

# Why the Embodied Emotion Theory is Better than the Evaluative

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**ABSTRACT:** Supporters of the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion mainly explore emotions from the perspective of cognitive evaluation and advocate that emotions are evaluative judgments. The Perceptual Theories of Emotion have made some modifications to the evaluative judgment of emotions, attempting to propose better theories. The Perceptual Theories of Emotion advocate verifying the similarities between emotions and perceptions through analogical reasoning. However, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion also have their problems. Compared to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion and the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, the Embodied Emotion Theory has significant advantages, mainly reflected in avoiding the drawbacks of over-intellectualize emotions by evaluative judgments; infants and animals can also understand emotions through non-conceptualized ways of self-awareness and understanding of social rules and norms; the core relational property of emotions revealed in the embodied emotion theory demonstrates the action orientation of emotions, connects the organism's body and external environment, and integrates both biological and social aspects, further clarifying the complexity and diversity of emotions.

**KEYWORDS:** emotions, evaluative judgment, perception, embodied emotions

## 1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORIES OF EMOTIONS

**I**N THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, philosophers have explored the definition of emotion and the nature of emotion from different perspectives, leading to different theories of emotion.

From a cognitive perspective, the intentional content of emotion is generally presented through propositional content, which is primarily related to beliefs, desires, evaluative judgments, and so on. Firstly, emotions are usually considered to be associated with two key elements of action: beliefs and desires. However, emotions are distinct from beliefs and desires; they have their unique characteristics. The main difference between emotions and desires lies in the fact that emotions and desires reflect two different directions of alignment between the mind and the

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world. The primary purpose of desires is to change the world, to make the world align with desires. If desires are not satisfied or fulfilled, the agent will experience emotions such as frustration. In contrast to desires, emotions focus on the alignment of the mind with the world. The subject is influenced by the world, leading to the emergence of a certain emotion. There exists a kind of fitting relationship between emotion and the world.

Next, after distinguishing the differences between emotion and desire, when examining whether emotion is similar to belief, Judgmentalism suggests that emotion can be reduced to evaluative beliefs or judgments. Key figures representing this perspective include Robert Solomon and Martha Nussbaum. The focus on evaluative judgments or beliefs when discussing emotion and belief is because evaluative judgments, as a subset of judgments, emphasize the evaluative nature of the object of emotion, that is, the evaluative properties of emotion's formal objects. Evaluative beliefs, as a necessary but not sufficient condition for evaluative judgments, play an important role in evaluative judgments. Some advocates of the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion argue that human emotions are not only based on beliefs but also on evaluative beliefs. For example, the feeling of fear when standing on the edge of a cliff is not based on the belief that the cliff is steep, and it is not directly related to a specific concrete object. Instead, it is based on the evaluative belief that standing on the steep edge of a cliff is dangerous. However, whether evaluative beliefs are necessary and sufficient conditions for triggering emotions is still a matter of debate. Critics also use the idea that evaluative beliefs are not necessary and sufficient conditions for triggering emotions as a point of criticism against the evaluative judgment theories of emotion.

Comparatively, the advantage of reducing emotion to evaluative beliefs over reducing it to desires is that evaluative beliefs can reveal the value of emotional experiences through their representational content. For example, fear represents danger, and fear is constituted by the belief that one is in danger. Beliefs are better at identifying the representational content of emotional experiences than desires. Furthermore, evaluative beliefs are closely related to emotional experiences, such as my happiness being closely related to the belief "I passed the exam." Without such beliefs, there would be no corresponding emotional experiences. Lastly, both emotion and belief are constrained by standards of correctness and true. However, the difference lies in the fact that in emotion, recalcitrant emotions can also be defended as true emotions, whereas at the level of belief, the corresponding beliefs for recalcitrant emotions either do not exist or are only subconscious, not yet beliefs.

However, the evaluative judgment theories of emotion face numerous problems, with the most significant being that evaluative beliefs are not necessary and sufficient conditions for triggering emotions, and the theories tend to overly intellectualize emotions. These issues prevent the evaluative judgment theories of emotion from becoming an ideal theory of emotion. Additionally, the theories overly intellectualize emotions, assuming conceptualization abilities in subjects, placing high cognitive demands on evaluative judgments, failing to fully consider infants and animals lacking conceptualization abilities, neglecting the role of feelings in evaluative

judgments, and being unable to accommodate evaluative judgments with true values opposite to reality. To address and circumvent these difficulties, philosophers have proposed theories such as the perception theories of emotion, and the Embodied Emotion Theory. In the following, I will briefly introduce whether these theories can construct a more comprehensive theory of the nature of emotion.

