration on and consideration of the theoretical construct of emotions in practice and practice architectures

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ABSTRACT

Despite increased interest in the affective aspects of human interaction in education, as elsewhere, emotions have largely been neglected in the field of practice research. Moreover, they still lack an obvious place in the theories developed and used by researchers studying practices. This article strives to elaborate on the emotional aspects of practice as a theoretical construct within the theory of practice architectures. For this purpose, empirical data retrieved from a previously completed research circle with ten Swedish school leaders were categorized and reflected on. The analysis of the data, which comprised 19 pieces of documentation based on school leaders’ observations of practices of which they were part, suggests that emotions are not just social but also semantic and physical events. The findings also suggest that emotions transcend the three categories of sayings, doings, and relations stipulated by the theory of practice architectures. Based on these findings and to stimulate further consideration of the theoretical construct of emotions and their place in the schematic representation of practice and practice architectures, a fourth category labeled ‘feelings’ was tentatively added to the framework.

Introduction

The centrality of emotions to the personal and professional practice of school leaders is well established. The importance of emotions is also widely recognized in the field of education (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007), where they are often associated with learning and motivation (e.g. Lackéus, 2014; Linnenbrink, 2007; Meyer & Turner, 2002; Pekrun, 1992) (including learning at work; see Hökkä et al., 2020, for a review), student social relations, health (e.g. stress and relaxation), wellbeing (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2021; Runions et al., 2021), and educational leadership (see Heffernan et al., 2022, for a review). In theories developed and used by researchers in these knowledge areas, some key concepts are ‘emotional understanding’ (Denzin, 1984), ‘emotional intelligence’ (Goleman, 1995;
Mayer et al., 2004), ‘emotional geographies’ (Hargreaves, 2001), ‘emotional identity’ (Crow et al., 2017), and ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild, 1983; Wilkinson, 2021).

Despite the rapidly growing interest in the affective aspects of education (Zembylas, 2021), emotions have until recently received very little attention in research on educational practice and praxis. In contemporary theories, such as the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014), emotions are insufficiently elaborated on and therefore still rather diffuse. Consequently, in empirical studies aiming at better understanding and transforming educational practices, emotions have not been given appropriate consideration (Wilkinson, 2021).

The purpose of this article is to elaborate on the emotional aspects of practice, as constructed in the theory of practice architectures, and on the place of these aspects in a schematic representation of the theory’s core ideas, and to offer some ideas as to how they can be dealt with both theoretically and analytically.

The article is structured as follows. First, there is a brief introduction to a recent discussion of the significance of emotions in practice and to the theoretical construct of emotions in the theory of practice architectures. Next, the empirical study drawn on in this article is described in terms of methods and data, ethics conditions, and limitations. Finally, the results of the analysis are presented and discussed in relation to the theory of practice architectures.

**Emotions in practice**

Many attempts have been made by scholars in various disciplines to understand and explain the significance of emotion in human lives and interactions (see Sörhuus, 2020, for a review of contemporary theories). From the extended research conducted in different disciplines and traditions, it has become clear that emotions are complex and multidimensional phenomena. Taking a philosophical point of departure, Scarantino and de Sousa (2018) illustrated this multidimensionality of emotions with reference to ‘the thing we ordinarily call emotions’ (p. 2). According to Scarantino and de Sousa (2018) what people ‘ordinarily call emotions differ from one another along several dimensions’ (p. 2). For instance, emotions can be occurrences or dispositions; they can be short- or long-lived, involve primitive or sophisticated cognitive processing, and be conscious or unconscious. Furthermore, emotions may or may not be associated with particular facial (or other bodily) expressions, and they may or may not motivate action (Scarantino & de Sousa, 2018). Altogether, this makes emotions somewhat elusive and difficult to theoretically define and categorize. Additionally, emotions are claimed to be unstable, unreliable, subject- and context-dependent, and transient (Sörhuus, 2020), and thus difficult to deal with methodologically and analytically.

