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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A Stanislavskian and Barthesian deconstructive analysis of *Thinking Architecture* of Peter Zumthor: The case of Therme Vals

Esin Yılmaz ^{a,*}, Muzaffer Tolga Akbulut ^b^a Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Yıldız Technical University, İstanbul, Türkiye^b Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Design, Fatih Sultan Mehmet Vakıf University, İstanbul, Türkiye

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Abstract In 21st-century architectural literature, Therme Vals stands out for its spatialization of theory and art. This study is based on the thesis that Therme Vals is structured under the influence of Roland Barthes' five codes and Konstantin Stanislavski's *The Method of Physical Actions* (1934–1938). In this context, Peter Zumthor's narratives about the *atmosphere* chapters in *Thinking Architecture* are analyzed with strategies based on Barthes' textual decoding in *S/Z*, and Stanislavskian perspectives in these narratives are revealed. The trilogy of space-action-text, as a diagrammatic representation of discourses, forms the theoretical foundations of the methodology. Through qualitative research within the framework of structural narrative analysis, this study deconstructs Barthes' principles of semantic plurality and Stanislavski's *The Method of Physical Actions* (1934–1938) through the architectural codes of the Therme Vals and *atmosphere* chapters. The analysis of 17 semantic units yielded 190 productive terms, of which 59 are unique and 131 are repetitive, as well as principles of clustered effects. The results support Zumthor's view in *Thinking Architecture* that architecture operates not as a narrative but as a text open to multiple interpretations.

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* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: esyilmaz@yildiz.edu.tr, esinyilmaz3@gmail.com (E. Yılmaz).

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1. Introduction

Designed in 1996 by Peter Zumthor in the town of Vals, Switzerland, the *Therme Vals* (2009), has been widely discussed since its inception as both an ontological and representational tectonic form (Shih et al., 2018). This concept has Greek origins and is derived from the term *tecton*, meaning carpenter or builder (Frampton, 1990). This term reflects traces of the origins of Zumthor's materialist understanding, as it encompasses material knowledge. For the material to contribute to an ontological tectonic form, it must be employed in architectural design not merely as a building product but also as a construction technique (Teixeira et al., 2023). A representational tectonic form, therefore, maintains the material at a more plastic distance from the architectural design itself. In this context, numerous architects have developed various discourses on building tectonics since the advent of modernity (Giada et al., 2019; Kucker, 2002; Owens, 2001; Radford and Oksala, 2007; Vandenbulcke, 2011). According to Mitrahe (2012), the bath, defined as a work of contemporary architecture, is based on an aesthetic minimalism with high symbolic value due to its combination of material and form with a simple architectural approach.

In Zumthor's designs, the spatial rhythm with the environment and the fluid harmony with nature can be considered a subjective perspective on a minor scale. However, the representation of space as an artistic process and the primary role of the experienter in shaping it justify the existence of an objective architecture on a larger scale (Djebbara et al., 2024). The existence of design or architecture and its value as a produced object—hence its tangible materiality—is seen as the means of communication between us and the entire environment "outside of us" in the built plane (Petrović, 2017). Heidegger's concept of "the thingly character of the thing" as the being of the object constitutes a consistent emphasis on material as the foundation of design in architecture (Heidegger, 1971, pp. 15–87). For Zumthor, the architectural object can possess the qualities of a work of art. Therefore, his knowledge of materials, though influenced by his carpentry training, was further enriched by an insight and understanding that balanced his intellectual nature. For him, architecture is a way of thinking about things, aligning with Heidegger's philosophical discourse (Zumthor, 2006b).

2. Literature review

Frampton, in his 1990 article *The Case for the Tectonic*, defines the outcomes of architecture as the object, the material, and the concrete reality itself (Frampton, 1990). However, although this definition may initially be perceived as predominantly referring to the tangible presence of material, it should be understood in a secondary sense as a subject of architecture itself (Gabrijelčić, 2016). The semantic existence of material, which constitutes the subject matter of architecture, necessitates a holistic architectural formation emerging from an existing void. Architecture, which arises when material transforms into an art form in harmony with its immaterial reality through the combination of parts, attains its reality through the architect's

perspective. This can be exemplified by the notion that a poet requires more than just grammatical rules—namely, a poetic vision. Peter Zumthor explains this through the concept of atmosphere. Derived from the German term *Stimmung*, the concept of atmosphere extends far beyond mere aesthetic visualization (Zumthor, 2006a). Caballero (2013) focuses on Zumthor's design methodology while analyzing metaphors in architecture. Zumthor derives inspiration for his design approach through mental images and observes that images and perceptions emerge through a continuous iterative process to initiate the design process (Caballero, 2013). It should be noted that this iterative process references interpretation, classification, modeling, topological restructuring, and textuality (Abusaada and Elshater, 2024). For instance, as Zumthor experiences space, he generates new spaces through the imagery he creates in his mind, searching for the semantic trace of visual associations.