From a non-cognitivist perspective within the context of the philosophy of mind, non-cognitivism asserts that non-conceptual sensory experiences can also trigger emotions, and these sensory experiences have corresponding neurophysiological foundations. Non-cognitivism primarily considers the role of sensations in emotions. The concepts of sensation and emotion are closely related because emotions can be manifested through bodily agitations or disturbances. These manifestations typically include increased heart rate, rapid breathing, elevated blood pressure, increased adrenaline, as well as somatic sensations and muscular tension. In other words, emotional experiences are the “what-it-is-like” bodily sensations, such as the increased blood pressure and adrenaline surge experienced during anger.<sup>2</sup> A representative theory in this regard is William James’s Somatic Feeling Theory, which explores the relationship between emotions and bodily feelings. James argues that feelings resulting from bodily changes constitute the conditions for the occurrence of emotions.<sup>3</sup> The advantage of James’s theory lies in explaining emotions from the perspective of feelings caused by bodily changes, avoiding the pitfalls of over-intellectualizing emotions in evaluative judgment theories. James’s theory has received support from certain biological and neuroimaging studies, but the feelings resulting from bodily changes are not necessary conditions for the occurrence of emotions, and emotions do not necessarily require feelings resulting from bodily changes.

Building upon James’s Somatic Feeling Theory, philosophers further explain the essential characteristics of emotions from a perceptual perspective, termed the Perceptual Theories of Emotion. In contrast to bodily feelings, the advantage of explaining emotions from a perceptual perspective is that perceptual content combines intentionality and phenomenality. Bodily feelings tend to overlook the intentional features of objects, and they pay less attention to how things trigger bodily changes but emphasize the feelings themselves brought about by bodily changes. Perception can further reveal the impact of the external environment on mental representations. Moreover, supporters of the perceptual theories of emotion often use analogy arguments to compare the similarities between the characteristics of perceptual states and emotions, avoiding the dilemmas faced by the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion and somatic feeling theory. The four main arguments of Perceptual Theories of Emotion, including the perceptual system argument, the argument for non-inferential structure, the argument from epistemic role, and the argument from phenomenology, all employ analogy arguments as a methodological approach.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Julien Deonna, and Fabrice Teroni, *The Emotions: A Philosophical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–2.

<sup>3</sup>William James, “What is an Emotion?” *Mind* 9, no. 34 (1884): 188–205, at 189–90.

<sup>4</sup>Mikko Salmela, “Can Emotion be Modelled on Perception?” *Dialectical* 65, no.1 (2011): 1–29, at 1. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1746-8361.2011.01259.x>.

However, the functionalist nature of these arguments and the shortcomings of analogy arguments pose challenges to Perceptual Theories of Emotion. Analogy arguments, as a form of inductive reasoning, cannot exhaustively demonstrate the features of the objects under discussion and are always incomplete. Furthermore, Perceptual Theories of Emotion can only explain the similarities between perceptual states and emotions, not conclusively demonstrating that emotions are perceptual states. There are also many dissimilarities between emotions and perceptions, posing a challenge to perceptual theories of emotion. These dissimilarities include the fact that emotions are subject to standards of true and correctness, while perceptions are only subject to standards of correctness; emotions are closer to beliefs, whereas perceptions differ from beliefs; emotions are more cognitively complex than perceptions; emotions are inherently fuzzy, whereas perceptions are relatively clear. Therefore, perceptual theories of emotion are still some distance away from being an ideal theory of emotion and need to respond to the methodological challenges of analogy arguments and the dissimilarities between emotions and perceptions.