The difficulties of theorizing emotions are also recognized in the tradition of practice research. As noted by Scheer (2012) much of this difficulty in defining emotions originates from ‘persistent dichotomies’ (p. 193) that practice theorists in different traditions have striven to bridge. As a result of such efforts, it is generally agreed that emotions are something people have (i.e. experience) as well as something they do (i.e. manifest), and that emotions are embodied (i.e. cognitive but not separate from the body in the Cartesian sense) (Scheer, 2012). Furthermore, it seems to be generally agreed among contemporary practice theorists that practices shape and are shaped by emotions:
they are part of the teleaffective structures\textsuperscript{1} that govern practice (Schatzki, 2002, p. 80) and they belong to practices ‘in the form of knowledge’ (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 254). Becoming part of an existing practice therefore ‘involves learning how to act, how to speak (and what to say), but also how to feel, what to expect, and what things mean’ (Nicolini, 2012, p. 5, my emphasis).

In contrast to the ontological work cited above, the analysis employed here is somewhat pragmatic and technical, focusing on how emotions can be addressed within the framework of practice and practice architectures. The inquiry takes its point of departure in a topical question, posed by J. Wilkinson in a keynote speech held at the annual meeting of the Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP) network on 17 September 2021, namely: Where do emotions fit within practice theory, and within practice architectures?

Another point of departure is the author’s own experiences of creating ‘reflective spaces’ (Thelin, 2020) for principals during their studies in the Swedish National School Leadership Training Program (Rektorsprogrammet). In creating these spaces, the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014) served as an important resource, guiding instructional practice, i.e. the arrangements made to facilitate the school leaders’ individual and collective reflection. For instance, at Uppsala University (where the author teaches), program participants were provided with and encouraged to use a specific protocol for documenting and reflecting on various situations in which they engage professionally as school leaders. As the protocol was constructed, the participants’ attention was directed toward specific practice-constituting elements and prefiguring arrangements. The elements of practice were, in accordance with the theory of practice architectures (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014), conceptualized as ‘sayings’, ‘doings’, and ‘relatings’. Furthermore, the prefiguring and thus practice-conditioning arrangements were also, in accordance with the theory, conceptualized as ‘cultural – discursive’, ‘material – economic’, and ‘social – political’ arrangements (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014).

Since the protocol and the related reflection activities were introduced into this educational setting in 2017, program participants have repeatedly asked how to document and analytically address emotions when practices in which they themselves participate are being investigated. These experiences of working with the theory in an educational context warranted further elaboration of the protocol used to support practitioners’ investigation of practices in which they are professionally engaged. Hence, when similar reflection activities were introduced to school leaders in a research circle focusing on pedagogical leadership (Thelin & Liljekvist, 2020), an additional space for documenting emotions was incorporated in the protocol used for investigating professional practices. Before this venture is further described, attention is turned toward the theoretical construct of emotions in the theory of practice architectures.

**Theoretical construct**

In the theory of practice architectures, practices are ‘composed of sayings, doings, and relatings that hang together in the project of a practice’ (Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014, p. 55; see also Kemmis, 2022; Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014). As practice-constituting elements, the sayings, doings, and relatings of a practice are conditioned (i.e. enabled and
constrained) by various cultural – discursive, material – economic, and social – political arrangements found in or brought into the sites of a practice (Schatzki, 2002), i.e. ‘where practices happen’ (Kemmis, 2022, p. 2). Together, these arrangements form the ‘practice architectures’ that make practices possible or hold them in place (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014).

Within this theoretical framework, emotions are acknowledged as important aspects of practice, although they are not recognized as practice constituting in the same way as are sayings, doing, and relatings. Instead, they are considered part of the relatings and social – political arrangements that prefigure relatings in a practice (Kemmis, 2022; Wilkinson, 2021). Accordingly, in the schematic representation of practice and practice architectures (see, e.g. Kemmis, 2022; Kemmis, McTaggart, et al., 2014; Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014), which is often used to illustrate how the various elements stipulated in the theory are entangled (Hodder, 2012), emotions are allocated to the social dimension of the three-dimensional intersubjective space, where they are realized in the medium of power and solidarity. Regarding this theoretical construct, participants’ relatings (i.e. the ‘affective’) become manifest in their values, feelings, and emotions (Kemmis, 2022). However, this is not the only dimension in which emotions are realized. As will be demonstrated later, emotions are not merely social, but are also semantic and physical events.

