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Representations of Finnish Design Policy Discourses of Design Policy in Economical Press

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Research Questions, Used Terms and Purpose of the Study

Industrial design related design policy manifestations started to emerge in Finland in the beginning of 1960s (Sulonen, 1968; Sitra, 1972). Before that Finnish design policy was mainly in the hands of few design patrons and well-known design promoters (Kalha, 1997). However, after the Second World War in Finland the situation changed. Discussions orientated more and more to the means that could be used in differentiating Finland through quality design.

”Design is facing big tasks. Small countries may be competitive in parallel with big and capital-rich countries, if design policies in the small countries are taken care of with appreciation and far-sighted actions [...] but as long as design is not coordinated on the government level it cannot be utilised properly nationally nor internationally.

Advancement in the field of design is rapid. It is not enough that the rhythm is the same than others have, but it should be slightly faster. Self-admirer escapes from the topic and will be left on the verge of the road.” (Tapiovaara, 1965, p. 10)

Ilmari Tapiovaara¹, an internationally well known Finnish interior designer and in those days the chairman of the Finnish Association of Designers Ornamo, characterises above the growing importance of design policy both in national and international level. This particular notion of Finland’s ability to compete with bigger countries in terms of design took place in 1965. In Finland, as in other Scandinavian countries, design is highly dependent on the public sector and the state. The state funds all education, which is free for the students, as well as funds the different players and organisations in the design world (Valtonen, 2005b). This can be seen as a reason for political players frequently commenting design in media.

Similarly Tanja Karpela, the Culture Minister of Finland, elaborates on Finnish design policy and its consequences in an economical context grounding the benefits to the national level in 2004.



“ [...] Purpose of the design program (Design 2005!) is to connect design to the national innovation system. The idea is to clarify the role of design as a part of fostering competitiveness of industry and service sector. International accounts address that business operations based on design are remarkable, and have a clear influence on competitiveness in companies.” (Kauppalehti [KL], 15.4.2004).

The journalist's next question concerned differences of consumer and capital goods. Companies producing consumer goods have taken advantage of design, but would it be worth directing public design funding to companies that produce also capital goods? The Minister answers the question:

”To enable development of design in Finland a ‘Design 2010 –strategy’ was initiated.

The purpose of this strategy is to pin down the very question. It is very important to clarify those success-clusters in which design has central role in fostering competitiveness.” (KL, 15.4.2004).

The subject of this research is design as a phenomenon taking place in the Finnish society. When defined this way, the subject is placed between subjective, communal and societal tensions. Generally design is considered from the perspective of economical press where the cultural and societal issues are particularly emphasised. Consequently, this paper deals with design discussions taking place in context of economical press on the level of four design policy discourses. The design policy discourses and the particular descriptions will be addressed on a detailed level.

The main questions of this research are: what have the discourses of design policy been like in Finland from the beginning of 1990s to 2005? How can these media discourses of the Finnish design policy be interpreted in a relevant way?

Besides the above stated questions this research pays attention to appearance of the design policy discourses and its evolution taking place in the particular time. The themes of design discussion that spring up from the Finnish society are also in the research focus. These themes appearing in design policy are strategic and the expected effects take place in the societal level. This paper will not concentrate on describing particular events that have occurred in the field of official Finnish design policy. There is already an extensive body of literature describing the progress in detail (see Korvenmaa, 1998; Korvenmaa, 2001; Saarela, 1999; Valtonen, 2005a; Valtonen, 2005b). There is also a forthcoming evaluative paper on the Finnish design policy program and its results. The paper at hand focuses only to the design policy discourses highlighted by the Finnish economical press.

The term policy, especially design policy, is frequently mentioned in this paper. Policy is usually understood as an organised and established system or a form of a government or an administration. The term policy can also be defined as a course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman or some other public actor. On the other hand, policy can be defined as any course of action adopted as advantageous or



expedient. When adopting the latter context in many respects, the design policy described in this paper concerns the conduct of public affairs and communal actions executed by the institutional actors involving design in Finland. The Ministry of Education, design education on several levels, research, Ornamento, industry, and international relationships of these actors can be regarded as participants of the larger frame called Finnish design policy. Also promotional actors like design museums and non-profit associations are policy makers when these actors are aiming at a commonly accepted goal or common-spirited intent in developing design related issues in Finland.

