

Introduction

Space and place have been important concepts in architectural and urban histories, from ancient to present times. Since the 1990s, issues of space and place have influenced interest and development in the field of social sciences and anthropology. The shift in approach now focuses on the location and construction of space that gives a foundation to social behaviour and practices of culture. Space is acknowledged as an essential component that encapsulates socio-cultural theory. "...rethinking and reconceptualising understandings of culture in specialised ways..." (Low & Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003:1).

It is important to acknowledge the anthropological viewpoint regarding spatial aspects and social practices, but this falls on the fringe of the investigation of this study.

Lefebvre argues in *The Production of Space* (1991) that social practices produce space (social space). "Everyone knows what is meant when we speak of a 'room' in an apartment, the 'corner' of the street, a 'marketplace, a shopping or cultural 'centre', a public 'place' and so on. These terms of everyday discourse serve to distinguish, but not to isolate, particular spaces, and in general to describe a social space." (Lefebvre 1991:16). The interconnectedness of spaces is enhanced by the social activities and interaction. The descriptive words are derived from the spatial function: 'room', 'corner', 'marketplace', 'centre' and 'place'. The words contain meaning according to the use of language to describe place. This study accepts the value in the meaning of words and utilises terminology in the investigation. The aim, however, is to use words as elements or principles that, once combined, will create spatial meaning by being associated with one another.

Place and non-place are used as terminology based on Augé's (1995:77-78) argument that place contains spatial dimensions and spatial manifestations. Place is defined as "relational, historical, and concerned with identity". It allows

for urban relationships and social life. Non-place, on the other hand, generates no identity, history or urban relationships, but forms spaces that are temporarily used for passing through, communication and consumption.

This study investigates the criteria to define space and create place. The use of terminology is based on the premise of Augé's (1995) argument that is interpreted: place = positive space and non-place = negative space. The words are used in a broad sense that encompasses aspects related to space and place combined.

Lefebvre indicates the importance of 'differential spaces' that allow for appropriation by the user. This process facilitates space in becoming place. Elements are unified, according to specific social practices within the daily routine (Lefebvre 1991:38, 52). Spatial codes, verbal and non-verbal, are described that are used to make space. Verbal implies connection to words and meaning which are not addressed in this investigation. Non-verbal codes, on the other hand, include physical aspects, such as architectural constructions (Lefebvre 1991:47-48). This study focuses on the static, physical environment as the spatial framework, which can be appropriated by combining elements of spatial definition and the application of spatial variables (principles) to create place.

The study acknowledges the multitude of options for organising space and the vast number of meanings related to any give place. Additional factors that influence the production of space and the creation of place also cannot be ignored: "...people form meaningful relationships with the locales they occupy, how they attach meaning to space and transform 'space' into 'place'..."
Philosopher Edward Casey also explains the process of transforming 'space' into meaningful 'place' (Low & Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003:13, 17).

Social construction of space further allows for spatial experience through which people have social exchange and memories in daily activities. This relates to Michel De Certeau's *Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), concerning how people spatially act out space in daily operations. The term tactics is used to demonstrate how spatial domination is contested by means of use and manipulation (Low & Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003:31-32). Tactics within spatial environments are necessary, as external, uncontrollable factors influence the process and product of place through spatial production. Foucault argues that power structures control space use and behaviour and that this is driven by the political power over enclosure and the organisation of space (Low & Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003:30). The investigation accepts this influence, together with "...geographical, economic, demographic, sociological, ecological, political, commercial, national, continental and global influences..." (Lefebvre 1991:8). These influences determine the nature of spatial definition and the meaning associated with place.

Soja (1996) brings everything together in the trialectic approach to human life: spatiality, historicity and sociality. Trialectic thought is captured in Soja's *Thirdspace* (1996) that indicates the relation to Lefebvre's trialectics and include spatiality (physical), spatial thinking (mental) and spatial imagination (social). Soja (1996:74) argues that "...each term appropriately contains the other two although each is distinguishable and can be studied in splendidly specialised isolation..." The study focuses on the physical spatial environment that is static and produced to facilitate social and mental activities and interaction.