If we consider the nature of emotions from an embodied perspective, the challenges faced by the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion and the Perceptual Theories of Emotion can be better addressed. The Embodied Emotion Theory advocates understanding the nature of emotions through the interaction between the organism and the environment and explains the action orientation in emotions through the core relational properties of emotions. The core relational properties of emotions refer to the affordances of emotions, that is, the organism being stimulated by the external environment, leading to the possibility of performing a certain action.<sup>5</sup> For example, the affordance of anxiety emotions can be avoidance of danger. Moreover, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion contain embodied thought, such as our perceptions are related to the interaction between agents and the external world. While the Embodied Emotion Theory is different from the perspective of perception, it emphasizes the action orientation contained in the core relational properties of emotions. But this idea is not unique to the Embodied Emotion Theory but is an improvement upon the ideas of other philosophers. However, the Embodied Emotion Theory handles the nature of emotion more comprehensively, providing explanations for the core relational properties or attributes of various basic emotions, acknowledging the existence of non-conceptual cognitive abilities and individual variations in emotional features, and revealing the action orientation in emotions.

## 2. THE EVALUATIVE JUDGMENT THEORIES OF EMOTION AND EMBODIED EMOTION THEORY

Next, I will compare the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion of Emotions with the Embodied Emotion Theory in more detail and attempt to highlight the advantages of Embodied Emotion Theory.

<sup>5</sup>See Rebekka Hufendiek, *Embodied Emotions: A Naturalist Approach to a Normative Phenomenon* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 158.

Firstly, it needs to be clarified that the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion of emotions include an understanding of embodied emotions. For example, R. C. Solomon interprets the judgment that constitutes emotion as a systemic judgment, rather than a single judgment.<sup>6</sup> Systemic judgment involves various aspects of the agent, including the agent's background, such as quality, social status, and conflicting interests. These factors refer to the results of the interaction between the agent and the environment, reflecting the embodied characteristics of the agent. Secondly, Solomon states that emotional expression is within the judgment system that constitutes emotion. Emotional judgments are not only made in the mode of observation but are also expressed in the form of actions, such as the expression of emotions through actions like angrily throwing things. Emotions are inseparable from judgment, action, and our entire life experience. This can be explained through the action orientation of emotions revealed by the affordances of emotions.

However, the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion of have some problems in explaining the relationship between emotions and beliefs and desires. Firstly, according to Solomon, desires can evoke emotions, and desires are closely related to judgment. Solomon also clearly distinguishes emotions that include desires from those that do not, such as anger with a desire for revenge and anger simply arising from being offended. However, Solomon does not further differentiate these phenomena. Both types of anger can be represented by the same core relational theme, but their affordances are different. Anger with a desire for revenge includes the action orientation of revenge, while anger arising from being offended may only involve responding with a few words. Therefore, the affordances included in the same core relational theme can be diverse. In addition, regarding the relationship between emotions and beliefs, Nussbaum believes that beliefs play an important role in emotional judgment, and our beliefs about the occurrence of events will affect our emotions.<sup>7</sup> For example, if I believe that failing an exam will make me the subject of ridicule by classmates, I will feel embarrassed. Beliefs can influence emotions, but beliefs do not contain logical contradictions, while emotions can contain content contradictory to beliefs, such as feeling afraid of harmless things like the shadow of a tree. Therefore, although beliefs influence emotions, they are not sufficient to fully present the content of emotions.

Secondly, the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion assign significant importance to evaluative beliefs, but evaluative beliefs are neither sufficient nor necessary for emotions. Insufficiency means having evaluative beliefs without corresponding emotions, such as when someone does something shameful due to character traits but does not feel shame. Or the sensitivity of emotions varies; deep-rooted or subconscious beliefs can easily lead to changes in emotional intensity.

<sup>6</sup>Robert C. Solomon, "On Emotions as Judgments," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (1988): 183–91, at 184.

<sup>7</sup>Martha Nussbaum, "Emotions as Judgments of Value and Importance," in *Thinking About Feeling: Contemporary Philosophers on Emotion*, edited by Robert C. Solomon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 183–199, at 189.

For example, the prolonged pandemic has led to a relaxation of vigilance, and the level of fear has decreased.

Unnecessity means having corresponding emotions without related evaluative beliefs. The most classic case comes from recalcitrant emotions, such as believing that a roller coaster is not dangerous but also believing that it is dangerous, and feeling fear. The belief that the roller coaster is dangerous, corresponding to the fear, does not exist consciously; it is only subconscious. Roberts attempts to salvage the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotions from the perspective of emotions and propositional content. He believes that emotions are interpretations of concerns, thus explaining recalcitrant emotions as mature emotions and genuine emotions, resolving the dilemma of contradictory emotions. However, from the perspective of propositional content, the necessity of evaluative beliefs for emotions still lacks further explanation. It needs further exploration of the consistency or fittingness between beliefs and emotions to truly prove the necessity of evaluative beliefs for emotions.