The purpose of this paper is to link different aspects of design discussions in economical press to the context of design policy. This view and suggested discourses may be divergent when compared to discussions taking place in cultural columns of the Finnish newspapers. When the subject is brought to the economical context, the role of design can be seen quite differently. The design representations in media can thus be linked to various meanings produced in contemporary Finnish society. This makes it possible to evaluate the meanings of design and, for example, the effects the of conducted design policy in Finnish society.

Research Method, Materials and Procedure

The research method applied in this paper is a rather well known approach to study different texts: discourse analysis. The nature of discourse analysis is rather heuristic than strictly methodological, the very strength of this research method is its flexibility. Discourse analysis can also be applied to various phenomena and through various sortiments of different texts or textual materials (e.g. Gee, 1999; Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 1993; Jokinen, Juhila, & Suoninen, 1999).

Discourse analysis can be defined as a research method that focuses on the usage of language or other meaning mediating activity (Jokinen et al., 1993, pp. 9-10). With methodological help provided by discourse analysis, the collected textual research data will be analysed in detail. Subject matter of discourse analysis is how social reality is produced in various socially determined conventions (Gee, 1999). Discourse analysis is basically constructed as if social meanings, communicative aspects and culturally orientated issues behind the texts have control over other relevant factors.

In the discourse analytical approach our understanding is based on a usage of language: to a conceptual classifications and different meanings language can transmit. The usage of language can be analysed from two aspects, as a picture of reality or a construction of reality (Jokinen et al., 1993). The first, 'realistic' view is based on assumption that language works as a mean to get information about the facts that exist. In the latter stance, usually called social constructionism, the usage of language is not seen as a bridge to the reality, but rather as a part of reality itself. Usually the discourse analytical approaches rely on the latter definition, and so does this study.

The focus of this paper is in analysing press articles and applying the discourse analysis as heuristic method for interpretation. Traditionally discourse analysis as a method for analysing empirical data is divided in two branches. First is centred in diversity of social reality and its variability. Another branch focuses on analysing



power structures and different dominating positions (e.g. Foucault, 1989). The approach used in this paper concentrates on the former.

It is worth noticing that discourses and suggested interpretation repertoires are consequence of researcher's interpretation based on empirical data. From this aspect discourses can be seen as a system of classification. Thus, the identity of a discourse is derived from the fact of how it stands out among other discourses. Discourses are, thereby, based on usage of language and to social conventions, less so to contextual situations. Systems of meaning appear usually in fragments, seldom in explicit en bloc. Defining or naming the discourses is a question of more than identifying simple themes or topics from the data. Besides the literal meanings, it is important but analytically quite challenging to grasp also the 'invisible' meanings written in articles. These invisible meanings can take a form of mythical or symbolic delineation (e.g. Barthes, 1990, pp. 109-115; Fiske, 1996, pp. 112-122). Researcher's central challenge applying discourse analysis is not a perception of different systems of meaning but detailed analysing of the ways of using these systems.

The empirical data of this research consists of article text and textual materials. All the data is collected from the three biggest economical papers in Finland² when measured by circulation. Thereby, the core of the data is articles of Finnish economical press from 1990 to 2005. The articles are collected so that the main theme of each article has a close communal link to design. The data consists of altogether 120 articles.

This paper is based on a qualitative examination of economical paper articles concerning about design policy related discourses. The applied method of interpretation, discourse analysis, can be divided into three procedural phases. First, the representations concerning design policy in Finland were recognized and isolated from the irrelevant part of the data. In the second phase the isolated representations of design policy were classified. The classification based on the topicalisation and the functions determining why these manifestations of discourses were written in the article text and, what was the goal these discourses were emerging for. Thirdly, the classified themes of design policy representations were collected together and as a result four design policy discourses or different models to present design policies were formulated. The discourses depict how design policy is presented to the Finnish citizens during the selected period of time.

Design Policy Related Themes in the Sample of Finnish Economical Press in 1990-2005

The general themes presented in the design-related articles in the economical press have varied according to different time periods (see table 1). These themes are operating on a non-specific and quite time-bound level describing design-relevant issues occurring in the Finnish society. Later in this paper introduced design discourses are taking place more or less under these general design themes. The general design themes presented in this chapter are more conceptual than the more concrete design policy discourses that will be analysed in detail later in this paper. However, it seems to be fundamental to design policy related discourses that they are not time bound in a same sense that general design trends presented in this chapter.