The concept of *atmosphere* is explained across various disciplines and is argued to hold critical importance in both social and individual aspects of human life (Anderson, 2009; Blum, 2010; Borch, 2010; Böhme, 1993, 2006; Goetz and Graupner, 2007; Harris and Sørensen, 2010; Hasse, 2012; Kazig, 2007; Pennartz, 1999; Rauh, 2012; Stewart, 2011; Thibaud, 2011, 2012; Zumthor, 2006a). Atmosphere constitutes the background of these studies, which define it through geographical concepts in relation to human experiences and memories (Rohkrämer and Schulz, 2009), describe human activities as establishing deep and special connections with place (Tuan, 1977) and associate human identity and sense of belonging with values (Gehl, 2013; Relph, 1976). "Atmosphere is typically defined as the overall emotional or sensory experience of a place, time, or situation, as perceived by an individual, and includes factors such as the mood, ambiance, or aura of a particular environment (Kim and Kwak, 2024, p. 2)." The *atmosphere* is something that can only be perceived through experience and can be explained in terms of the impact it creates and the impressions it leaves on the individual (Brennan, 2004). To clarify using Gernot Böhme's discourse: "Without the sentient subject, they are nothing" (Böhme, 2013, p. 3). The intertwining of sensory experiences and the material space itself reinforces the effect of the subject becoming part of the atmosphere and developing new potentials with each instance of experience and perception (Sørensen, 2015). A statement supporting this discourse was made by Merleau-Ponty, who asserted that "Our memories and our body, instead of presenting themselves to us in singular and determinate conscious acts, are enveloped in generality" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945)". Every change or event occurring inside or outside the space also alters the mode of perception within the space itself, as the image and *atmosphere* of the space influence each other and possess the power to redirect the subject's perceptions (Kim and Kwak, 2022). There are even studies that define the relationship between these variables and attempt to measure their differences (Kim and Kwak, 2024). Peter Zumthor states that, before designing a space, he first envisions the atmosphere of a theater stage in his mind (Zumthor, 2006a, p. 41). He emphasizes that an architect should feel the value, emotion, and excitement of that stage from the actor's perspective while configuring spatial arrangements. In a

similar vein, Tschumi also suggests that space can be shaped with the logic of a theatrical stage, asking: "Is this a play or an architectural work (Tschumi, 1996, p. 252; 1997)?" As someone who defines architecture through "event" and constantly regards it as a text, Tschumi has also stated that he borrows codes from literary texts (Barthes' Narrative Codes) for his architecture and applies them in his works (Tschumi 1996, p. 108).

Before interpreting the narratives in Zumthor's text, it is necessary to clarify narratology and narrative theory. Manfred Jahn defines narrative as "... everything that tells or presents a story. Whether through text, visual performance, or a combination of all these, they are all narratives. Thus, novels, plays, films, cartoons, etc., are all narratives" (M. Jahn, cited in 2012, p. 44 (Parrin, 2017)). Similarly, Barthes supports this view by stating: "Narratives are not singular; they are structures that unfold in layers, vary by context, and can be rewritten (Barthes, 1977)." Although it originated within literary theory, narratology has since been applied to other fields such as cinema, history, theater, architecture, and more. Narratology, the foundation of structuralism, is a field of study that systematically investigates the structure, form, and function of the objects it analyzes. Structuralism emerged in the 20th century through literary theorists and critics such as Ferdinand de Saussure (Barthes, 1977), Tzvetan Todorov (1977), Gérard Genette (1980), Claude Bremond (1973), and Roland Barthes (2011) Bordwell and Thompson describe narrative as "a chain of events in cause-and-effect relationships occurring in time and space," and they indicate that narrative can begin under certain conditions and, through a series of changes, arrive at a new state that concludes the narrative (Bordwell and Thompson, 2008, p. 75). The application of structuralist methodology to anthropology—one of the first disciplines to do so—was developed by Claude Lévi-Strauss. Jacques Lacan reinterpreted Sigmund Freud's theory to apply narrative theory to psychoanalysis, emphasizing the similarity between the structure of the unconscious and the structure of language. Michel Foucault applied structuralist methods to his studies on culture and knowledge (Evliyaoglu, 2020). In this context, Jacques Derrida also analyzed philosophical texts through a structuralist lens (Moran, 1999, p. 185).

Structuralism, particularly in literature, opposed mimetic and expressive criticism as forms of communication (Sudhaka, 2021). By the 1960s, however, structuralist criticism had given way to the concept of post-structuralism. In 1966, a group of French intellectuals—including Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Jacques Lacan, Georges Poulet, and Lucien Goldman, who were among the pioneers of this movement—delivered talks at a groundbreaking conference titled "*The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*" held at Johns Hopkins University. This conference opened up a discussion on how structuralism and post-structuralism influenced literary studies, particularly their role in education and in the analytical interpretation of ideas (Keskin, 2020). Derrida, who develops discourses about the text by developing a deconstructive reading strategy, mentions that it is not the first and last word, that it does not contain a final meaning, and how the postponed meanings affected by the context it establishes with other texts can eliminate even the text itself (Keskin, 2020). Umberto Eco shared a

similar perspective with Derrida in his view of the text, stating: "A text is a multilayered system of signs and is potentially open to an unlimited production of meaning" (Eco, 1976).

French philosopher Derrida, in collaboration with architects such as Zaha Hadid, Peter Eisenman, Bernard Tschumi, among others, regarded architecture not only as a physical construction but also as a system of language and meaning. In particular, in his work "*The Truth in Painting*," Derrida explores the tension between the authority of writing and image in painting. In doing so, he performatively brings together the "hidden" relationships between object, image, and word. As seen in Michel Foucault's works "*The Order of Things and The Archaeology of the Human Sciences*" and "*Manet—Velázquez and Aesthetic Modernism*" (Foucault, 2018). Derrida interprets the hidden codes of visual art to develop the concept of "*différance*." This term is defined through Derrida's theory of *différance*, which differs from the notion of the "Other." In this context, *différance* expresses the diversity created by every new production and the "Other," and is defined through the transcendence of language as the "different." This aligns with Derrida's notion of *différance*. Jacques Derrida's statement 'there is no outside to the text' has led us to examine textuality. Derrida's concept of "text-writing" determines the content of the discourses of the post-modern Eisenman and his collaborator Bernard Tschumi. By this understanding, it can be said that Eisenman sees architecture as a Text, and architecture, according to him, is what turns into a means of representation in showing the structure that establishes a relationship with other Texts (Eisenman, 1988). According to Derrida, writing, which is the definition of sound that begins with the expression of the idea of "presence", is one of the first tools for reading, especially for the individual's communication by nature. The possibility of things to be read, the possibility of the presence of writing makes language an entity. For instance, it is through writing that we can open up to the world and reduce it to a meaningful structure. In this sense, Derrida (1967) makes a similar statement that writing precedes language (Barthes, 2011). According to Derrida, the written text becomes a "game" through the reader's interpretation. Treating the game of signifiers as infinite creates "difference". By focusing on the movement that produces both meaning and meaninglessness, "difference" provides ontological priority to the discussion of truth and value. In line with Derrida's thought, the relationship between text and subject triggers the nothingness that results from dependence. The subject cannot be separated from the text because they are in the text. The relationship between the author and the text remains immanent (Barthes, 1977). Therefore, taking the text from the author and transmitting it to the reader, i.e., interpreting the text, will free them from this bondage and pave the way for them to support the productive aspect of narratives with new meanings and a new series of events. Because narrative is the functioning of a text through a series of events. For example, narrative constitutes an intersection point for theater and architecture because it includes both text and action (event) and is inherently tied to space.

