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16

Towards a model
of designing

The kinds of knowledge that may enter into a design solution are practically limitless

> Goel and Pirolli, *The Structure of Design Problem Spaces*

You think philosophy is difficult enough, but I tell you it is nothing to the difficulty of being a good architect.

> Wittgenstein, *Conversation with M.O'C Drury 1930*

This book has relied upon a great deal of research to develop its arguments. Some of the data behind those arguments are the author's but much were collected by others. A brief look back through the book will show that a tremendously wide range of research methodology has been used in design research. It is possible to classify all these approaches.

Ways of investigating design

When the first edition of this book was written in 1980 there was relatively little empirical research into the design process. Most of what had by then been written about designing was based not on gathered evidence but on introspection. A number of designers had simply sat down and reflected on their own practice and what they thought must be happening. Thus many early writers described not a design process they had observed, but one they believed logically must take place. Perhaps some, whose work was then known as 'design methods', even described a process they thought ought to happen. Examples of this sort of work are found in Chapter 3 and would include attempted definitions of design