The work presented in the subsequent sections of this article builds on previous work conducted by researchers who have developed and used the theory of practice architectures as a theoretical and analytical resource (cf. Mahon & Kemmis, 2017) and on work conducted in various educational settings where the theory has been used as a pedagogical and transformational resource (Thelin, 2020; Thelin & Liljekvist, 2020). Using empirical data retrieved from a research circle, the article offers some considerations of how emotions can be dealt with analytically.

**Materials and methods**

The empirical data comprise 19 pieces of documentation, including participants’ observations and related reflections (i.e. filled-out protocols), produced within a collaborative project conducted during the 2018–2019 period (Thelin & Liljekvist, 2020). The project was funded by the Forum for Community Engagement (Forum för skolsamverkan, FoSam) and took the form of a research circle (e.g. Holmström & Härnsten, 2003; Persson, 2009; Thomsen et al., 2017). Four school principals and six superintendents in one of Uppsala University’s cooperation municipalities were involved in the research circle, which was led by two researchers, of whom the author of this article is one.

The participants’ work was structured in ways similar to those previously described with reference to the Swedish National School Leadership Training Program. In line with the practice developed in this program (Thelin, 2020), the research circle participants were provided with and encouraged to use a protocol for documenting and reflecting on situations in which they engage professionally as school leaders. In the research circle context, the ‘affective’ aspect of practice (Kemmis, 2022) was emphasized with reference to relevant research on the importance of emotions in human lives and interactions, and participants were encouraged to pay attention to this aspect when documenting and reflecting on
the selected situations. To support this documenting and reflecting practice, additional space for registering emotions was incorporated into the protocol structure. It should be stressed, however, that the emotional aspect of practice was never the primary focus of the research circle project. No specific attention was paid to this particular aspect of the practice when the participants’ selected and documented situations were reflected on in the research circle meetings, and emotions were not foregrounded in the conversations in these meetings. Subsequently, the analysis on which this article is based was not part of the collaborative work of the research circle, but was conducted solely by me (the present author) after the completion of the research circle.

Participants’ overall documentation, although varying in length and detail, typically consisted of a brief outline of the selected situation and a short description of those involved in the recalled practice, followed by a narrative in which particular sayings, doings, and relatings were continuously interwoven in the text and then reflected on in notes on various arrangements conceived of as relevant to understanding the ‘happeningness’ (Schatzki, 2002) of the practice. Some narratives also included reporting on what was ‘felt’ in the documented situations. Such reporting was often further developed in the designated space in the protocol.

Before the research circle closed, the participants were asked for permission to use the documentation for further analysis outside the common interest of the project.

**Analysis**

For the purpose of the article, the aforementioned protocols were first searched for events that had been framed or labeled as emotional by the participants in their documentation. For the most part, this simply meant that these events were documented in the space headed ‘Emotions’. In the first step of the analysis, such events were marked and coded as emotional events. In the next step, the theory of practice architectures was consulted and used in classifying these events. The analysis used the previously stated question concerning the place of emotions in practice and practice architectures as a starting point, meaning that the prior localization of emotions in the schematic representation of practice and practice architectures was suspended in accordance with the idea of bracketing (Creswell & Miller, 2000). From this operation it became apparent that the documented events could be classified as either semantic, physical, or social, depending on how they appeared in the data. For instance, indications of verbally expressed or cognitively elaborated emotions (e.g. explained or reflected on) in the ‘medium of language’ (Kemmis, 2022, p. 43) were classified as semantic events, while evidences of acted emotions or emotions acted on in the ‘medium of activity and work’ (Kemmis, 2022, p. 43) were classified as physical events. Similarly, evidences of emotions that appeared as part of participants’ ways of relating to one another in the ‘medium of power and solidarity’ (Kemmis, 2022, p. 43) were classified as social events (Table 1).