In the beginning of 1990s the economical press emphasised themes in which industrial design was seen as a solution for, or saviour of, Finland's industry. In the late eighties, the practise of industrial design had



established itself from a few pioneers to a regular part of business activities in several Finnish companies (Valtonen, 2005b). Industrial design was seen as a means to pass through the exceptionally vast economical recession in the beginning of 1990s. At the same time economical press articles strongly introduced the meaning of design strategies and different design leadership programmes to wider public as a new and innovative ways of applying design. The beginning of 1990s is also stated to be a transitional period in industrial design because of new technological tools, for example computers and CAD-programs, emerged to the field of industrial design (Valtonen, 2005c). New technological tools were represented as the providers of new possibilities that could be applied successfully in concrete design processes.

After the mid 1990s the economical situation changed. This can be traced partly back to societal changes, local economical upswing and Finland joining to the European Union in 1995. At the same time global economical upswing was sweeping the globe which increased also the competition on the global markets. At this period anxiousness started to raise in the economical press. The concern turned to the state-of-the-art technological development and its ability to bear to the future as fruitful as in the beginning of the 1990s; technological advancement was seen at least partly deficient. In addition, cooperation of various design actors and obstacles of improving design cooperation emerged to a subject matter in the context of economical press.

In the beginning of 2000s, design was strongly connected to the national innovation system, also on a political level (Saarela, 2000; Valtonen, 2005b). In 2000, Finland's government and the Ministry of Education established the official Finnish design policy in order to include design to the national innovation system. The main factor in this process was to improve competitiveness of the country both locally and globally. Before 1996, design had been supported by the state, but there was no formal design policy in place. In the late 1990s there were also several accounts and publications concerning the state of Finnish design and design policies (Korvenmaa, 1998; Korvenmaa, 2001; Saarela, 2000).

This, partly political, interest towards design can be seen also in the writings of economical press. In addition, the themes of articles aiming at improving Finland's design practises on the part of international competitiveness. It was also recognised that design will be necessary for the industry, and as a part of industrial research and development processes. This theme was encouraged in the international competition accounts that positioned Finland fairly high in the rankings. (e.g. The Design Taskforce, 2003, pp. 22-24). Another economy related account from those days are the papers that are identifying design as a basic process of the businesses – good design seemed to be good business (Calonius, 2002; Hytönen, 2003; Design Council, 2004; Design Council, 2005; SVID, 2004).

The latest phase in this progression culminated in 2005, which was also promotional "The Design Year 2005" in Finland. The purpose of this theme year was to bring design and consumers closer to each other and highlight the role of design in the Finnish society. At the same time the phenomenon, such as the transferring of industry labour to countries with lower employment costs, frequently referred to as the 'China-syndrome' in media, figured in the economical press. The general fear was that these countries, mostly in Asia and Eastern-Europe, would prevail in the race of competitiveness. The solutions to this 'unexpected' situation were to be



new innovations, design, high technology and high-quality research. The general themes are summarised in the table 1.

Table 1. The general themes discussed in economical press articles.

ECONOMICAL PRESS ARTICLES - GENERAL DESIGN RELATED THEMES			
- Economical recession, design leadership/strategy programmes, new technological tools (1990-1995)	- Economical up-swing, EU, technological advancement not enough, improving of design cooperation (1995-2000)	- The national innovation system, official design policy, design is necessary for the industry/basic process, international competitiveness (2000-2005)	- The Design Year 2005. "China-syndrome", new innovations, design, high technology and high-quality research – new path to glory (2005 →)

In this development, in economical articles, different parties identified and proposed cooperative actions and design identified as a possible means to overcome these new threats. It was believed that continuous and creative innovations will guarantee nations competitiveness. Another central theme that came up was creativity and the means to funnel it through design. The new discursive model was following: high education and technology as basic components combined to the talented creativity and design will provide the grounds for innovations that filter to consumer and capital markets. The innovations exchangeable on global markets will, thus, guarantee Finland's competitiveness in the long run.

