Public Abstract

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Title:MODALITY SHIFT IN DESIGN PROCESS:

UNDERSTANDING THE RATIONALE BEHIND MODALITY SHIFT AND ITS EFFECT ON
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Architectural design is a deliberate act of creativity without any definite starting point. Critical analysis of any design process reveals its basic stages. Designers use a number of design and drafting tools as well as their media (modality) to perform these processes. In search of an effective solution, designers often tend to switch between modalities. The purpose of this study is to understand how design students rationalize their modality selection and factors causing modality shifts as well as the impact of these shifts on the design outcome.

This study examined different externalization forms of design ideas; identified any deviation from initial design ideas that occurred due to modality shift; analyzed final design outcomes by comparing initial ideas and its follow-through on the basis of their visualization and representation; and finally, looked into correlations between the modality shift and the design outcome.

Observation and analysis revealed that students tend to shift between modalities not necessarily for facilitating problem solving only. Individual styles, instructions, requirements, context, culture, competency, ambiguity and cognitive aspects also play a significant role. It was also evident that the amplitude of shift has a positive correlation with designers' experience and accordingly impact on the final design outcome. The result of this study would help to identify reasons and effects of modality shift in design process and thus benefit design pedagogy and practice. By developing effective design methods and processes through meaningful incorporation of traditional and technologically advanced tools, students of the digital age would benefit and enhance their design perception and decision-making.