The analogical and imaginative power of space, enacted and experienced through fundamental cognitive principles

(Hadian and Arefi, 2016), presents architecture with a sequential character and emphasizes spatial sequencing. The term sequence refers to a series of events, movements, and, in the context of this study, experientiality, that unfold in a specific order. In particular, the “event architecture” of Bernard Tschumi, one of today’s postmodern architects and post-avant-garde thinkers, is shaped by a series of sequential actions that activate space (Tschumi, 1996). Architecture, Much like a theatrical performance, has a composition—such as a structure—formed through the convergence of sequential scenes. However, unlike the play itself, the life within the space is real.

3. Material and methods

3.1. Scopes and objectives of this study

The contemporary bath structure examined in this study is based on the premise that its textual nature, shaped by various disciplines, has not been sufficiently emphasized in the architectural literature. Zumthor discusses the influence of performance arts such as theater and film on architecture in his books and, consequently, in his architectural works (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 41). Witnessing the multilayered processes of meaning production that emerge in Zumthor’s textual narratives reveals the necessity of analyzing these processes.

The impact of Konstantin Stanislavski’s principles of the creative acting system on character formation, together with an evaluation of how Zumthor’s architectural atmospheres are experienced and internalized sensorially through the body and mind, constitutes a complementary analytical method. Barthes’ five narrative codes and the 13 principles of the Stanislavski System provide a framework for interpreting architecture both at the level of meaning and through embodied experience. The central hypothesis of this study is that “*architectural narrative is performative—sensorial (actional) and textual.*”

The first author’s background in amateur theater has nurtured a theoretical interest in Stanislavski’s system of creative acting. The personal experience of Zumthor’s Therme Vals, on the other hand, has enabled a sensuous and performative engagement with the space. Together, these dual experiences provide the rationale for both the case selection and the theoretical framework adopted in this study. Unlike other Therme Vals studies that employ a phenomenological pattern, narrative analysis encompasses a wider interdisciplinary narrative universe, providing theoretical coherence and analytical flexibility. The primary objective of this research is to examine the theoretical approach of contemporary architecture and architects from a broader perspective and to affirm the representation of an interdisciplinary process.

3.2. Research materials

The primary research material and the main source of the study is Peter Zumthor’s book. This study is about analyzing Zumthor’s narratives in his own book through the second book and supporting them with chapters from the third book. This book contains not only narratives of Therme Vals

but also discourses of his architecture. Opposite the atmosphere chapters in the study, the spaces of Therme Vals are defined by the authors and categorized as the architectural codes of the article.

The secondary research material is Roland Barthes’ book *S/Z*. In this book, Barthes creates the method of structural discourse analysis by analyzing Balzac’s *Sarrasine*, published in 1830, in-depth (Balzac, 2012, p. cover page). During the deconstruction of the *Sarrasine* text, the emphasis is placed on the semantic multiplicity of its meaning units. To facilitate this analysis, Barthes introduced two concepts: “lexia” and “code.” A lexia refers to a segment of text, varying in length from a few words to several sentences, which can be examined as a discrete “unit of meaning.” To explain each unit of meaning when analyzing the quotation, Barthes creates a productive term associated with the relevant code, which can consist of a word or a phrase. For *Sarrasine*, Barthes created a productive term consisting of 561 words. The tertiary research material is Konstantin Stanislavski’s *An Actor Prepares*, which serves as an auxiliary tool for the deconstruction of the first book. This work contains a categorization of the 13 principles of Stanislavski’s System, grouped under the title “*Method of Physical Actions (1934–1938)*.” The presence of these principles in Zumthor’s discourses on the spaces corresponding to the atmosphere chapters in Therme Vals is analyzed in this study (Stanislavski, 2007).

- 1) The primary research material is the architectural codes derived from the *atmosphere*’s chapters of the narratives in *Thinking Architecture* and adapted for the study:
 - **The body of architecture:** The physical presence of architecture is concerned with its materiality, mass, and fabric, framing architecture as an envelope that defines space.
 - **Material compatibility:** The interaction between materials, or as Zumthor describes it, the way materials react to one another, is a fundamental aspect of architectural atmosphere.
 - **The sound of a space:** Every space possesses its own distinct sound. The acoustics of a space and the way sounds resonate within it are key determinants of its atmosphere.
 - **The temperature of a space:** Each space has a unique thermal quality. The physical temperature of a space and the way its materials conduct and retain heat significantly contribute to its atmospheric character.
 - **Surrounding objects:** Objects, furnishings, and small details within a space possess their own presence and contribute to the completeness of the atmosphere.
 - **Between composure and seduction:** While some spaces evoke a sense of calm, others draw people in. The balance between these two opposing qualities is considered a crucial aspect of atmospheric design.
 - **Tension between interior and exterior:** The perceptual contrast between a space’s interior and exterior, along with the spatial experience and transitions between them, plays a significant role in shaping its atmosphere.
 - **Levels of intimacy:** The scale and proportions of a space influence how it is perceived and experienced, shaping the emotional and atmospheric response of its occupants.