In Low & Lawrence-Zúñiga (2003:4) the viewpoint of Edward Hall is argued: "...universally shared phenomenological experiences...people not only structure spaces differently, but experience them differently and inhabit distinct sensory worlds." Lefebvre (1991:48) argues in support that generalities cover societies within a global mode of production of space. If modes of production can be generalised and universally shared, then collective elements and methods to

physically produce and appropriate place need to exist. The question then arises: what are the elements and variables (principles) that can be applied to define space and create place?

The aim of the study is to determine the relationship between spatial definition and place-making. This integration is supported by the identification of theoretical terminology based on interior place. The focus is not on anthropological space or socio-political, economic or cultural aspects, but on the geometrical space that can serve as a spatial facilitator for social practices. The aim is to establish general guidelines that can be used to produce space and place to be appropriated by any society, combined in various ways according to the context and purpose of the space. The appropriateness and meaning related to place are aspects for further study.

The following diagram, Figure a, positions the direction and approach of this investigation, highlighting the focus of the study within the broad scope of spatial definition and place-making within architectural and urban interiors. The physical static model of space or 'spatiality' is of importance. The other two aspects of this trialectic interaction are excluded.

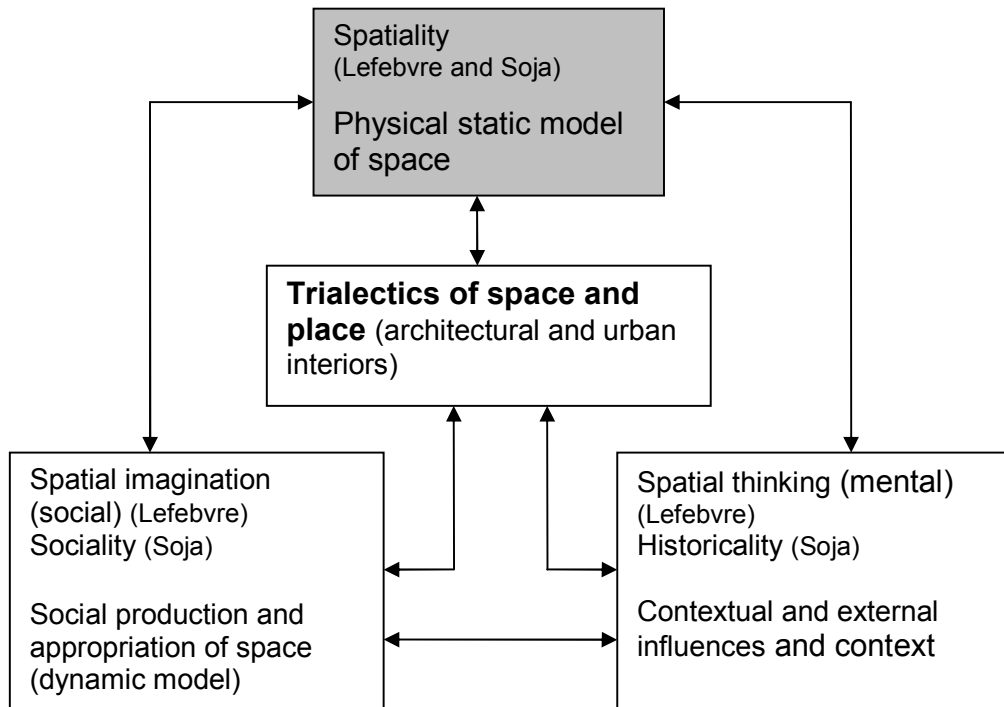


Figure a: Trialectic context (Adapted from (Soja 1996:74)

In order to understand the physical static model of space or 'spatiality' this trialectic aspect is analysed in terms of various components. The effect of external influences on space and place creation falls on the fringe of this investigation, but it is noted that these influences will largely determine the selection of elements that can be used to define space, and the variables (principles) with which place is enriched.

The external influences as listed, determine the selection of elements and variables (principles) according to a specific context, use and location. A combined application, results in the creation of the interior according to the specific situation.

