

A Discursive Psychology Analysis of Creating Accounts of Decision-Making in Sustainable Design

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Introduction

Sustainable design is a critical area of focus in contemporary society, with an increasing number of individuals, businesses, and governments seeking to reduce the environmental impact of their actions. In this context, decision-making plays a crucial role in sustainable design, as it requires individuals to balance multiple factors and prioritize competing values. This paper will present a discursive psychology analysis of creating accounts of decision-making in sustainable design.

Discursive psychology

Discursive psychology is a theoretical and methodological approach to understanding how individuals use language to create social reality. Discursive psychology assumes that individuals create social reality through their use of language and that language use is shaped by the social context in which it occurs. Therefore, by analyzing the language used in social interactions, discursive psychologists seek to understand how individuals construct and negotiate social reality [1].

Creating accounts of decision-making in sustainable design

In sustainable design, decision-making is a complex process that involves balancing economic, environmental, and social considerations. Individuals who engage in sustainable design must navigate competing values and make trade-offs between different goals. Therefore, understanding how individuals create accounts of decision-making in sustainable design can provide valuable insights into the factors that shape sustainable design practices. One way in which individuals create accounts of decision-making in sustainable design is by framing their decisions as being based on environmental values. For example, an individual might justify their decision to invest in renewable energy by stating that it aligns with their commitment to reducing their carbon footprint. By framing their decision in this way, the individual creates an account that positions them as environmentally conscious and socially responsible [2].

Another way in which individuals create accounts of decision-making in sustainable design is by highlighting the economic benefits of their decisions. For example, an individual might justify their decision to install energy-efficient lighting by pointing out that it will result in cost savings over time. By framing their decision in this way, the individual creates an account that positions them as economically savvy and financially responsible.

However, these accounts are not mutually exclusive, and individuals may create accounts that incorporate both environmental and economic

considerations. For example, an individual might justify their decision to invest in a sustainable building design by highlighting the long-term cost savings that will result from reduced energy consumption, as well as the environmental benefits of the design. By framing their decision in this way, the individual creates an account that positions them as environmentally and financially responsible. The accounts that individuals create of their decision-making in sustainable design are shaped by the social context in which they occur. For example, in a business context, individuals may be more likely to highlight the economic benefits of their decisions, while in a social context; individuals may be more likely to emphasize the environmental benefits of their decisions. The social context also influences the audience for whom the accounts are created, and the language used to create the accounts [3].

Discursive psychology provides a useful framework for understanding how individuals create accounts of decision-making in sustainable design. Through the analysis of language use in social interactions, discursive psychologists can identify the factors that shape sustainable design practices and the values that underpin decision-making in this context. By understanding the language used to create accounts of decision-making in sustainable design, individuals and organizations can develop more effective strategies for communicating the benefits of sustainable design and promoting environmentally and socially responsible practices [4].

Description

To assist designers in making wiser and more environmentally friendly design choices, numerous techniques have been developed. Yet, research on designers' viewpoints on design choice is scarce. Discursive psychology is employed in this study to examine designers' explanations of their decision-making. When attempting to characterise decision-making as an identifiable action, the designers struggle. To explain how decision-making fits into the design process, various techniques are employed. Constructions of rational decision-making are used in explanations of how decisions are formed, but these structures are later overturned by "confessions" of intuition. Instead than being decided by designers, sustainability decisions are portrayed as being decided by other stakeholders. The results demonstrate that decision-making is a versatile concept that may be used to explain a variety of actions [5].

Numerous organisations that promote sustainability and the circular economy emphasise the importance of design choices for long-term product viability. Therefore, it is emphasised that making decisions is a crucial action for designers. Many people argue that the key choices regarding a product's sustainability are made at the design stage. Decisions are discussed in terms of criteria and options in design literature. For instance, while selecting concepts, materials, and assembly techniques, designers may take sustainability factors like longevity, reparability, and supply chain impacts into mind. Typically, these design choices are chosen within the confines of a design brief that is either established by clients or internally within a corporation. Throughout the past several decades, several viewpoints on how design decisions should be decided have evolved and have been the topic of intense theoretical discussion. Although such a contradiction is unlikely to exist in professional design practise, two opposing strategies can be found in the literature. On the one hand, a logical, scientific approach typically encourages the use of a linear design process and decision-support tools. In contrast, a creative approach welcomes subjectivity and intuition into the design process. Although there is growing acknowledgment that design is a social process involving substantial

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collaboration and negotiation among many stakeholders, both viewpoints usually place the designer at the centre of design decision-making.

Conclusion

A substantial corpus of literature with a scientific, engineering design approach has suggested that design decision-making should be explicit and reasonable. Engineering design authors describe design decision-making as requiring evaluating possibilities against criteria while frequently utilising mathematical formulas. This is consistent with traditional choice theory, which encourages listing all available possibilities before choosing the best one. There are many Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) tools available that promise to assist designers or design teams in making judgements that are better, or frequently more sustainable. These tools provide formulas for comparing possibilities and rating them in according to criteria. They can take the shape of computer programmes or simpler maths that can be finished by hand. The majority of the literature on the use of MCDA tools in design focuses on providing examples of when to use the tools and suggestions for enhancing their technical capabilities. These tools assume the assumption that designers are aware of the decision-making stage, are capable of identifying the possibilities, and just require assistance in objectively evaluating the options against predefined criteria to eliminate human subjectivity. Yet, this objective purpose is criticised for ignoring how people's opinions and criteria are inevitably influenced by humans.

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