- **The light on things:** Light possesses a mass-like quality, and its interaction with surfaces within a space helps define its atmosphere, guiding perception and experience.
- 2) The secondary research material consists of the 13 principles under the title “The Method of Physical Actions (1934–1938)” in *An Actor Prepares*:
- **Units and Objectives:** In each unit—in the current scene—the actor adopts a character objective and aims to perform effectively in an active (action-driven) performance.
 - **Through line of Actions and the Superobjective:** To ensure the character’s role integrity, there is a Superobjective in which all minor objectives are united. This superobjective would carry this ‘through line of action’ logically.
 - **Analysis of Text through Action:** Initially the text was analyzed prior to character creation, and then the focus was on exploring the psycho-physical behavior of the actors in the character’s actions.
 - **Truth, Belief and the “Magic If”:** In character creation, he advocated believable truth on the stage with the “Magic if” technique to create the scene with the imagination of the audience.
 - **Imagination:** In addition to the technical knowledge of the actor, it is also important that he/she has the imagination necessary for character creation. Imagination is necessary for the realization of the theatrical truth on the stage with an impressive performance.
 - **Subtext:** Imagination is used to express the subtext and hidden meaning of the play. Here, the character conveys the hidden meaning to the audience through body language, intonation, and actions.
 - **Motivation:** Motivation, which plays an important role in psychological realism in character creation, is a product of the driving force effect in the character’s subconscious.
 - **Concentration:** As a stage technique, “circles of concentration”, developed for the actor to maintain attention on stage, aim to balance intellectual and emotional attention.
 - **Relaxation:** Muscular tension in the actor restricts the inner emotional experience, but complete relaxation also makes it difficult to maintain control. What is required for artistic fluency is the balanced, conscious and controlled use of the muscular structure.
 - **Communion:** The direct connection between all the characters in the play triggers an indirect connection between them and the audience. The communion established with a real partner creates a strong interaction in the audience.
 - **Adaptation:** Adaptation helps the character overcome barriers within a limited emotional or physicality to convey the subtext.
 - **Tempo-Rhythm:** The tempo-rhythm of the actions establishes the bridge between the actor’s experiences and the physical expression he/she expresses during the character creation.
 - **The Physical Apparatus:** The actor’s performance, which is based on his/her inner experiences, is communicated to the audience through his/her physical apparatus—his/her body and voice. These tools, defined as the

actor’s instruments, must be consistent and logical, supporting the superobjective.

- 3) The tertiary research material is the five codes from the *S/Z* book that were adapted for this study:
- Action code ***ACT:** This refers to the voice of the experiment that enables the narrative to be seen as a plot and a series of actions.
 - Hermeneutic code ***HER:** This code functions as the voice of truth, maintaining the mystery, riddles, and deceptions within the narrative.
 - Semantic code ***SEM:** This code reflects the psychology and approach of the characters, giving them a voice.
 - Cultural code ***CUL:** This code refers to science and types of knowledge, and is considered the voice of science.
 - Symbolic code ***SYM:** This is the voice of the symbol, which harbors contradictions and is open to multiple interpretations at the metaphorical level.

Barthes’ *S/Z*, written in 1970, marks a pivotal transformation in both his intellectual trajectory and body of work. Until then, he had adhered to the notion of the “closed text”, but with *S/Z*, he embraced the concept of the “open text”, fundamentally altering the way texts are understood. No longer confined to a singular interpretation, the text, through this paradigmatic shift, began to generate pluralistic meanings and invite dynamic analysis. Barthes challenged the traditional authority of the author over the text, repositioning the reader from a passive recipient to an active participant—a concept encapsulated in his theory of “the death of the author”. Reflecting on this notion, Thomson (2008) remarks, “I realised with disappointment that death was an inappropriate name for a linguistic category.” This idea is examined in depth by Gilbert Adair in *The Death of the Author*, where he argues that if deliberate gaps within a text enable readers to construct new meanings, then implicit meanings can also be interpreted and rendered explicit (Adair, 2008). As a result, the text transcends preceding narratives, simultaneously reconstructing and deconstructing them. The reader thus becomes central to the process of meaning production, actively engaging with the text rather than passively consuming it. This dynamic interaction ultimately establishes a new order of meaning, as illustrated (Fig. 1) (Barthes, 1974).

In this context, the concepts of “performative” and “sensorial” in this structure become spatialized through inclusive terms at the intersection of theatrical collage, montage, sequence, or gestural composition. The textual analysis system presented in this study aims to offer a model that is applicable not only to this particular structure but also to other selected architectural works. In this way, architecture will sustain its potential to be critically examined by embracing pluralistic and heterogeneous values.