Thirdly, one of the widely criticized points of evaluative judgment is its excessive intellectualization. Evaluative judgment places high demands on cognition, leading to the neglect of emotions in infants and animals. Specifically, firstly, evaluative judgment is inseparable from feelings, but the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion do not provide a clear answer to the role of feelings in evaluative judgment. Then, emotions include action orientation, but evaluative judgment does not necessarily include action orientation. Therefore, the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion need to enrich their content. Although Solomon and others defend the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, some proponents of the theories do not support the idea of action orientation. Finally, how evaluative judgment theories reconcile judgments with opposite true values will face challenges. Although it can be defended from the perspective of unconscious emotions or the dominance or disappearance of one emotion, contradictory emotions can coexist without disappearing or existing in an unconscious form. Emotions and judgments are two separate systems and do not necessarily correspond completely.

From these descriptions, it is reasonable for the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion to emphasize evaluative beliefs, but there are some unavoidable shortcomings. These shortcomings are better addressed in Embodied Emotion Theory. On the one hand, factors such as character traits or deep-rooted and subconscious beliefs can be better explained through the biological and social aspects of the subject. However, the core relational themes or attributes of Embodied Emotion Theory lack a comprehensive explanation of these factors, so there is still room for improvement in Embodied Emotion Theory. On the other hand, for recalcitrant emotions, the Embodied Emotion Theory does not directly respond to this challenge. However, I believe that by combining the interaction between the agent and the environment, the rationality of inappropriate emotions in the current environment can be explained. The contradictory aspects of emotions will also be reasonably interpreted. Another advantage of Embodied Emotion Theory is that it does not require high cognitive

demands for infants and animals and believes that they can gain self-awareness and an understanding of social rules and norms through non-conceptual means.

Fourthly, the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion presuppose conceptual content, but conceptual content is not a necessary condition for emotions. Firstly, we do not need evaluative concepts to perceive the subject's feelings, such as not needing a concept of "loss" to feel sadness. Secondly, proponents of the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion deny that emotions can change through education, which is evidently problematic. Emotions are different from concepts; emotions are not unchanging. In comparison to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, Embodied Emotion Theory does not require conceptual content for perception but advocates that the subject's perceptions obtained through interaction with the environment can also become an understanding of the environment. From this perspective, the Embodied Emotion Theory is more reasonable. Moreover, Embodied Emotion Theory agrees that factors such as education can influence emotions; emotions are not unchanging. This is in line with our common sense.

Fifthly, proponents of the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion attempt to salvage their theories through add-on theory, especially through the constructionist theories of emotion. This strategy uses "a feeling with a judgment" to explain emotion instead of judgment,<sup>8</sup> broadening the connotation of judgment, attempting to depict the richness of emotions, and advocating that emotions depend on the agent's interpretation of experiences. However, this strategy fails to make a detailed distinction between emotions and affective tendencies and cannot solve some of the difficulties faced by the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion in the analysis of emotions. Relatively speaking, Embodied Emotion Theory can explain emotions without the need to add or expand embodied concepts, making it more concise in strategy, facing fewer difficulties, and distinguishing between emotions and affective tendencies as well as conscious and unconscious emotions more effectively.

In summary, compared to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, Embodied Emotion Theory provides a more robust and complete explanation. The challenges faced by the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion are mainly: (1) There are problems in explaining the relationship between emotions and beliefs and desires. The Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion do not make a detailed distinction between different affordances and emotional intensity of the same emotion, leading to insufficient clarity in distinguishing between emotions and desires. Besides, Nussbaum emphasizes the important role of beliefs in emotions, but the theories do not explain how emotions, as evaluative beliefs, can accommodate logical contradictions. (2) Evaluative beliefs are an important factor in the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion of emotions, but they are neither sufficient nor necessary for emotions. Insufficiency means having evaluative beliefs without corresponding emotions, and the reasons can be character traits, etc. Unnecessity means having corresponding emotions without related evaluative beliefs. (3) Evaluative judgment explains emotions in an excessively intellectualized manner, neglecting the emotions

<sup>8</sup>Deonna and Teroni, *The Emotions*, 58.

of infants and animals. (4) Evaluative judgment presupposes conceptual content, but conceptual content is not a sufficient and necessary condition for emotions. (5) The add-on strategy of emotional appraisal as a means of salvaging the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion does not respond to challenges, and the analysis of emotions remains insufficiently detailed.

