

Jan Derry:

Epistemology and conceptual resources for the development of learning technologies

The understanding of representation has a clear significance for the design and development of learning technologies. The issues raised by this design and development has led to a demand for appropriate language and form of conceptualisation. However we are insufficiently familiar with the way in which different types of mediated tool use occur, to develop the theoretical models needed for the development of this language and form of conceptualisation.

In its absence a somewhat eclectic variety of concepts and research, including concepts such as affordance and mediational means, are recruited in accounts of learning with new technologies.

In looking briefly at the relevant area in philosophy this paper will consider whether or not the use of concepts such as affordance give adequate weight to social practice and knowledge in the design of educational technology.

A fruitful source for work in this field which has not been sufficiently exploited is philosophy. Particularly recent work in epistemology.

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