3.3. Theoretical backgrounds: the trilogy of Space—Action—Text

This study opens up a discussion on whether architecture is a narrative or a text by focusing on the relationship between an architect’s architectural practice and their narratives. They within Peter Zumthor’s written work,

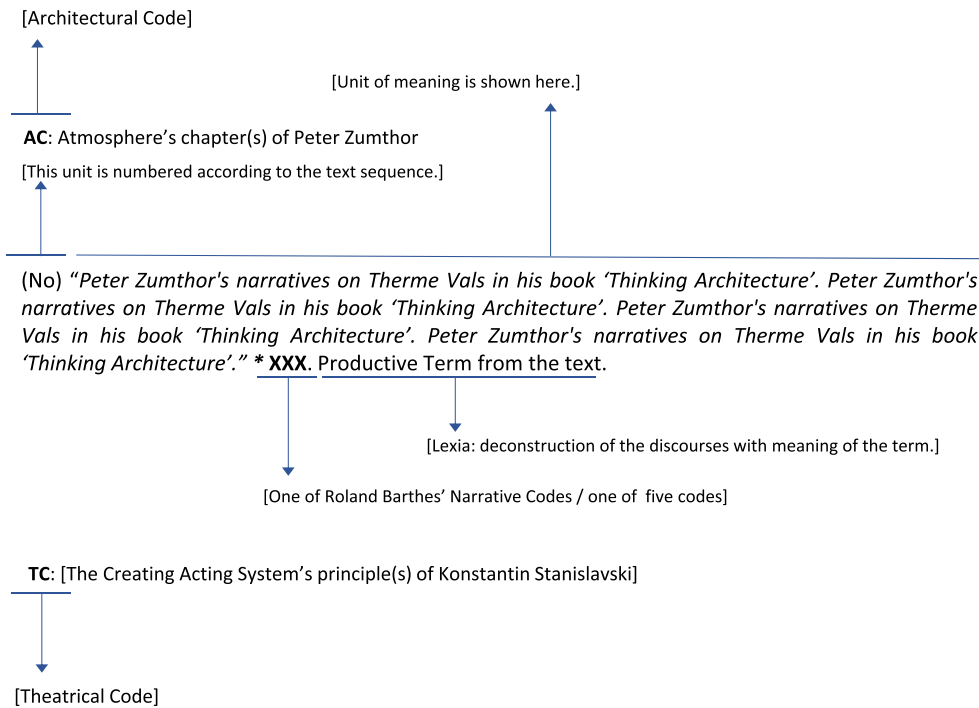


Fig. 1 Standardized coding of the study: the visualization of *Architectural Code*, *Theatrical Code* and "Narrative Code", was prepared by the authors based on Ünal Baştürk et al. (2024)'s visual interpretation.

Thinking Architecture are interpreted through Barthes' *Structural Analysis of Narrative*, using the semantic units categorized in accordance with the principles of Konstantin Stanislavski's creative acting system. In this sense, the study employs the narrative analysis pattern of the qualitative research method.

Aiming to read architecture and theater together, this study demonstrates that architectural narratives can be interpreted as "staged texts" and seeks to analyze the multilayered structure of these intra-textual narratives through narratology, as employed in both theater and literature. Within this scope, the analysis process of the study is structured in three main stages:

In the first stage, Peter Zumthor's *Thinking Architecture* was thematically scanned based on concepts found in the "atmosphere" chapters (such as "atmosphere," "sensation," "performativity," "temporality," and "experience"), and a total of 21 narratives were identified in this preliminary mapping. In the second stage, 17 narratives were selected from among these, either directly or indirectly corresponding to the 13 core principles defined in Stanislavski's creative acting system, and categorized accordingly for the study. This selection process focused on narratives based on the spatial constructs created by the performative, sensory, temporal, and actional connotations each narrative evokes. In the third stage, the selected 17 narratives were analyzed based on the five narrative codes (hermeneutic, proairetic, semantic, symbolic, cultural) of structural narrative analysis proposed in Roland Barthes' *S/Z* (1970). The first seven narratives were interpreted in depth, while the remaining ten are included in the appendix. Each narrative was systematically analyzed according to these codes, revealing the plurality of meanings within

the text. As a result of this analysis, a total of 190 productive terms (semantic units) were obtained.

A qualitative, Hermeneutic methodology was employed, with data manually analyzed through thematic coding. The step-by-step structure of the methodological approach is presented schematically in Fig. 2. Theater and architecture fundamentally produce performative works. Although both disciplines operate through narrative and share similar mechanisms, they represent two distinct modes of production. The staging of a narrative and its spatial organization occur through Action (Brook, 1968). Richard Schechner, in a similar view, defines the art of theater as the construction of a text that transforms into words and body on stage. Its transformation into narrative, he asserts, lies in its capacity to involve the audience. Just as the actions attributed to the body construct the narrative, the audience generates meaning under these conditions (Schechner, 2003). In addition to these perspectives, Henri Lefebvre's (1991) statement directly references the concept of narrative in the joint consideration of architecture and theater: "In theater, space does not serve the text; rather, the text is part of an apparatus of action that gives presence to the stage. The same logic applies to architecture (Lefebvre, 1991)." Tschumi also interprets architecture and theater on the same plane and transforms both into Text. He clearly aligns with Lefebvre when he states, "Architecture is like a text; it is read, lived, and interpreted. Every structure can become a stage; its actors are its users (Tschumi, 1996)." Therefore, narrative is divided into three equal parts, forming the conceptual foundation of the study. Within this conceptual framework, referred to as the "Trilogy of Space-Action-Text," Roland Barthes' five narrative codes and Lexias (semantic units)

