Education, Design and Practice – Understanding skills in a Complex World

• Paper / Proposal Title:
  “Learning architecture: A cognitive approach”

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• Abstract (300 words):

Architecture is a language. A challenge to teach, from the early institutionalism to the accelerating decentralization, had been a claim of the profession. However, architecture was being performed many years before its definition. A shift from the act of teaching to the performance of learning may provide a wider understanding of the language of architecture: how it works, and how it goes into the cognitive processes.

Language enables us to build meaningful structures using words in sequential order. In this manner, lexicon gives you the materials available, and grammar defines how they can be combined. Moreover, grammar is at the heart of the linguistic process that acts as an interface between syntax-semantics correspondence. In this way, infinitely many unique meaningful structures are coherently produced using a finite lexicon. Investigation of how learning and producing language may also give us the insight to understand learning and creating architecture that also has form and meaning. One key point is, “being exposed to” the observable “linguistic expressions” is vital in this learning process.
The reason to study architecture as a language lie behind this structure. Being exposed to architectural spaces, producing them socially, and analyzing them sytonically, people had been making sense of architectural structures and their parts. As learning of a language, architectural education is the mastery of a profession you already capable of: mastering on the instruments and knowing how to use them.

In this study, architectural and linguistic processes will be briefly examined from a cognitive perspective. Then, learning and generating/creating mechanisms of these phenomena are discussed. Such a perspective may lead to enhance the effectivity of architectural education. For the experimental shift in architectural learning, a strong need for a cognitive approach towards experience and exposure is seen. Ultimately, to form new sentences, new sentences need to be heard.

**Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Çağda Türkmen is a student in History, Theory and Criticism in Architecture master’s program at Istanbul Bilgi University and a research assistant in Department of Interior Architecture at Istanbul Esenyurt University. Graduated from Middle East Technical University Bachelor of Architecture, she had been a part of many students’ initiatives producing meetings, workshops, happenings, artwork, exhibitions, and publications. For the masters’ thesis, she is studying the potentials of ‘learning’ in decentralized architecture students’ initiatives in Turkey for a future of formal architectural education.

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