

Innovative Pedagogy

A Recognition of Emotions and Creativity in Education

Tatiana Chemi, Sarah Grams Davy
and Birthe Lund (Eds.)



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Innovative Pedagogy

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Scope

The knowledge, learning and creative economies manifest the changing significance of intellectual capital and the thickening connections between economic growth, knowledge and creativity. Increasingly economic and social activity is comprised by the 'symbolic' or 'weightless' economy with its iconic, immaterial and digital goods. This new digital knowledge economy includes new international labor that rely on developments in information and communication technologies (ICTs) that are changing the format, density and nature of the exchange and flows of knowledge, research and scholarship. Delivery modes in education are being reshaped. New global cultures of knowledge and research networks are spreading rapidly. New forms of openness and networking, cross-border people movement, flows of capital, portal cities and intensive development zones all are changing the conditions of imagining and producing and the sharing of creative work in different spheres. At the centre of is the economy/ creativity nexus. But are education systems, institutions, assumptions and habits positioned and able so as to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges? This new series investigates all the aspects of education in (and as) the creative economy in order to extend the dialogue about the relationship between contemporary higher education and the changing face of contemporary economies.

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Edited by

Tatiana Chemi, Sarah Grams Davy and Birthe Lund

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TATIANA CHEMI, SARAH GRAMS DAVY AND BIRTHE LUND

EMOTIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION

Introduction

This is our second book in the series *Creative Education*. In the first one, *Dealing with Emotions: A Pedagogical Challenge to Innovative Learning*, we reflected on emotions and education from multiple perspectives: the socio-cultural perspective that looks at interactions among individuals, the creation and recreation of the self and others, the study of collaboration, change processes (transformative learning) and aesthetic and creative learning in order to reflect on students' and educators' emotional responses. Like this edition, it offered empirical documentation and theoretical reflections on how pedagogical and educational changes might challenge or facilitate learning for students and educators.

PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATION AND EMOTIONS IN EDUCATION

An overarching theme of this book is our interest in taking a close look at how students and teachers in educational institutions apply the innovative, the playful and the emotional and creative dimensions of learning.

On the one hand, we are interested in these dimensions in order to improve our understanding of how they interplay with the depth and the quality of learning processes, as they present a new ground for students and teachers to experiment with the construction of knowledge, ways of assessing teaching, learning and research.

On the other hand, we want to look at how creative, emotional and innovative potentials in education are affected by current societal changes and demands. As university researchers, we are part of an educational system in which we recognise an increasing political demand for innovation and creativity as an outcome of education. An EU report defines creativity and innovation as a necessity and a skill that can be taught:

Creativity and innovation in education are not just an opportunity, but a necessity. This work highlights an inclusive and democratic perspective of creativity, which sees all people as capable of being creative from early childhood. However, whether people develop their creativity depends on the kind of training they receive. Accordingly, creativity should be understood as a skill which may be developed through creative learning and innovative teaching. (Ferrari et al., 2009, p. 47)

In addition to this demand for “teaching of innovative and creative skills”, international comparisons of educational outcomes (such as the Programme for International Student Assessment, PISA) are on the political agenda, which indicates a contemporary economic, outcome-focused ideology in education, intending to rank countries, schools and classes, which influence students’ learning environment. Put briefly, students – as well as teachers – are expected to be innovative and creative and produce measurable learning outcomes.

Interestingly, the idea of viewing education as a societal field, where creation of ideas takes place and social change might be fostered, is not new. About a hundred years ago, John Dewey (1988) regarded education as part of progress, depending on whether or not it can nurture the originality of mental attitudes in people:

As I have referred to the young as evidence that a certain originality of mental attitude is a spontaneous trait of human individuals, so I must now refer to education as one great force that may either preserve or propagate this attitude or that may slowly and surely choke it. Education is one of the great opportunities for present day pioneering. (Dewey, 1988, p. 131)

Education can be looked at as a process that influences students’ attitudes, understanding and belief systems, which in turn affect their actions. The process of education therefore holds the potential to influence the foundation for social and ethical judgment, thereby preparing students for life in a democratic world. Hence, the educational process plays a meaningful role, as it can determine whether or not our students become citizens who are able to think for themselves and dare to do things “differently”, to think and act “outside the box” and to express original thoughts and ideas. In this sense, education also deals with “self-creation” which includes both cognitive aspects (knowledge, understanding and beliefs) and actions.

When creativity and innovation become a demand for education, it might be assumed that it is enough to change the curricula of school subjects, in order to improve students’ “skills”. This approach may overlook, however, the fact that emotions and feelings play an essential role in learning and knowledge creation. Emotions refer to the self and hence provide us with a means for developing self-knowledge. If we consider emotions as an integral part of how we interpret and make sense of events, then they consequently affect whether or not we maintain or change our current practice. For example, emotions might be signalling reward and trigger curiosity and playfulness, or they might make us feel uncomfortable (or puzzled) and give us an incentive to reconsider what we do. In other words, emotions influence what we learn and how – and consequently direct our acting and thinking. They relate to students’ success and failure and to how they think about themselves as learners and individuals.