Overall, compared to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, the advantages of Embodied Emotion Theory lie in further revealing the action-oriented nature of emotions; addressing the issue that beliefs and desires alone are insufficient to explain the content of emotions; better resolving the problem that evaluative beliefs are neither sufficient nor necessary for emotions, and responding from a non-conceptualized perspective to the over-intellectualization issue of the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion.

### 3. THE PERCEPTUAL THEORIES OF EMOTION AND EMBODIED EMOTION THEORY

The Perceptual Theories of Emotion have made certain modifications to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, avoiding some drawbacks, particularly the over-intellectualization of emotional concepts. The Perceptual Theories of Emotion can effectively navigate this issue by emphasizing bodily changes or feelings to simulate emotions or analogizing the features of emotions and perception, thus steering clear of excessive emphasis on rationality and reasoning. Moreover, in comparison to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion, the advantages of the Perceptual Theories of Emotion include: firstly, perception does not require language proficiency and conceptualization abilities, allowing infants and animals to be free from the limitations advocated by evaluative judgment theorists for conceptualization abilities; secondly, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion does not necessitate the assertion or contemplation of propositional content, such as beliefs, desires, or evaluative judgments, providing an explanation for some instinctual and primal emotions; finally, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion not only focuses on the intentionality of emotions but also on the phenomenological content of emotions, perceiving emotions not only as directed towards an object but also as a perception of the phenomenon about an object, thus integrating the advantages of both cognitivism and non-cognitivism.

However, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion still has its shortcomings, and Embodied Emotion Theory can to some extent address these deficiencies. Specifically, firstly, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion exhibits a prominent characteristic of analogical reasoning. The four main arguments of the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, including the perceptual system argument, non-inferential structure argument, epistemic role argument, and phenomenological argument, all employ analogical reasoning methodologies. This approach is chosen because it directly demonstrates that all features of emotions are perceptual features, which is impractical and poses various difficulties. Consequently, analogical reasoning is utilized to argue for the sameness or similarity between emotions and perception.



However, its drawback is evident—these analogical arguments can only illustrate similarities between emotions and perceptual states, failing to genuinely demonstrate that emotions are perception or that emotions and perceptual states serve the same purpose. Additionally, there are many dissimilarities between emotions and perceptual states, including emotions being constrained by true and correctness criteria, while perception is only constrained by correctness criteria; emotions approaching beliefs, whereas perception differs from beliefs; emotions being more complex in epistemological terms than perception; and emotions exhibiting fuzziness, while perception is relatively clearer. Yet, Embodied Emotion Theory does not encounter these downsides.

Secondly, Perceptual Theories of Emotion refer to William James's Somatic Feeling Theory, but the Somatic Feeling Theory's drawback lies in the fact that the sensory experience of bodily changes is not a necessary condition for the occurrence of emotions. The temporal relationship between emotions and bodily changes is not necessarily as James claimed, with bodily changes preceding emotions; it is possible for emotions to precede bodily changes or for both to occur simultaneously. Sensory experiences of bodily changes are only a sufficient condition for emotions and not a necessary one. Nevertheless, these drawbacks are not significant issues for Embodied Emotion Theory. Embodied theories acknowledge bodily changes but does not emphasize the temporal sequence between emotions and bodily changes, allowing for mutual influence between the two and thereby avoiding the drawbacks of James's Somatic Feeling Theory.

