

Representation in imaginative practice: Studying learning and design among students of architecture

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Project leader: Jonas Ivarsson

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Project summary

In my current research project I seek to study design and problem solving activities among students of architecture. Of special interest is their use of modern computerised technologies. It is well recognised that technology can re-structure the division of labour, and thereby decrease the workload of the individual in a number of activities. But, in what ways can technology expand and augment the creative skills in processes of design? The specific interest of the project is thus to address the question of the supposed imaginative and creative possibilities afforded by the introduction of modern information technologies. Today, the employment of computerised tools in design and creative projects can be observed at all levels of the educational system. In this context, however, students of architecture present an exemplary case, as their education relies heavily on the use of computer-based technologies for the design and production of graphical representations.

To get an initial understanding of this large question, the project will make use of an ethnographic approach to the study of technology-rich learning environments. When following this approach technology will not be attributed any general characteristics that would supposedly cause specific effects. However, it is assumed that the use of digital tools in processes of construction and design, contribute, in hitherto fairly unexplored ways, to what will be characterised and analysed as imaginative practices.