In the educational context, emotions can foster or discourage not only learning, but also creativity and the sense of courage and curiosity needed for students to try out something new. If we see emotions as inseparable from learning, it becomes relevant

to actively integrate and consciously address the emotional dimension in education. Teaching and learning processes must consequently balance different emotions, playfully wild, uncontrollable processes of idea generation, as well as rituals, traditions, histories, social interaction and other already valued understandings of development, learning and knowledge.

Emotions control the students' attention, influence their motivation to learn, modify the choice of learning strategies, and affect their self-regulation of learning. Furthermore, emotions are part of students' identity, and they affect personality development, psychological health and physical health. From an educational perspective, emotions are important because of their influence on learning and development, but students' emotional well-being should also be regarded as an educational goal that is important in itself. (Pekrun, 2014, p. 6)

In this book, we take a particular interest in emotions linked to creativity and in that respect we emphasize the crucial importance of emotions in the design of innovative learning processes and education in general.

THE AUTHORS, THEIR BACKGROUND AND THEIR CO-CREATION

The authors of this book are all members of the research group FIU (Danish acronym for Research in Education and Cultures of Learning). Our main scientific focus is on the study of education and teaching at a micro and macro level, in all stages of the educational system. At a micro level, we look at the interaction, communication, relations and teaching cultures that are manifested in processes of teaching and learning. Another aim is to grasp the relationship between the micro and macro levels of teaching and to study the multiple socio-cultural conditions for pedagogical innovation.

We make use of mainly qualitative methods, such as ethnographic studies and action research, which allow linking of research and development, as well as designing and documenting concrete changes in teaching and education. However, quantitative studies are also valued and welcomed, as the present volume testifies. Research projects that are carried out within FIU focus on teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools, high schools, in post-secondary education and universities and within professional development at Teachers' Colleges with specific attention to creativity and innovation in these contexts. The projects' purpose is building and extending knowledge about existing teaching cultures or future developments in education, through the description and development of pedagogical strategies, both in theory and in practice.

Currently, the group covers areas such as: innovative educational design; creativity in the classroom; arts integration in curriculum and non-formal learning environments; evaluation and assessment in primary schools; problem-based and project-organised work in high schools; building of study cultures in university education and adult education.

The scholarly affiliation of the group is Aalborg University, Denmark. Aalborg University numbers 20,000 students and has been working with and developing problem-oriented, project-based education since it was established in 1974. Rather than communicating knowledge to students, we as educators support the collaborative process of knowledge-creation and knowledge-development within student groups. Students work in faculty-supervised groups, planning, managing and completing a project, which addresses an independently and originally formulated problem. Problem-based learning, projects and group structures form the learning model at Aalborg University (Krogh & Aarup Jensen, 2013; Lund & Aarup Jensen, 2013). The model stimulates continuous curiosity among educators, whose role is to facilitate and support students' creativity and initiatives. To support students while they are exploring the world around them implies to a high degree dealing with students' and own emotions when learning and teaching. This is the reason why writing the present contribution was a deep-felt need in the research group and part of an on-going and long-term theoretical and practice-oriented work.

THE GENESIS OF THE BOOK

Like our previous contribution, this anthology, too, is the product of a thematic effort within our research group whose members have been working together for a long period of time. It is a collaborative and a dialogic-based work. Within the authors' team we worked individually when writing the various chapters, but also very much collectively, giving each other advice, challenges, inspiration and internal peer review. Our team work has been strengthened by our regular research-group meetings, where we developed content-related, methodological or procedural discussions on educational dilemmas. For this reason, although the book form is an anthology, we perceive the final product as a collective work – a second FIU footprint in the scholarly sand.

During the process of writing this anthology, we organised a Creative University Conference within the International Creative University Network (ICUN), titled: *Knowledge Cultures, Critical Creative Thinking and Innovative Learning Processes* (Aalborg University, 18–19 August 2016, Aalborg, Denmark). The internationally diverse group of participants indicated a growing world-wide interest in teaching methods and pedagogies that develop students' innovative and creative thinking, where students as well as teachers are expected to break with habitual actions and thoughts. We invited contributions that investigate philosophical, cultural, social and pedagogical aspects of education to extend the dialogues between playful, creative learning processes and the contemporary concerns in society and the wider world.

Our anthology is part of this continuing dialogue, as we recognise societal changes and the call for new ways to conceptualise address and enact education and research within education.

Within the author group, we attempted to live up to our socio-cultural scientific perspective, making mutual sharing a fundamental structure of our work. As Aarup Jensen explains, “a key point in the socio-cultural activity theory is that

communication and interaction between people is essential in all learning processes, and it is through communication that socio-cultural resources are created” (2015, p. 63). To a great extent, the present contribution bears witness to the group’s learning process.

