

**LOCAL VALUES**  
**in a**  
**NETWORKED**  
**DESIGN WORLD**

ADDED VALUE OF COMPUTER AIDED  
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

**DUP Science**

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# Statements for the workshop

## Local values in a networked design world

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### **‘Constructed’ knowledge vs. ‘received’ knowledge**

- As my paper begins to express, a great deal depends on how one treats the idea of ‘information’: is it a static entity that can be applied to students without their active participation, or does it require a ‘constructed’ response from them?
- I believe it requires a much more constructed approach than has been the case up to now, in most educational situations.
- Of course, educational approaches vary quite considerably between countries. In countries where rote learning is common, there may be little opportunity for students to construct their own ‘customized’ responses to the ideas and information they encounter.
- This tends to increase the stress that these students feel within the educational process, as well makes education a much more painful activity than it needs to be.
- In the end, it tends to be a counter-productive educational strategy, since stress of this sort tends to inhibit learning in most students.

### **Local / global**

- In a networked environment, definitions of ‘local’ and ‘global’ are not necessarily geographically based.
- In a P2P environment, for example, the unit of locality is the network hop, that takes you to your nearest peer. Each network hop may involve a cross-global journey.
- With P2P systems, one of the most interesting features is the ease with which virtual communities can be set up between strangers. Virtual communities are therefore defined dynamically by people who decide for themselves that they might have mutually beneficial reasons to come together.

## **Information and language**

- Information if it is to be shared, seems to depend on the use of shared languages.
- Most information is exchanged using language. The reason that language evolved in the first place, in higher primates, was to allow them to communicate with their peers.
- Therefore, using language is at its foundation a social activity.
- When one uses a particular language, one must adopt the thought patterns that this language affords the speaker.
- This idea, that languages influence the kind of thoughts that can be imagined or expressed in the language, is called the ‘Safir Whorf hypothesis’, named after a pair of famous social linguists.
- It suggests that information is not an objective entity, but one that varies considerably depending on the language used to express it.
- Meaning comes ultimately from a history of shared interactions. In these interactions, the semantic ‘meaning’ of information arises.

## **Future use of local and global information**

- In the future, I believe, the value of socially ‘constructed’ knowledge will increase.
- In this regard, it appears that P2P applications will become a valuable addition to an educator’s repertoire.

