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Appraisal Patterns of Emotions in Human-Product Interaction

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Abstract

Emotional design, i.e., designing with an intention to evoke or to prevent a particular emotion, can be facilitated by understanding the processes underlying emotions. A promising approach to understanding these processes in the current psychological literature is appraisal theory. Appraisal theory can support this understanding because it explains how different emotions are elicited by different underlying appraisals. This paper reports a study that aimed to identify and specify appraisals that elicit emotions of product users for four emotion groups: happiness/joy, satisfaction/contentment, anger/irritation, and disappointment/dissatisfaction. The study started with a sensitizing task to make participants familiar with reporting their emotional experiences. With a combination of experience sampling and in-depth interviews, the emotions experienced when interacting with products and the causes of these emotions were captured. The results indicated that the appraisal patterns as proposed in general appraisal theory can also be traced in human-product interaction for all four emotion groups. On the basis of the results, an initial specification of those appraisals and design directions are proposed.

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