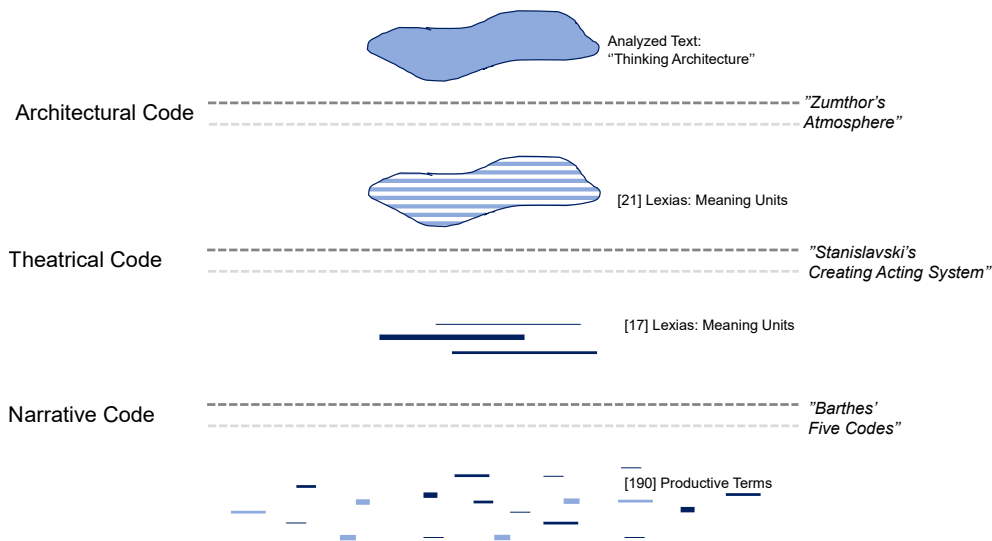


Fig. 2 Methodological framework diagram.

are placed in the Text column, Konstantin Stanislavski's System in the Action column, and Peter Zumthor's "architectural codes" in the Space column.

The text is written and completed; at the moment of its writing, it ceases to live. Here, Barthes' five narrative codes function to generate new productive terms from selected semantic units. The theatrical code in the Action column processes the narrative in terms of performativity and leads to the Space column. The Space column, where semantic units deconstructed in the theatrical code are reconstructed, finds their architectural correspondences in productive terms. "Trilogy of Space-Action-Text" serves as a permeable interface, tracing how semantic units are transformed into productive terms. The legibility of this trace is illustrated (Fig. 2).

This analysis is based on Henri Lefebvre's proposition from *The Production of Space* (1991): "Among nonverbal signifying sets must be included music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and certainly theatre, which in addition to a text or pretext embraces gesture, masks, costume, a stage, a mise-en-scène—in short, a space" (Lefebvre, 1991). Another statement that supports this view comes from Tschumi: "There is no space without a body, no body without space. This applies both to my perception of a theatrical space and to an architectural one" (Tschumi, 1997). Similarly, Zumthor refers to the vitality shaped through imagination in the design process, stating: "The awareness of the passage of time and of the human lives that are enacted in these places and rooms (Zumthor, 2006b)." In line with this theoretical framework, each narrative has been analyzed within a three-column structure: Space—Action—Text, as illustrated in Fig. 3.

- The Space column pertains to the architectural code: it is supported by visual representational elements that reflect architectural interpretations of atmospheric concepts.
- The Action column pertains to the theatrical code: it demonstrates how selected narratives correspond to Stanislavski's 13 principles.

- The Text column pertains to the narrative code: it includes the semantic units analyzed through Barthes' five narrative codes.

According to Tschumi, the method of *Structural Analysis of Narratives* (Barthes and Duisit, 1975; Barthes, 1977), developed to uncover these plural meanings, could be applied in architecture to analyze spatial sequences (Tschumi, 1996). In *Structural Analysis of Narratives*, Barthes defines a sequence as "a logical succession of nuclei bound together by a relation of solidarity: the sequence opens when one of its terms has no solitary antecedent and closes when another of its terms has no consequences (Tschumi, 1996)." According to Tschumi, a similar situation applies to Eisenstein's theory of montage. Eisenstein establishes a hierarchy of montage types—metrical, rhythmic, tonal, metatonal, and intellectual—and subsequently disassembles and reorganizes them (Eisenstein, 1989; Smith, 2010). One of the key parallels with Barthes' five codes is their shared emphasis on the concept of "action." Following the classification of these codes, which are based on textuality or the concept of the "text," productive codes reveal plural meanings. The deconstruction of "action" then seeks to explain the 13 principles of Stanislavski's System through these plural meanings. In investigating the atmospheric knowledge of "space" in architecture, Zumthor reinforces Barthes' codes and the principles of Stanislavski's *Method of Physical Actions* (1934–1938), thereby opening the spatial perception of Therme Vals to reinterpretation (Fig. 3).

4. Results

4.1. Deconstruction of Peter Zumthor's narratives in the *Thinking Architecture*

AC: Material compatibility.

- (1) "To me, there is something revealing about the work of Joseph Beuys and some of the artists of the Artc

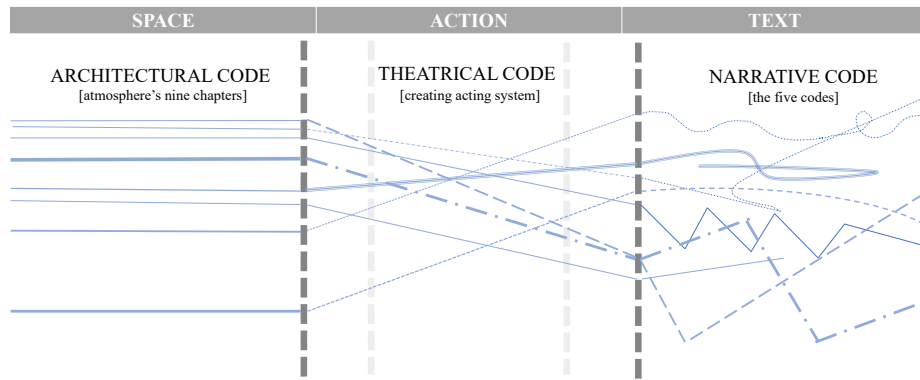


Fig. 3 Relational model of the codes: the trilogy of Space–Action–Text.