Thirdly, regarding Prinz's argument on the perceptual system of emotions, the three core relational themes he proposes (danger, threat, loss) are insightful and reflect the embodied characteristics of emotions.<sup>9</sup> However, Prinz denies that bodily changes serve as the initiation pathway and direct cause of emotions, and his presentation of core relational themes as the direct cause of emotions lacks persuasiveness.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, he fails to explain the source of conceptual cognitive abilities included in the core relational themes. In addition, individual differences in negative or positive emotions or emotional degree in the emotional states produced by the same or similar situations are not considered. In contrast, Embodied Emotion Theory handles these aspects more appropriately. Embodied Emotion Theory provides a more specific and comprehensive description of the core relational themes, offering detailed explanations for the core relational themes involved in over a dozen basic emotions. It also acknowledges the existence of non-conceptual cognitive abilities, avoids excessive reliance on cognitive abilities, and recognizes the different emotional features of individuals.

Fourthly, from the perspective of the non-inferential structure argument in the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, the argument's problem is that the content of

<sup>9</sup>Jesse J. Prinz, "Is Emotion a Form of Perception?" *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 36, no. 32 (2006): 137–160, at 148.

<sup>10</sup>Salmela, "Can Emotion be Modelled on Perception?," 5.

emotions does not follow a non-inferential structure.<sup>11</sup> This is because emotions not only adhere to correctness standards but also to true standards, and the content of emotions is related to rationality and is akin to beliefs. However, I think that perception adheres only to correctness standards not to true standards. So, emotions and perceptions differ in adhering to true standards. Therefore, attempting to deduce that emotions possess this feature through the content of perception, which can contain contradictory content to beliefs without involving contradictions, fails to establish a non-inferential structure in the content of emotions. However, Embodied Emotion Theory does not explicitly specify whether emotions are inferential or non-inferential, but in dealing with contradictory emotions, embodied theories may provide new arguments for the non-inferential structure of emotions, considering the interaction between emotions and the environment. Contradictory emotions coexist in reality, and this contradiction is not logical or propositional but occurs in real situations. Perhaps a certain emotion may dominate at a specific moment, but this does not exclude the simultaneous existence of opposing emotions in the subject. Thus, the Embodied Emotion Theory seems to offer new evidence for the non-inferential structure argument of emotions.

Fifthly, considering the epistemic role argument in the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, the emotional frame of reference is similar to the perceptual frame of reference, with the long-term evaluation of emotions forming values or character tendencies akin to the features of perception, and these features all play an epistemic role.<sup>12</sup> However, the issue lies in the difficulty of explaining certain special cases through the features of perception, such as a timid person displaying fearlessness in front of a loved one. Additionally, negative emotions are not overly associated with perception. Emotions should not be understood solely as the perception of evaluative facts, as the long-term formation of values is not just the perception of evaluative facts; it is also influenced by various social environments and individual experiences. Therefore, exclusively drawing a parallel between emotions and perception from an epistemic role perspective would overlook many factors. But Embodied Emotion theory's advantage lies in its ability to focus on the individual features of emotions and consider the influencing factors on emotions more thoroughly.

Sixthly, from the perspective of the phenomenological argument in the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, emotions involve bodily feelings and feeling towards, both possessing intentionality and directly pointing towards an object.<sup>13</sup> Both perception and emotions exhibit a feature of cognition that is cognitively impenetrable, requiring reflective thinking through feelings to comprehend things. However, feelings directed towards something are not a necessary factor for emotions; they only apply in certain situations. Furthermore, emotional experiences are challenging to describe, and the fuzziness of emotions may present difficulties in explanation.

<sup>11</sup>Sabine A. Döring, "Seeing What to Do: Affective Perception and Rational Motivation," *Dialectica* 61, no. 3 (2007): 363–394, at 378–79.

<sup>12</sup>J. A. Deonna, "Emotion, Perception, and Perspective," *Dialectica* 60, no. 1 (2006): 29–46, at 36.

<sup>13</sup>Peter Goldie, "Emotions, Feelings, and Intentionality," *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences* 1 (2002): 235–54, at 235.

However, perceptual experiences are easier to describe, such as hearing and smell. Embodied Emotion theory might offer better explanations for this, as it does not reject feelings directed towards something in emotions but further explains them as action-oriented. Regarding the fuzziness of emotions, Embodied Emotion theory places it in specific contexts for consideration, attempting to mitigate the difficulties that fuzziness might bring in terms of explanation. In these aspects, Embodied Emotion theory has certain advantages.