Common Problems and Challenges – The Discourse of Mutual Challenges

When preceding general design themes are brought to closer examination and to the context of empirical article data, more specific discourses behind these themes can be pinned down (see table 2). As noticed earlier, the now identified discourses seem to appear without a clear connection to an exactly defined timeframe as it was case of general design themes introduced earlier. It is also worth noticing that the general themes and the discourses in economical press that will be presented next are events taking place on a different level.

The first design policy related discourse is the identification of mutual challenge. In principle, this is also a precondition that a political discourse can be found: there has to be an issue or problem that needs to be solved. The function of this discourse is to recognise and explain possible problems and to consider what the circumstances these particular problems occur are. Basically the contents of this discourse can be divided to problems that are controllable and those which nature is quite unpredictable. In this discourse, something in the field of design has been seen as a common problem that needs to be taken care of. For example, during the 1990s economical recession, and right after it, design had a role in economical press articles:

"Finnish design is having a hard time. Economical recession eliminates businesses and companies in Finland, and entire industries are in danger to totally vanish [...] The problem is how we could get designers and industry around the same table." (KL, 10.5.1991)⁵.



”Finland will arise again as a nation of design. Finland has always flourished when we have been in challenging cultural situations. As we examine history of design and history of arts and crafts, the biggest ascents have been always after the fierce societal transformations [...]” (KL, 18.4.1996)

Another way of defining design related problems is connected to more accurately defined issues. In these cases the object of the challenge or the ‘guilty’ element is recognisable. Usually, industry has identified as the guilty one. It is repeatedly suggested, from 1990 to 2005, that industry has not properly taken advantage of design.

”The core of this problem is in concept of applied arts. When designers’ and industry are not collaborating, there exist no grounds for businesses to survive. Designers shift the blame onto industry, the companies for not understanding the additional value design brings to manufactured products. Whereas in industry the designers are seen as hard nuts and very troublesome people to cooperate with.” (KL, 10.5.1991)

”Finnish industry does not sufficiently take advantage of industrial design [...] Both large companies and SMEs are in the same boat [...] It is collectively acknowledged that technological investments in Finnish industries have been very successful. It is still crucial to integrate this achieved success to something else [design].” (KL, 6.8.1998)

On the other hand, the problem is also located to the designers’ domain. Especially in economical press articles design consultancies, their marketing skills and networking capabilities are highlighted as a problematical issue.

”Industrial design has not developed into a comprehensive system, and it is mainly product or item design. The situation is not hopeless, but requires a bunch of measures [...] Reason for the weak success is not resting solely on industry. Designers should perfect their economical know-how. There are severe weaknesses in commercialising design capabilities and taking it to business [...]” (KL, 6.10.1998)

”Customers desire to buy complete services is pushing Finnish design agencies to team up [...] Sheer networking is not enough, because deeper know-how and tight cooperation are demanded. This may conjoin that agencies pursuing general design are forced to narrow their area of operation. Also specialisation of design agencies might take place in the near future [...]” (Taloussanomat [TalSa], 4.2.2003)

In this discourse design has been encountered as a problem or a challenge. Often these challenges are discovered, but a proper solution rarely takes place. Articles introducing challenges in the field of design usually worry about the future or in other cases, loosing the favourable present state.



The Role of Design in Finnish Society – The Discourse of Meanings of Design

Second design policy related discourse goes beyond the identification of challenges and problems. In this discourse, on the national level, the meanings of design are playing a central role. The function of this discourse is to explicate the role of design in Finnish society from the larger and partly historical perspective.

”Advancement means that Finnish design is moving farther and farther from designing of vases and chairs that took place already in 1950s. Today, strength of design appears more clearly in electronics industry and in engineering industry.” (KL, 13.11.1992)

”Contemplating the state of design is topical nowadays. The countries that do not have a long design tradition like Finland does, have noticed that design is a considerable factor [...] It is crucial to understand that design has both economical and societal influence. There is also a strong cultural effect [...]” (Tekniikka & Talous [T&T], 28.10.1999).

”Industry is starting to realise that design cannot be only applied randomly and, that there is not enough competent industrial design know-how. This is particularly important since Finnish companies are getting international and are competing in new situations. Industrial design is totally different matter than the good old arts and crafts – which best works of art we are used to proudly call ‘Finnish Design’. Rugs are rugs, aesthetics is aesthetics but business is business” (KL, 7.2.2002)

Economical press articles are addressing the benefits accumulated through design to the societal level. This economical gain becomes concrete through the activities of companies applying design. The meaning of design is not merely means to generate measurable profits to the companies. It is also a question of business strategies and strategic usage of design. The standard in examining strategic usage of design is clearly in a corporate level in economical press.