Finally, evidences of emotions found difficult to classify as either semantic, physical, or social were temporarily marked as ‘other’, and later used in discussing the possibility of a revised representation of practice and practice architectures.
Table 1. Classification of emotional events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotions</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbally expressed or cognitively elaborated on (e.g. explained or reflected on) by participants in the medium of language</td>
<td>The teachers declare that they are worried about not having time to conduct the joint assessment, that it will make marking more difficult, and that collaborative learning will disappear. (Superintendent B, protocol no. 2)</td>
<td>Semantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acted (on) by participants in the medium of activity and work</td>
<td>The teacher starts to cry. (Principal J, protocol no. 2)</td>
<td>Physical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of participants’ ways of relating to one another in the medium of power and solidarity</td>
<td>Many of them are extremely stressed due to everything that is currently going in their schools – all the meetings and evaluations. (Superintendent C, protocol no. 2)</td>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ethics**

The data were handled in accordance with the ethical principles formulated by the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, the Vancouver Recommendations for the Conduct, Reporting, Editing, and Publication of Scholarly Work, and the ethical principles encompassing scientific work at the scholarly community of which the author is a member. Since the study did not involve any physical intervention impinging on the participants, or any methods that would physically or psychologically affect them, no ethical review was needed. However, written consent, including permission to use the individual protocols for the analysis, was obtained from all participants in the research circle.

**Conditions and limitations**

The present findings rely on observations made by school leaders who were themselves part of the studied practices. As ‘insiders’ (e.g. Brannick & Coghlan, 2007; Hockey, 1993), they were familiar with the context in which these practices occurred. Moreover, they had first-hand access to their own inner life – for example, thoughts and emotions – in these situations. This placed the participating school leaders in a position offering unique opportunities to explore the emotional aspects of the studied practices. Nevertheless, in most cases the documentation of this aspect was not very detailed and would not allow far-reaching conclusions about the role of emotions in these practices. However, since the purpose was not to understand emotions but to discuss their theoretical and schematic position within the framework of practice and practice architectures and how this framework can be advanced to support future empirical studies, this particular condition was of limited concern in the context of the study. The same can be stated regarding the participants’ influence on the data, due to their choice of situation and interpretation of the happenings in the selected situations. Since the study reported here is not concerned with leading practices per se, this condition is of limited relevance.
Findings

A wide range of emotions appeared in the first encounter with the documents collected from the research circle, for example: anger, calm, concern, confusion, disappointment, disturbance, frustration, doubt, fatigue, hope, joy, resignation, sadness, satisfaction, stress, and trust. Of this spectrum of emotions, some appeared in the documents more often than others. For instance, concern and frustration were more frequently registered than joy or satisfaction. It also became evident that emotions with negative associations appeared more often than those with positive associations. A plausible explanation for this skewed distribution between negative and positive emotions could be found in the project design, i.e. the agreements made by the participants in the research circle to select situations they found particularly challenging. Common to all the documented emotions, regardless of their positive or negative connotations, was that they were acknowledged by the participants as important for a specific practice documented and reflected on by the school leaders participating in the research circle.

In the second step of the analysis, the emotional events were classified as either semantic, physical, social, or other, depending on how they appeared in the data. First, regarding the category of events classified as semantic, emotions appeared in the data as verbalized pieces of information with which participants communicated significant happenings in the observed and documented situation. This can be illustrated by the following passage retrieved from one principal’s documentation of a situation in which s/he was discussing, with a small group of teachers, challenges related to students’ special needs:

We explained our frustration, saying things like ‘you don’t seem to understand what additional accommodations are all about’ and ‘it seems as if you think the students are just causing trouble’. (Principal J, protocol no. 3)

This quotation illustrates how certain emotions, in this case emotions documented and labeled as frustration, were verbally communicated and explained in the recalled practice. Another illustrative example was found in the documentation based on observations made by a superintendent in a meeting with a principal and a group of teachers:

The teachers state that they are worried about not having time to conduct the joint assessment, that marking will become more difficult, and that the opportunities for collaborative learning will disappear. (Superintendent B, protocol no. 2)

