

STOÀ Journal n. 8, Year III, Issue 3/3, Autumn 2023: Lexicon

Deadline: Apr 17, 2023

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As part of a broader reflection or exploration on the theme of language – of how one communicates through words – and its internal and operational mechanisms in relation to teaching, Stoà 8 investigates a specific theme: that of lexicon.

Ludwig Wittgenstein once wrote: «The limits of my language are the limits of my world». This statement seems to be particularly emblematic at present, given that one of the dominant features of our time is the impoverishment of the lexical landscape, both due to the continuous process of technicalisation of the professional world, which grows increasingly distant from a humanistic approach, and due to the establishment of new forms of communication wherein the image – rather than the verb – has risen to take on the protagonist role.

And yet, as Wittgenstein suggests, it is precisely through words (their meaning and the cultural references associated with them) that one is able to demarcate a conceptual horizon. In architecture, this usually occurs on two levels – on the one hand, from an operative point of view in the making and constructing architectural arguments and on the other in the development and transmission of the tools through which architectural projects are constructed. In this sense, whenever a term ceases to exist in our linguistic repertoire, so too do the images associated with it cease to exist in our minds. In the context of architectural pedagogy, this void can represent a major obstacle. Indeed, the absence of a word makes it impossible to access the forms of knowledge associated with it, to grasp its conceptual dimensions in the development of the discipline and, why not, to recognize its relevance for thinking and conceptualizing the contemporary world. It is in this sense that the precise choice of the use words, even if dialectically and through contrasts, is able to determine the character or the conceptual and cultural bearing of a design course, while at the same time providing the necessary resources for the redefinition of the limits within which a given conceptualization of knowledge occurs. Faced with this double possibility of language, the aim of Stoà 8 is to carry out a critical reflection on the words used in the teaching of architectural design today, in order to identify a conceptual vocabulary necessary to encompass (and possibly reinvent) the various subject areas of the discipline.

In the light of the above observations, two possible subject areas are proposed:

Lexicon and Pedagogy: Architectural pedagogy necessarily relies on a number of key words to orient the investigation and structure the design course. But which educational experiences actually use vocabulary as a basis for teaching? Which exercises in the teaching of architectural design are characterized by the set of concepts and contents conveyed by a chosen set of words? And

what practices are used to translate the word into architecture or to substantiate verbal concepts in order to make them tangible in physical space?

Lexicon and Contemporaneity: As a set of words amounting a specific linguistic system, a lexicon is the result of a collective work rooted in the past but gradually reconfigured according to contemporary needs. What new terms are emerging in the teaching of architectural design? How can the renewal of the architectural lexicon enable students (and teachers) to deal with the range of critical issues defined by contemporary conditions?

We are interested in contributions that specifically engage with the following:

- recognizing common traits in contemporary international pedagogical experiences;
- understanding and describing approaches and cultural references, as well as inferences derived from other fields, such as history, art, philosophy, anthropology, literature, geography, sociology and economics useful for teaching architecture;
- exemplifying, through their conceptualization, specific didactic experiences, capable of becoming synthetic and effective expressions of a teaching know-how;
- intertwining narratives and research, theories and conjectures, verifying the starting conditions by comparing them with the results of the teaching activities;
- tracing a limit that can be shared by the scientific community, within which to critically and tentatively “position” ideas and (didactic) projects, in order to build a recognizable system by substantiating the reasons.

Abstracts in English or Italian (max. 2500 characters, with one keyword before the title) and three images should be submitted (in .doc file): redazione@stoajournal.com

Accepted abstracts will be announced by 26/04/2023. Contributions accepted for publication in the printed journal are expected by 12/06/2023 in the form of a scientific essay, accompanied by notes, bibliography and images, for a maximum of 18,000 characters (spaces, notes and bibliography included) and 8 images/pictures (of which you own the copyright or if they are free for use).

The proposed article must be original in its content. It should have not been published in another print or digital magazine or book.

Accepted essays in their final version will undergo a process of Double-Blind Peer Review.

The call is open to PhD students, researchers, professors and all scholars academically involved in teaching architecture.

Abstracts will not be accepted from authors whose contributions have already been selected through calls (in STOA 4, 5, 6 and 7).

Reference:

CFP: STOA Journal n. 8, Year III, Issue 3/3, Autumn 2023: Lexicon. In: ArtHist.net, Mar 21, 2023 (accessed May 13, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/38845>>.