THE BOOK STRUCTURE

The book is framed by this introduction and a final conclusion, pointing out what we have learned and which new perspectives we gained during the process of composing this second edition. We also suggest directions and focus points for further research in this field. The seven chapters of this anthology are summarised here:

In the first chapter, Tatiana Chemi discusses a hot topic within the field of arts consumption, with several consequences for learning and development: does participation in artistic experiences stimulate positive emotions? If so, how does this happen? Are emotions in art experiences charged with learning outputs? The author discusses the complexity of this topic by elaborating on the metaphor of the arts as safe haven. This reflection is mostly conceptual but as empirical support Chemi brings examples from a research study on artistic creativity (2011–2014), and on artist/school partnerships (2016–2017). Findings focus on the emotional side of art-making and its learning potential. The author proposes a conceptual interpretation of the arts as a safe haven for learning experiences.

In Chapter 2, Sarah Grams Davy attempts to link two previously unconnected research fields. How can findings on teacher well-being and classroom emotional climate inspire research in teaching for creativity? In reviewing findings from both areas, she illustrates the meaningful role of teachers’ well-being for students’ creativity, by focusing on the two concepts of “micromoments in teaching” and “students’ creativity-related self-image”. Teacher uncertainty and teacher well-being are pointed out as relevant factors to be considered when aiming to improve creativity in students. Implications for school practice are discussed.

In the third chapter, Julie Borup Jensen analyses an action research-based study, applying arts-based pedagogies and methods in social education studies at a Danish university college. The project in focus deals with a common challenge – that students find it difficult to participate in the ever more theory-oriented academic environment of the institutions for social education studies. Taking a socio-cultural perspective on cultural production, the author investigates how the arts can offer ways to express, contain and process students’ emotions in innovative identity-building processes. In offering different ways to express individual and collective knowledge, values, attitudes, interpretations and experiences and emotions, the collective production of arts seems to enable democratic, personalised opportunities for professional self-reflection and identity development in students.

In Chapter 4, Annie Aarup Jensen studies why it may be difficult for some university students to distinguish between subject-related, academic reasons and arguments on the one hand, and personal and value-laden attitudes and opinions

connected with emotions on the other hand. Drawing on socio-constructivism and culture theory, this problem will be analysed through a specific case: a module in a master's program on learning seems to invite students to present emotional rather than academic arguments for their treatment of the subject in question. The arguments presented may be both personal and private, such as feelings regarding the subject area, reluctance to enter into reflection processes deemed necessary for doing the task, or a lack of interest in the subject.

In the fifth chapter, *Assessment of Students – a Look at Validity in Emotional Situations*, Lone Krogh sheds light on the different perspectives affecting situations where students are being assessed and which may therefore play an important role in the result. Questions are raised, such as: Why do we assess? What can we assess? And what is difficult to assess? Challenges and ways to talk about assessment are analysed. Finally, problems with validity and reliability and, not least, student perspectives, including their backgrounds and the emotional aspects which play an important role, are included in the discussion. Current challenges regarding forms of assessment appear to be related to societal expectations of students' competencies after graduation.

In Chapter 6, Birthe Lund analyses the general educational aims and conditions for forming or cultivating "the innovative student", taking as point of departure the new learning goals in Danish Schools. The hypothesis is that the subject (the student) in this educational process risks becoming an "object" of political and educational goals, reflected in general and economics-biased concepts of what being "entrepreneurial and innovative" means. The chapter discusses the pedagogical consequences for students' self-cultivation, emancipation, subjectification and democratic *Bildung*, when such educational and political goals deliberately influence students' will and their ability to act. This formation process takes place in order to prepare students for a working life in – what is expected to be – an international, competitive, knowledge society, but it might neglect the importance of democratic *Bildung*, which ought to take place in schools.

In Chapter 7, Chunfang Zhou explores how playfulness influences creative climate from a perspective of emotionality. Based on socio-cultural theories, creativity is regarded as a situated-based activity. "Playfulness" is discussed as one of the main psychological characteristics influencing creative climate and "freedom" is introduced as being embedded in the nature of playfulness. As one of the relatively stable characteristics, playfulness is found to have some positive impact on academic achievement, working performance and creativity development. Therefore, this chapter suggests that in order to develop a creative classroom climate in education, students should acquire more learning experience with playfulness through pedagogical design.

TARGET GROUP

With this book we aim to reach an international audience of educators at several levels, including primary and secondary schools, higher and adult education,

university colleges, graduate, undergraduate and PhD schools. We also imagine possible applications of the content in non-formal learning environments, such as museums, cultural institutions and the like, that is educational settings where the emotions are largely stimulated and cultivated in edutainment or experiential forms.

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