“The position of design is particularly weak, says the rector⁶ of University of Industrial Arts Helsinki⁸. Design should be seen as an investment of immaterial resources in industry, and design should be in the picture from the very beginning. Combining design to technical product development from the beginning, it is possible to shorten the manufacturing time, simplify the manufacturing processes and reach significant material and cost savings.” (KL, 13.7.1989).

“Industrial design has very important role in developing international competitiveness in companies, said the Minister of Industry and Trade Pekka Tuomisto [...] He states that the meaning of design is widening from products appearance to functionality [...] He stressed that industrial design is a function that needs to be addressed in overall strategy in companies.” (KL, 11.12.1992).



”Design must be a part of strategy in Finnish companies [...] The meaning of design is emphasised when products are getting more technical and when business potential is recognised. TEKES⁷ program is pursuing better competitiveness for products through industrial design. The program will pursue comprehensive and persistent usage of industrial design from the research phase to completed product concepts.” (TalSa, 24.01.2001).

The meanings of design are also highlighted through design education and design research. Both research and education are basic parts of the official Finnish design policy (Saarela, 2000). It seems to be usual in the context of economical articles to argue both educational and research related issues in the same occasion.

”Design needs an own defined cluster, including education [...] It has to be reconsidered how public investments on design could be exploited [...] How Finland will carry out the message that design is an important matter to us. On the societal level it is not enough that design is considered only as gifts for VIPs in official visits.” (KL, 12.11.1998)

”[Minister of Culture Suvi Lindén] Education and research are basics for the development of design knowledge. Quality and development in design demand ‘critical mass’ and controlled actions [...] It is important to create new interface between design students and companies to make good use of design.” (KL, 10.2.2000)

”Finland’s competitiveness is intended to improve on developing design education and design research. Design is also going to be connected to progress of the national innovation system [...]” (TalSa, 16.6.2000).

Discourse of the role of design in Finnish society seems to culminate to larger contexts. This is typical for design policy related issues generally speaking. These larger contexts are also explicating Finnish design in the light of historical success. In economical context it is also quite natural that design is highlighted as a part of strategic knowledge in companies. Also design education and design research were mentioned in this discourse.

Actors of Design and Practice – The Discourse of Cooperation

The discourse of cooperation is inviting the readers of the articles to the particular positions, depicting different roles of the design policy actors. In this discourse the actors from public sector (e.g. education, research funded by the state, non-profit promotional actors, museums) are outlined or their voice is quite weak. Main ‘speakers’ are of private sector and the corporate actors. On the other hand, this is not surprising when noticing the nature of economical press data. Situation might be considerably different in case where the data would be collected from newspapers cultural pages instead of economical press. The discussion is also



located on a more practical level, when all other discourses of design policy are represented in larger contexts. The function of this discourse is to describe actors in the field of design and their different roles. In this type of discourse, cooperation of various parties is an issue processed in an economical context. Also notions in which design and designers are defined as an integral part of some system seems to be relevant. In some points this discourse moves quite close to the discourse of mutual challenges identified in this paper. Focus is rather in cooperation and actors than problems in discourse of cooperation.

”Companies in the field [of design] require cooperation. The companies have noticed that engineers, economists and designers cannot cooperate in a sufficient way. However, a Finnish company needs, in addition to successful design, also marketing and technological skills in order to prosper.” (KL, 14.6.1995)

”Although, the share of proper design products in international trade is relatively small, design is still a vital part in many top-ranking products [...] Designer is a part of a complex system that consists of equally of manufacturing demands, social games and distribution channels.” (TalSa, 25.7.1998).

”Nowadays, design tackles so complex problems that one person cannot handle it alone anymore. Product design is done in teams. In these teams, there are individuals that each has his/her own and unique capabilities [...]” (TalSa, 2.7.2002)

Business management and attempts to understand design on a company level is another topic in this discourse of cooperation. In this case economical press writings are focusing on corporate actors and their roles in design functions.