Second, regarding the category of events classified as physical, emotions appeared in the data as actions colored or accompanied by certain emotions, or perhaps as emotions acted out or acted on – for example, someone laughing, raging, crying, or stomping out of a room. In the data, such enacted emotions were sometimes difficult to analytically separate from those previously referred to as semantic, since in the participants’ documentation, they were often hidden in sweeping descriptive formulations such as ‘she showed signs of resignation’ or ‘she expressed her feelings of despair’. From the information provided in the principal’s and the superintendent’s documentation, there was no way of determining whether those emotions were expressed in words, facial expressions, or body language, or whether the event also included other more substantial action. Yet, the distinction between the two possibilities is analytically clear. Third, regarding the
category of events classified as social, emotions appeared in the data as recognized in or attributed to other participants in a practice, as in this example retrieved from the documentation of one superintendent:

The selected teachers appeared to be uncomfortable with the situation, and a bit confused since they did not understand why they had been selected. (Superintendent B, protocol no. 2)

In this case, certain emotions (i.e. of discomfort) were recognized in, or perhaps attributed to, the teachers participating in the studied practice. The same can be said based on the testimony of a principal, who claimed that one of her teachers was ‘appalled’ (Principal H, protocol no. 3) as a result of what were described as accusations against her.

As indicated above, the data could largely be sorted into any of the three theoretically informed categories, and thus classified as semantic, physical, or social events. Depending on how emotions are treated in the site of a practice, they become evident as sayings, doings, or relations. However, from the practitioners’ point of view, emotions were primarily experienced and psychologically managed in the studied practices:

[First, I'm] glad to be able to support the student’s development! Then [I get] frustrated as it feels like someone is throwing a spanner in the works. Then, quickly over to ‘Can we find a solution?’ At the same time, I am happy to be surrounded by competent people who can make me pause and reflect. (Superintendent D, protocol no. 1)

This fundamental observation raises questions about the need for an additional category that goes beyond those previously described in terms of emotions communicated or enacted by, and recognized in or attributed to, participants in a practice. Within the scope of this study, I have allowed myself to add a fourth category for observations of the kind mentioned above. Regarding participants reporting on their observations, this fourth category may well be divided into two sub-categories: one based on participants reporting on emotions individually experienced in a studied practice, and another based on participants reporting on collectively experienced or ‘co-experienced’ emotions. Evidence of the two different types of events is found in participants reporting on their own feelings (e.g. I felt angry and disappointed), on one hand, and on jointly experienced feelings (e.g. We felt frustrated), on the other. One could, of course, question this division into two sub-categories, arguing that the empirically constructed events sub-categorized as ‘emotions collectively experienced’ (or ‘co-experienced) in practice comprise not one but rather two simultaneously occurring events – for instance, two participants experiencing similar emotions at the same time, or perhaps one participant experiencing an emotion and concurrently attributing it to another participant or a group of participants. Despite this and any other ontological or epistemological considerations one might have regarding these observations, the testimony of the participants who registered these emotions suggests that sometimes there was a sense of joint experience and sharedness that was significant to that practice. Nonetheless, events categorized as emotions experienced in practice appeared to be either just observed and registered, or seemed to have required the participant’s attention and effort. In the former case, they were typically described as present in and emotionally defining the practice (i.e. what practice feels like). In the latter case, they come across as labor (i.e. something that must be
psychologically addressed as part of practice). The following passage retrieved from one of the principal’s documentations illustrates this:

I am struggling with my fear of conflict [. . .] It is hard for me to talk to a teacher about their behavior, although I do believe that it is important to stand up for my staff in vulnerable situations. (Principal H, protocol no. 3)

In summary, the results of the analysis indicate that emotions are semantic, physical, and social (i.e. relational) events. As such they, respectively, become evident in sayings communicated by participants, in participants’ doings as enacted emotions, and in participants’ relatings as recognitions or attributions among participants. In addition, emotions are experienced and managed by those involved in a practice.

The findings also suggest that emotions transcend the three categories of sayings, doings, and relatings stipulated by the theory of practice architectures. In the remainder of this article, the meaning and implications of this observation will be further considered and elaborated on in relation to the current theoretical construct of emotions in practice and practice architectures, and its place in the schematic representation of the theory’s core ideas.