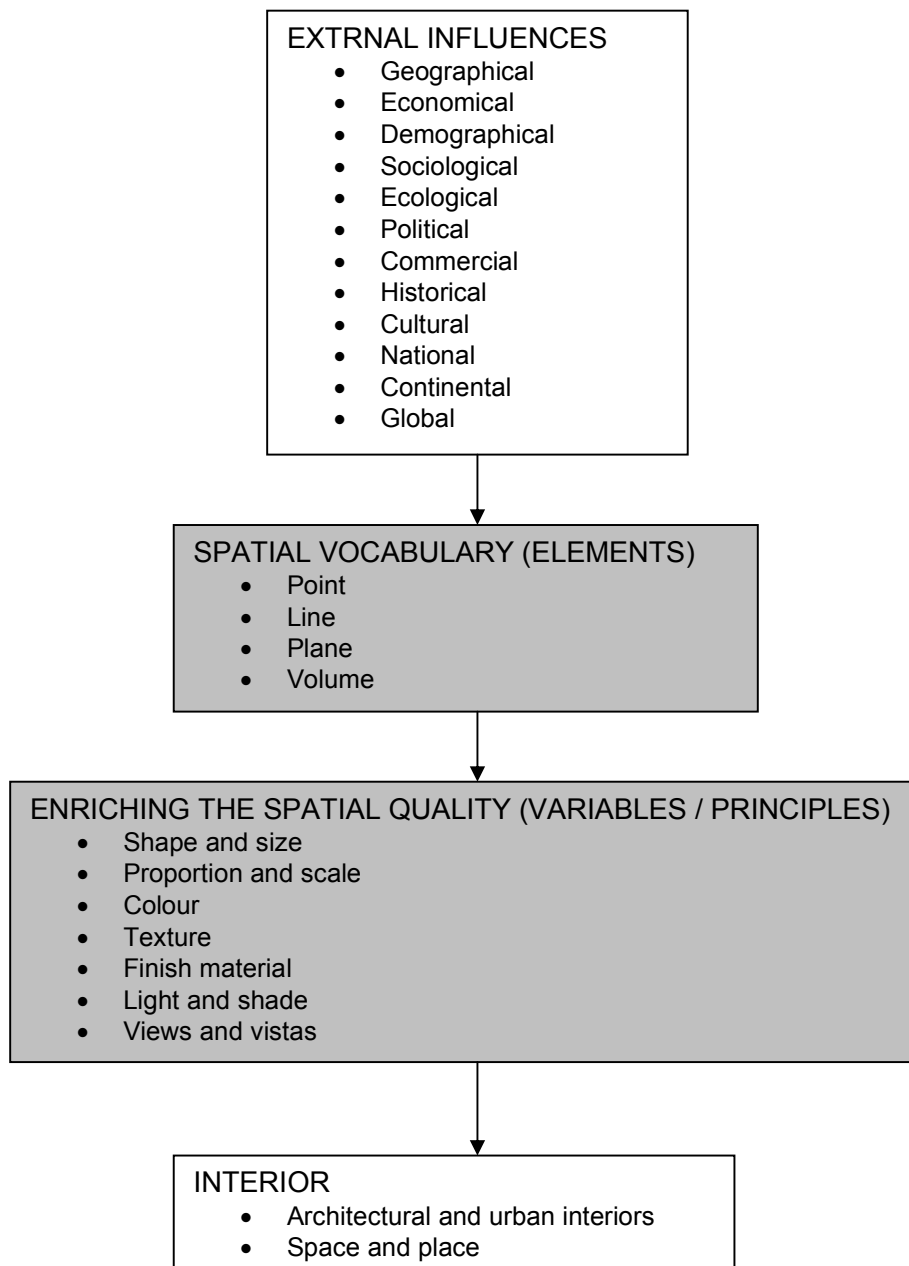


Figure b: Physical static model of space (Grobler 2006)

Figure b identifies, Spatial Vocabulary (elements), and Enriching the Spatial Quality (variables / principles), as the two major components. With these combined, interiors are produced.

The combination of architectural and urban interiors in both diagrams is a strategic decision, illustrating the compatibility of terminology as communal vocabulary for the definition of space and the creation of place. The selection of the same words indicates the compatibility in the use of the terms. Alternatives can possibly be found, but this investigation places emphasis on an unambiguous comprehension in the interpretation of the vocabulary. In this manner a gradual shift from architectural and urban interiors could be noted. However, the aim of the study is to find commonalities that can make possible the use and application of 'interior', describing the elements and variables (principles) with the same words.

The search focuses on the possibility of utilising the same criteria for urban places. The question remains whether a collective use of vocabulary can be established to define space and create place, regardless of the location. Does a universal set of criteria exist to create a relationship between spatial definition and place-making?