Povera group. What impresses me is the precise and sensuous way they use materials. It seems anchored in an ancient, elemental knowledge about man's use of materials, and at the same time to expose the very essence of these materials, which is beyond all culturally conveyed meaning. I try to use materials like this in my work. I believe that they can assume a poetic quality in the context of an architectural object, although only if the architect is able to generate a meaningful situation for them, since materials in themselves are not poetic (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 8–10)."

*ACT. Revealing. **SYM. Poetic. ***CUL. Convey of knowledge. ****HER. Material.

SS: Imagination,
Subtext,
Communion,
Adaptation,
The Physical Apparatus.

In meaning unit No. 1, Zumthor starts the interpretation of the architectural code of *Material Compatibility* in his text by referring to Joseph Beuys, one of the important names of installation art, and Artec Povera group artists. These examples, in fact, contain the evidence of who the way of using the material is used with reference to. The existence of something that needs *to be revealed* is mysteriously directed to the reader. In this way, it points to a series of sections gathered under the name of general action. This creates an experimental tone in the Action code: *ACT. Revealing. He explains through two examples that he cares about the sensory roles of the material in addition to all its physical justifications. In Joseph Beuys' art, he gives symbolic values to the materials and makes them meaningful. The materials frequently seen in Beuys' art (such as felt, oil, and copper) have special meanings that they evoke and represent. In particular, after a plane crash during World War II, he was treated by Tatar villagers who helped him after a plane crash by wrapping him in felt with animal fat, which was crowned with a narrative explaining the symbolic meaning he attributed to these materials (Tisdall, 1979). A similar situation applies to the *Artec Povera* art movement. The movement emerged in Italy in the late 1960s, criticized the industrialized and commercialized system and consumer culture, and acted with an anti-form approach. In

this movement, the value and creation of a work of art lie in the meaning given to it rather than the material itself. In the creation of art, one identifies with life and aims to experience the work of art itself as an entity rather than legitimizing or reflecting that product (Harrison and Wood, 2003). Therefore, to determine the suitability of the material for use of the author, in addition to the historical, cultural, and physical knowledge of the material, awareness of the sensory perception of the material is also necessary for the material to find what it wants to be. Therefore, we will interpret the concept of *poetry* that Zumthor wants to attribute to the material as a Symbolic code in this respect: **SYM. Poetic. The formation of this symbolic code refers to wisdom and knowledge codes ("... beyond a basic knowledge and also beyond all the culturally transmitted meanings of these materials ..."): ***CUL. Convey of knowledge. Since the common point and sign of the elements described here are shaped around the concept of material as a sequence, discourses about the material are developed in Hermeneutic code. The fact that it starts in this semantic unit and overflows to subsequent semantic units makes it open to interpretation and continuous production: ****HER. Material. In particular, the unit of meaning (No. 2) will focus on material and affect. Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski's actor training system, the Poetic is possible with the "adaptation" between the character and the actor in the concept of "motivation" that must occur in the "Physical apparatus (actor's body)" necessary for the actor's character creation. Ensuring the poetry of the affective and the Material, the "motivation" is revealed with the "actor's body" through "communion", that is, the transfer of information. While completing the creation of the character, the actor must be able to see the hidden meanings in the text, i.e., the *subtext*, and must have the ability to reflect the character correctly. The "subtext" here is the material. The material must be what it is supposed to be. This is possible with the ancient knowledge of the architect (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 8–10).

AC: Material compatibility,
Surrounding objects.

(2) "The sense that I try to instill into materials is beyond all rules of composition, and their

tangibility, smell, and acoustic qualities are merely elements of the language that we are obliged to use. Sense emerges when I succeed in bringing out the specific meanings of certain materials in my buildings—meanings that can only be perceived in just this way and vibrate in this one building (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 10)." *HER. Meaning. **SYM. Sense. ***ACT. Vibrate.

SS: Through line of Actions and the Superobjective, Truth, Belief and the "Magic If", Subtext.

In meaning unit No. 2, it is observed that Zumthor's architectural codes, *Material Compatibility* and *Surrounding Objects*, in which Zumthor conveys the meaning of a material for a building in a sequential order, are given meaning. In architecture, material, in its most general definition, is the smallest, rawest, or unprocessed material used in creating the building, which carries with it the most powerful and irresistible weapon besides physically showing its existence: Sense. At the same time, it is inherent to the material itself, i.e., its existence is self-evident, but it also carries other meanings along with the other objects surrounding it. Zumthor, who states that he prioritizes the material in an effort to create a meaning sensually, refers to the commonly known state of architecture with narrative phrases such as ("*... beyond all the rules of composition ... , ... the language that we are obliged to use ...*"). While these phrases prepare architecture for the Hermeneutic code in terms of meaning, they achieve this through the concept of material. The intention here is to search for a hidden meaning, and for this, it attempts to make sense and develop multiple meanings with narratives that are open to interpretation: *HER. Meaning, material. Zumthor, who includes the narrative as a prerequisite for meaning and sense ("*... Sense emerges when I succeed in bringing out the specific meanings of certain materials in my buildings ...*"), places the concept of sense at the center of the symbolic field. He talks about the existence of a sensory field beyond all the known elements that transform the material into architecture, and that his architecture is actually centered on that field. Therefore, the Symbolic code offers a relatively unique framing formed by perceptions: **SYM. Sense. For him, the physical and semantic harmony of the materials that make up the building creates the vibration of the right encounters. The fact that this phrase in the narrative ("*... meanings that can only be perceived in just this way and vibrate in this one building ...*") is formed by a series of action segments places the concept of "vibration" (also mentioned in No. 16) in the Action code: ***ACT. to vibrate. Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski's actor training system, Sense can be indirectly associated with the "Through line of Actions and the Superobjective" necessary for the actor's character creation. Because the Sense, which is tried to be created in the material, becomes the main target for Zumthor. The effort to search for the true meaning of the sensory material assumes the role of "Subtext" in the theater. The aim here is to reveal deep and hidden meanings. For Zumthor, architecture, making sense of the sensory aspect of the material, is a task far beyond the construction of the building.

