

Creativity in design education: research with Creative Industries

The Role of Knowledge Sharing

Creativity in design education is considered to be the ability to generate new ideas and to combine existing ideas in new ways in order to find novel solutions to problems. Creativity is often enhanced by a free flow of knowledge and through social contact.

In this research project, an analysis of the knowledge-sharing practices of experts in the Creative Industries in Scotland has been conducted in order to inform novel approaches to design education which support creativity.

Methodology

The methodology in this study is design-based research; this approach advocates a rigorous framework, with cycles of design and evaluation, in which objectivity, reliability and validity are carefully considered.

Data has been gathered by structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews with participants from a wide range of Creative Industries. Data has also been gathered from final year students in design programmes.

Research Findings

In practice, employees in the creative industries consume and create knowledge by making use of a wide range of distributed resources. Creativity is an important aspect of practice for both students and experts. All respondents in this study believe that creativity is enhanced by knowledge-sharing collaborative practices.

However differences between the practices and knowledge-sharing patterns of students and experts have been identified. This evidence has been used to develop an authentic industry-based learning and teaching intervention which supports creative design. The learning and teaching outcomes have been evaluated and the evidence suggests that authentic knowledge-sharing interventions support the development of

creative solutions to design problems. A number of key principles have been deduced that are considered central to this outcome.

These are to:

- provide students with learning opportunities which allow them to work collaboratively with industry experts and clients.
- provide students with authentic learning tasks which prepare them for the complexity of real-world design environments.
- reward learners (through assessment) for meaningful collaboration and the open sharing of creative ideas over cooperation in content creation.
- provide students with feedback which is meaningful to them and used in learning.
- encourage students to self-regulate their learning, by setting their own goals and reflecting on their motivations.

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