AVANT, Vol. III, No. 2/2012
ISSN: 2082-6710 avant.edu.pl/en

Selected literature on affordances and ecological psychology

Ecological Psychology

The most recognizable journal devoted to ecological psychology. It focuses on many problems and issues that are related to animal-environment systems. The journal presents such diverse areas as human experimental psychology, developmental/social psychology, animal behavior, human factors, fine arts, communication, computer science, philosophy, physical education and therapy, speech and hearing, vision research. Frequency of the journal is four issues every year. Publischer: Taylor & Francis.

The journal's Main Editor is William M. Mace: Professor of Psychology at Trinity College (Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut, USA) and Executive Director of International Society for Ecological Psychology
(*http://caribou.cc.trincoll.edu/depts_ecopsyc/isep/)*

The journal's website:
http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10407413.asp

Classic works by James Jerome Gibson:

J.J Gibson. 1977. The Theory of Affordances. Eds. Robert Shaw and John Bransford. *Perceiving, acting, and knowing: toward an ecological psychology.* Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. 67-82.

In this article Gibson for the first time introduced the term "affordances".

J.J. Gibson. 1979. *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

One of the most important books about ecological psychology and affordances. It covers such topics like: complementarity of animal and environment, theory of affordances, theory of direct perception and ecological psychology. It is both: a new proposal of theory of perception and as well as critique of classic ones (like behaviourism, cognitivism). Obligatory position for everyone interested in the subject.

Other works:

A. Chemero. 2003. An Outline of a Theory of Affordances. *Ecological Psychology*, 15(2): 181-195.

Comprehensive overview on theory of affordances. Author describes the relations: (a) between the abilities of animals and features of the environment (b) and among affordances and niches, perceivers, and events.

W.W. Gaver. 1993. What in the World Do We Hear?: An Ecological Approach to Auditory Event Perception. *Ecological Psychology*, 5(1): 1-29.

Gaver takes an ecological approach to everyday listening. Everyday listening is the experience of hearing events in the world. Author develops a new framework for describing sound in terms of audible source attributes.

E.J. Gibson & A.D. Pick. 2000. *Perceptual learning and development: An ecological approach to perceptual learning and development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

It is a unique theoretical framework for the ecological approach to understanding perceptual learning and development. This book covers the development of perception in detail from birth through toddlerhood, beginning with the development of communication, going on to perceiving and acting on objects, and then to locomotion.

H. Heft. 2001. *Ecological Psychology in Context: James Gibson, Roger Barker, and the Legacy of William James*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

The book is a contribution to both the history of psychology and the development of the ecological method. Heft presents many different topics from philosophy and psychology and shows connections between both.

D. Norman. 1988. *The Psychology of Everyday Things*. New York: Basic Books.

Author of this book studies affordances in the context of human–machine interaction. It covers large amount of topics including HCI, design practice, ergonomics and psychology.

M.T. Turvey. 1992. Affordances and Prospective Control: An Outline of the Ontology. *Ecological Psychology*, 4(3): 173-187.

This article is about actions and ontology. Author argue that research in the ecological approach to prospective control is ultimately the search for objective laws. Moreover affordances and the promoted ontology is materialist and dynamicist.

W.H. Warren. 1984. Perceiving affordances: Visual guidance of stair climbing. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception & Performance*, 10, 683-703.

One of the most important experimental research about affordances. It is an analysis of affordances in terms of the dynamics of an animal-environment system. Warren explores relation between environmental properties and properties of animal by introducing critical points (phase transition to a new action), optimal points and more. Case study of a research is stair climbing ability.

prepared by Dawid P. Lubiszewski

published 24 December 2012