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An Investigation of The Concept of Designer Style and its Relevance To The Design of CAD Systems

Tony Eddison

Department of Architecture and Building Science
The Manchester Metropolitan University
Manchester

Underlying the notion of style is the basic premise that all designers are not the same and that the manner in which any designer works through a design problem towards a proposed solution may be qualitatively different from other designers. If, through this work, this is shown to be the case and the concept of designer style can be meaningfully discussed then any model of the design process and any system or product relating to this model must allow for such variations at the level of the group or individual. This is the starting point of this investigation of the concept of designer styles.

Plan

This background to the proposition of a five stage plan of work:

1. Literature review including design decision making, designer styles and the psychology of design. The primary aim of this review is to gain a fuller understanding of the concept of style, together with an awareness of how, if at all, it differs from the notion of strategy.
 2. In order to supplement the work in stage one, investigations will be conducted with designers within the Buildings and Estates Division at MMU and final year 3D Design Students within the Faculty of Art and Design at the same institution. More experienced CAD users will be investigated at Building Design Partnership (BDP) and Ove Arup, Manchester.
 3. Data from the previous two stages will be examined under expert guidance leading to a classification and interpretation of designer styles used during the survey.
 4. An attempt to validate the classification derived from stage 3.
 5. The development of CAD tool and interface requirements based on the interpretation of the data of stages 3 and 4.
- It is anticipated that the outcome of this research will show that designer style can be better understood and that a characterisation of an individual designers strategies may be expressed in terms other than those commonly accepted.

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