In summary, the advantages of the Perceptual Theories of Emotion are as follows:

- A. Perception does not require language proficiency and conceptualization abilities, avoiding excessive criticism for being overly rational and accommodating the emotions of infants and animals.
- B. The theories of emotional perception integrate the advantages of cognitivism and non-cognitivism, focusing not only on the intentionality of emotions but also on the phenomenological content of emotions.

However, the Perceptual Theories of Emotion has its drawbacks, including:

- i. The methodological limitations of analogical reasoning are insufficient to demonstrate that emotions are equivalent to perception; it can only establish partial similarities. Additionally, many dissimilarities between emotions and perception have been overlooked by proponents of the theories.
- ii. Prinz's perceptual system theory, including the three core relational themes, is not mature enough and fails to provide detailed explanations for the diversity of core emotional themes and the individual differences in emotional valence and intensity.
- iii. The non-inferential structure argument in Perceptual Theories of Emotion fails to accurately elucidate the relationship between emotions, perceptions, and beliefs.
- iv. The epistemic role argument in Perceptual Theories of Emotion neglects the impact of social environments and individual experiences on emotions.
- v. The phenomenological argument in Perceptual Theories of Emotion emphasizes the intentional directedness of feelings toward something, which is not a necessary factor for emotions.

In contrast, Embodied Emotion Theory can respond relatively well to these drawbacks. In comparison to the Perceptual Theories of Emotion, the main advantages of Embodied Emotion Theory lie in avoiding the drawbacks of the Somatic Feeling Theory, refining core relational themes or properties, providing new evidence for the non-inferential structure argument of emotions, focusing on individual emo-

tional features, mitigating the fuzziness of emotions, and avoiding the downsides of analogical reasoning.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Compared to the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion and Perceptual Theories of Emotion, Embodied Emotion Theory has a greater advantage in explaining the essence of emotions. Embodied Emotion Theory argues that emotions should be understood in the context of the interaction between the organism and the environment, and asserting that perception and action related to emotions are inseparable. The relationship between the organism and the environment is an affordance relationship, indicating that the organism responds to environmental stimuli with a certain action orientation or possibility. The affordance can also be used to describe the relational nature of emotional cores. The organism possesses sensorimotor skills, which are non-conceptual embodied practical knowledge that prepares the organism for action. In comparison to the first two theories, the advantages of Embodied Emotion Theory are:

- I. Avoiding the over-intellectualization of emotions, as well as not setting high requirements for conceptualization abilities. Infants can gain an understanding of self-awareness and societal rules through non-conceptual means.
- II. Providing a better explanation for recalcitrant emotions. Although recalcitrant emotions may involve contradictory beliefs, considering them in the context of the unique characteristics of individuals and viewing the current emotional response as appropriate or fitting can resolve this contradiction.
- III. Asserting that perception and action are inseparable, thereby revealing the action-oriented nature of emotions.
- IV. Paying more attention to the uniqueness and diversity of individual emotions.
- V. Deepening and refining Prinz's three core themes, revealing the affordance or action-oriented nature inherent in the relational properties of emotions.
- VI. Providing new evidence for the non-inferential structure argument of Perceptual Theories of Emotion.
- VII. Avoiding the drawbacks of analogical reasoning in emotional perception theories.

Based on the discussion above, an ideal theory of emotions should possess the following characteristics:

- (a) Avoiding an overly rational explanation of emotions and not excluding infants and animals from understanding emotions based on conceptualization abilities.
- (b) Considering the uniqueness and diversity of individual emotions, including differences in agent's emotions in the same situation and individual emotions arising from interactions with others or society.
- (c) Revealing the unique features of emotions, rather than presenting similarities between emotions and perceptions or other mental states through analogical means.
- (d) Emphasizing the relationship between emotions and the body, showing that emotions are closely related to bodily changes. While bodily changes are not a necessary condition for the occurrence of emotions, they remain crucial for an ideal theory of emotions.

If these criteria are considered for evaluating emotional theories, the Evaluative Judgment Theories of Emotion do not meet the first, second, and fourth criteria but can reveal the evaluative features of emotions while avoiding analogical dilemmas. Perceptual Theories of Emotion do not meet the second and third criteria but align with the fourth, revealing the relationship between emotions and the sensory system of perception. However, Embodied Emotion Theory aligns with all four criteria, making it more advantageous in explaining the essence of emotions than the other two theories.

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