**Discussion**

According to Kemmis (2022), the relatings of a practice are ‘evident in participants’ values, feelings, [and] emotions’ (p. 43; cf. Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014, p. 38). But clearly this is not all that emotions are, or can be, in practices. As illustrated here, they can be communicated and enacted by participants in a practice as well as recognized in or attributed to other participants in that same practice, just as they can be experienced and managed by those involved in it. By these means they are realized, not only in the medium of power and solidarity but also in the medium of language and in the medium of activity and work.

The observation that emotions are not exclusively social or relational, but are to be found ‘everywhere’ in the intersubjective space of a practice, may well be explained through the concept of ‘bundling’ (Schatzki, 2012), which, in the theory of practice architectures, is used to communicate the idea that sayings, doings, and relatings ‘hang together’ (i.e. are bundled) in a particular project (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014). For instance, when a participant in a practice is saying something (e.g. ‘I think this decision is ill-considered’), they are also doing something (e.g. questioning a decision made by a colleague), while at the same time relating to others (and the world) in some specific way(s) (e.g. being loyal to one group, while distancing themselves from another). Furthermore, while all this is happening, the participants in the particular practice are most likely feeling something as well. For instance, someone who questions a decision may experience feelings of discomfort. Perhaps they are also struggling to control this feeling in order to come across as professional, while the other party, in their turn, may still recognize this feeling and, consequently, respond emotionally to the situation. In this sense, there is no fundamental difference between sayings, doings, and relatings, on one hand, and feelings on the other. They are all important elements of a practice. As such they are all interactionally secured in different aspects of the participants’ engagement in
a practice, and realized within the intersubjective space of that same practice; and they are all conditioned (i.e. enabled and constrained) by a particular practice architecture.

The findings align well with the reasoning of previously referenced practice theorists who have claimed that emotions are something people have as well as something they do; that emotions are embodied; and that they are part of the teleoaffective structures that govern practice. The findings also underscore the importance of emotions in comprehending practices and practice architecture. Nevertheless, feelings are seldom particularly prominent in the work conducted by researchers using the theory of practice architectures, plausibly because the emotional aspect is not very prominent in the conceptual apparatus used for investigating practices.

In a previously cited article, Scheer (2012) pointed out that emotions have often been treated as part of the internal (i.e. experience) or external (i.e. manifestation), but ‘hardly theorized as a category in and of itself’ (p. 199). This observation also applies, at least partly, to the theory of practice architectures, in which emotions are considered part of the relatings and social – political arrangements that prefigure relatings in a practice (Kemmis, 2022; Wilkinson, 2021). As a consequence, the emotional dimension often remains invisible when practices are empirically investigated, reported, and critically reflected on by researchers in the field and by practitioners in various educational settings. According to Scheer (2012), a potential solution to this problem is to treat emotions as practice, ‘as defined in practice theory’ (p. 194). In her reasoning in favor of such a position, Scheer (2012) claimed that emotion-in-practice is always both experienced and embodied, since ‘an emotion without a medium for experience cannot be described as one’ (p. 209), and that access to emotion-as-practice (i.e. the bodily act of experience and expression) ‘is achieved through and in connection with other doings and sayings on which emotion-as-practice is dependent and intertwined, such as speaking, gesturing, remembering, manipulating objects, and perceiving sounds, smells, and spaces’ (p. 209).

This reasoning resonates well with the findings presented here. However, the consistency between this view of emotions and the notion of practice as conceptualized in the theory of practice architectures is questionable. Although it may be argued that emotions are composed of certain sayings, doings, and relatings that hang together (i.e. are bundled) in ways similar to those of other practices, the lack of shared projects (i.e. common purposes) that hold the practice in place (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014) makes the emotion-as-practice view difficult to embrace. Furthermore, it is questionable whether emotions can be equated with other practices associated with the education complex (Kemmis, Wilkinson, et al., 2014), for instance, leading, teaching, and

| Practitioners’ ‘sayings’ – and thinking | In **semantic space**, realized in the medium of **language** | **Cultural–discursive arrangements** found in or brought to a site |
| Practitioners’ ‘doings’ | In **physical time–space**, realized in the medium of **activity and work** | **Material–economic arrangements** found in or brought to a site |
| Practitioners’ ‘relatings’ | In **social space**, realized in the medium of **power and solidarity** | **Social–political arrangements** found in or brought to a site |
| Practitioners’ ‘feelings’ | In **affective space**, realized in the medium of **passion and compassion** | **Psycho–emotional arrangements** found in or brought to a site |