”[...] Finnish Design in 1950s was 'fairly at the mercy of patrons and sponsors'. Commercially it is still true that 'design and brand agree like inspiration and perspiration' [...] Design as a competitive weapon has not been able to develop into a national movement or a way of thinking in business life. Business management needs critical information and analytical debate about design.” (KL, 19.2.1998)

”Some elements to provide design related issues to business management education are being developed. This issue emphasised also in the preparation of national design policy program. When design cooperation grow to normal activity, shared objectives and 'design language' are mastered, then the last concealed suspicions will prevail in industry.” (TalSa, 14.3.2001)

All in all, the discourse of cooperation is focusing on actors and their roles in the field of design. The economical press data highlights design related issues also through company level practise and especially from the aspect of business management.



Design and Economical Profits – The Discourse of International Competitiveness

In comparison to many of its international counterparts, the official Finnish design policy had very strong emphasis on improving business and through this the national competitiveness. In many senses design was seen as a tool to achieve this goal, rather than an intrinsic value (Valtonen, 2005b). The discourse of international competitiveness is clearly a part of declaring the potential advantages of Finnish design policy. The function of this discourse is to describe how Finnish design will lead the way when planned design policy actions take place. As mentioned above, the role of national economy is significant in this discourse, as well as international progressiveness in design. This discourse appearing in economical press articles describe also how this pioneering position will be attained.

“Industrial design will be an increasingly important part for strengthening the national competitiveness, and the importance of design-brands is continually rising in companies [...] Effective exploitation of design makes it possible to increase the competitiveness of our industries competitiveness to meet new global challenges [...] According to Ruokonen³, Finland’s objective is to be the leading design nation in 2005.” (TalSa, 24.4.2002)

”Finland is desired to be the leading nation of design in the future. To reach this goal Finnish companies, especially SMEs, are playing an important role. Competitiveness of those companies will be improved by striving design. According to recent studies, cases that successfully combine design to innovation will turn out to concrete financial benefit.” (KL, 20.1.2005).

Another manifestation of this discourse is related to national economy and broader economical issues. The national competitiveness is especially highlighted in economical press articles in order to display design as a means to improve industries possibilities in global competition. From this aspect the needs of industries are essential.

”Now, design is officially raised to one of the most important factors of competitiveness of Finnish industries. ’Design 2005!’ –program was published in this summer in order to strengthen the meaning and use of design [...] One of the goals is that half of the Finnish companies would take advantage of design properly as a part of business operations in 2010 [...]” (T&T, 28.10.1999).

”The role of design is growing in maintaining the international competitiveness of industries. Design is seen as an integral part of product development in various companies. However, it is important that even greater amount of companies would



exploit design in their products [...]” (TalSa, 9.1.2003).

”Design is an increasingly important instrument in the raging battle of market shares. For the expensive Finland it is easier to differentiate itself via high-end design than cheap prices. Investments on design capabilities are rational, especially when expected benefits are reflected upon the whole Finnish national economy. The economic growth in Finland, thus, needs design.” (TalSa, 30.4.2003)

The discourse of international competitiveness can be classified to two slightly diverging approaches. The first approach is claiming and describing how Finland will be one of the leading design countries in 2005. These writings are mostly based on the public announcements of the official design policy program that took place in 2000 continuing still in 2006. The second approach, which represents common tradition to deal with things in economical press, is that of describing design as a very important factor in the context of international competitiveness. In this second way of describing the discourse of international competitiveness, the national economy and possible benefits to the whole nation are playing a central role.

Conclusions

This paper concentrated on Finnish design policy discourses that are represented in the context of economical press articles. Altogether 120 articles were analysed with the methodological help provided by loosely applied discourse analysis. As a result four design policy discourses were identified. First, the discourse of mutual challenges introduces Finnish design policy as problem identifying and solving system. Second, the discourse of meanings of design is representing Finnish design policy as determinant of the role of design in the Finnish society. Third discourse is the discourse of cooperation. In this discourse design policy related issues are seen as a connector of different actors participating to the field of design. When the design policy in general was aligned to the national research policy, design was not seen as a value as such but as a tool for the industry. The focus was on how the industry and the nation could benefit from using design. On the level of final economical press discourse this phenomenon is culminating to international competitiveness which in turn is the fourth design policy related discourse identified from the economical press data.

Based on the findings of this study the introduced discourses are suggested to be less time than issue bound. It seems that the different design policy discourses are used in specific situations. Especially, when some aspect of design policy related issue is wanted to be highlighted in a certain context, the above presented discourses can take place. This is the case, for example, when a certain design policy related problem is identified and communicated through economical press articles. Another example that verifies this notion is the significant increase in usage of the discourse of international competitiveness at the same time when the official Finnish design policy program was initiated in 1999-2000. On the other hand, the competitiveness discourse was widely used also in the beginning of 1990s in a situation where design was seen as a saviour of Finnish competitiveness in the vast economical recession. It can be concluded that the design discourses in Finnish economical press seem to be basically quite similar over the time, at least during the time span studied in this



paper. Design themes and issues seem to be changing, but the economical press article discourses describing these issues are quite constant. The design policy related discourses are introduced in detail in table 2.

Table 2. The design policy related discourses in detail in economical press articles.

DISCOURSES	SEGMENTATION	FUNCTIONS	ROLE OF THE DESIGN POLICY
The discourse of mutual challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Larger / common problem (i.e. economic regression) - Particular/definable problems - Actor related problems 	To describe and explain possible design related problems	Design policy as problem identifying/solving system
The discourse of meanings of design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Role of design (society) - Strategic use of design (private sector) - Design education / research (public sector) 	To describe meaning and role of design in Finnish society	Design policy as determinator of designs role in society
The discourse of cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cooperation of different parties - Business management aspect 	To describe design actors and their roles	Design policy as an aggregate of design actors
The discourse of international competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How pioneering position in design will be attained - National competitiveness 	To describe economical and competitive issues related to design	Design policy as economical tool

After all, the official design policy launched in 2000 and its follow-up programs generated resources and goodwill for the development of the design field (Ministry of Education, 2004; Valtonen, 2005b). That notion can be confirmed without question when compared to the results of this study. At least, the amount of articles published in economical press has increased during considered timeframe. Also the “Design Year 2005” has provoked considerable attention in media (Design Forum Finland, 2006).

Another major achievement of the official design policy program was that it brought together all major players in design in the Finnish society, and made them focus on this area that they had not focused on before (Valtonen, 2005b). This can be confirmed by looking to the discourse of cooperation appearing in economical press articles. What is clear, however, is that the design policy related articles have increased the discussion on design, particularly in economical context, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Common to the all of these four design policy discourses is that they are emphasising the communal goals and the collective responsibility of design quite strongly. This can be seen as an uncommon way to represent design related issues in economical context. It is worth noticing that the data interpreted in this paper was design policy related – economical press certainly presents other aspects of design as well. Still, in this case the problems and the challenges the design policies came across were shared. These challenges, in turn, were suggested to be solved in close cooperation with other actors participating in the field of design. The introduced design discourses differ in the means of how and from what aspect the design policy is represented to the citizens. After all, a single economical press article is working with its own logic: the driving force is still



economical interest. Despite the fact that the economical press is focusing on business economy, the vast visibility of the economical press articles provides a good basis for communicating design policy related issues to Finnish nationals from a slightly different angle than other media.

”Form giving, I mean design, is a superior affair that is worth supporting – after all Finland is a well-known design country all over the world. Design is also a decent way to profile oneself in the media; design will gain visibility even without a design theme year and this holds true for the advocates of design too. All well and good.” (KL, 14.4.2005)

Endnotes

1 For more information see “Ilmari Tapiovaara” (Korvenmaa, 1997).

2 The economical papers the data was collected are Kauppalehti (KL, ‘Business News’), Taloussanomat (TalSa, ‘Economic News’) and Tekniikka & Talous (T&T, ‘Technology and Economy’).

3 The Design Year 2005 was a joint effort of the Scandinavian countries as 2005 is nominated The Design Year also in Sweden, Denmark and Norway (Valtonen, 2005b).

4 All the quotations taken from the economical press articles are originally published in Finnish. The English translation is done by the researcher.

5 The Rector of University of Art and Design Helsinki is Yrjö Sotamaa (since 1986)

6 The name of the school is “University of Art and Design Helsinki” in 2006

7 In English: Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation. TEKES was founded in 1983.

8 Arto Ruokonen is the program manager in “Industrial Design –technology project” in TEKES

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