Table 2. Practice and practice architectures (informed by Kemmis, 2022) with an added tentative fourth dimension.
professional learning practices. However, it may still be relevant to view emotions ‘as a category in and as itself’ (Scheer, 2012, p. 199).

For the sake of the argument, and to stimulate further theoretical discussion, I suggest that emotions should be viewed, not as practices, but as practice-constituting events, tantamount to sayings, doings and relatings in the theory of practice architectures. The implication of this suggestion is demonstrated in Table 2, where a fourth category, labeled feelings, is tentatively added to the preexisting theoretically established three-dimensional intersubjective space of practice. The space in which feelings are realized is, also very tentatively, labeled ‘affective space’; likewise, their medium of realization is ‘the medium of passion and compassion’ and the corresponding arrangements found in or brought to a site are ‘psycho-emotional’.

In this outline of an adjusted construct, the concept of feelings was chosen for its consistency with the language used by practitioners when referring to emotions experienced in practice, and for its analogy with previous semantic constructs applied within the theory (i.e. sayings, doings, and relatings). The tentative adjusted construct aligns well with the results of the empirical analysis presented above. Furthermore, it has the distinct advantage that it helps researchers and professionals interested in human lives and interactions to direct their gaze toward the often overlooked aspect of emotions in practice.

Although the face validity of such a fourth dimension may be strong, the need for further ontological and epistemological consideration is substantial. This also applies to the construction and labeling of the space and medium in which feelings are or may be realized, and to the type of arrangements that enable and constrain them. Consequently, if feelings are to be considered practice constituting in the same sense as are sayings, doings, and relatings, then further empirical, theoretical, and perhaps philosophical work is required.

**Conclusion**

A strength of the theory of practice architectures lies in its ability to direct our attention toward certain elements of importance for capturing and understanding the happening of a practice (i.e. what goes on in a specific time and space, and why). When it comes to emotions, however, the theory and the schematic representation designed to visualize its central ideas have hitherto offered little guidance. For this reason, and with the intention of stimulating, as well as contributing to, scholarly discussion of the emotional aspect of practice, empirical data drawn from a research circle were analyzed with a focus on documented emotional events.

Regarding the data and the theory of practice architectures, it can be argued that emotions are interactionally secured in sayings, doings, and relatings. As sayings, they are realized in the medium of language, as doings, in the medium of work and activity, and as relatings, in the medium of power and solidarity. Yet, emotions are primarily experienced, and managed (cf. Wilkinson, 2021), within the site of a practice. Based on these findings, it has been suggested here that emotions experienced in and managed as part of a practice are theoretically and analytically distinguished from other events previously
acknowledged as practice constituting. Moreover, to stimulate further consideration of the theoretical construct of emotions and their place in the schematic representation of practice and practice architectures, a fourth category labeled ‘feelings’ was tentatively added to the framework. However, this and accompanying suggestions relevant to the conceptualization of the intersubjective space and its corresponding arrangements are not to be viewed as definite, but as tentative and open to discussion. Conclusively, the need for further elaboration and consideration of the emotional aspect of practice is substantial.

Note

1. Schatzki (2002) has defined teleoaffective structures as ‘a range of normativized and hierarchically ordered ends, projects, and tasks, to varying degrees allied with normativized emotions and even moods’ (p. 80).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributor

Katina Thelin is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Education, Uppsala University, Sweden. She conducts research in educational leadership and school development and has a particular interest in participatory research, and leadership as practice. In previous work, she has investigated variation in ways of seeing different aspects of educational praxis, and possibilities of developing common ways of seeing as a basis for school development.

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