However, this sensuousness and building with sensuousness, producing space, is not only the production and creation of the architect, but also a phase in which the user, the one who experiences that space, is also involved. After the actor completes the character creation, when he/she takes on the role persona through "Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If'", the audience is expected to believe in him/her at a convincing level and to be in that emotional state. Therefore, the sensation and meaning that the material creates in the user and the audience's impression of the actor's gestures after s/he takes on the character can be analyzed in the context of the same vibration, i.e., resonative thought.

AC: The body of architecture,
The sound of space,
Surrounding objects.

(3) "*Architecture has its own realm. It has a special physical relationship with life. I do not think of it primarily as either a message or a symbol, but as an envelope and background for the life that unfolds in and around it—for the echo of footsteps on the floor, for the concentration of work, for the silence of sleep*" (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 12). *ACT. Architecture. **SYM. Envelope, background.

SS: The Physical Apparatus,
Truth, Belief and the "Magic If",
Communion.

In meaning unit 3, the concept of architecture, which Zumthor grounds on the material-building relationship mentioned in (Nos. 1 and 2), is made sense of through the architectural codes of *Material Compatibility* and *Surrounding Objects*. He mentions that even if architecture is a physical creation on its own (he has already explained in No. 1 and No. 2 that it is not only a physical creation), it contains traces of life. Here, the performative and sensorial aspect of architecture points to the formation of architecture as a means of action. He mentions that message or symbolic concerns have no place in architecture, that is, in this respect, it aims to live socially rather than aiming for social organization. Architecture as a concept suggests the first element of the section of the Hermeneutic code to be closed in (No. 15): *HER. Architecture. ("*... I think of it as an envelope and background for the life that emerges in and around it ...*") The concept of in and around, which he specifically mentions, socializes the narrative, while the motive of providing a background for life reinforces this idea as it points to the cultural field and process. This concept, which characterizes the cultural code and concerns a temporal flow, is formed as the Cultural code: **CUL. Background. Likewise, he draws attention to both the physical and performative existence of architecture, which he characterizes as an *envelope* for life. As it physically characterizes a presence, it also symbolizes *enveloping* and protecting sensually. Therefore, a metaphorical concept that is open-ended and allows multiple meanings is characterized by the Symbolic code: ***SYM. Envelope. While opening "Life" with three examples, it is necessary to say that the *Sound of Space* focuses on the atmosphere chapter and includes the *Surrounding Objects in the Body of Architecture*: ("*... for the echo of footsteps on the floor, for the intensification of work, for the silence of sleep ...*").

Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski's actor training system, Architecture should be associated with the "The Physical apparatus (the actor's body)", which is the only material for the actor's character creation in the theater due to its vital and physical existence. As architecture contains symbolic meanings far beyond the meaning that Zumthor deems worth explaining, sometimes causing deviations in a very formalist or retinal direction. He therefore wants to make a sharp distinction between the effect this has and his own architecture. This leads him to develop a discourse similar to the methodological unit "Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If'" mentioned by Stanislavski, who drew attention to the concept of "vitality" in theater, where the actor approaches realism and communicates it to the audience through his faith (Stanislavski, 2007, p. 60). In this narrative unit used by Zumthor ("... for the echo of footsteps on the floor, for the concentration of work, for the silence of sleep"), architecture alone is not possible. There is a life that exists inside and outside. It is through Stanislavski's "Communion", i.e., transmissions, that architecture comes into existence with the unity of that life.

AC: The body of architecture,
Levels of intimacy,
Between composure and seduction,
Tension between interior and exterior.

(4) *"The architect must seek rational constructions and forms at the edges and joints, where surfaces intersect and different materials meet. These formal details define the sensitive transitions within the larger proportions of the building. The details establish the formal rhythm—the building's finely fractionated scale. Details express what the basic idea of the design requires at the relevant joint: belonging or separation, tension or lightness, continuity or rupture, fragility or solidity Our attention is caught—perhaps for the first time—by a detail, such as two nails in the floor holding the steel plates near the worn-out doorstep. Emotions well up. Something moves us (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 16)."*
*SEM. Detail. **HER. Unity of contrast. ***ACT. Be caught.

SS: Communion,
Motivation,
Imagination.

In meaning unit No. 4, Zumthor lists the architectural codes of the *Body of Architecture*, *Levels of Intimacy*, *Between composure and seduction*, *Tension between interior and exterior*, as the detail information about the material will affect the value of the building as a whole and what the architect's tasks should be in this process. According to Zumthor, the rhythmic unity created by the formal fragmentation created by material knowledge and detailed solutions can also solve the scale problem of the building. Up to this point, Zumthor first develops an interpretation through the physical presence of these concepts, like the material in (No. 2) and architecture in (No. 3), and then begins to describe the affective: ("... belonging or separation, tension or lightness, continuity or rupture, fragility

or solidity ..."). Therefore, it can be seen that detail, as a concept, contains a consciousness of meaning, just as material and architecture are sections of meaning. It carries both physical and affective meanings in the productivity of multiple meanings of the Semantic code: *SEM. Detail. This productivity is further reinforced by the harmony and unity of contrast. Thus, with a mysterious and enigmatic expression, the meanings of the concept can be created infinitely. All the opposing but taken together phrases that Zumthor lists regarding detail are placed in the Hermeneutic code range: **HER. Unity of contrast. Zumthor ("... Details express what the basic idea of the design requires at the relevant joint ...") reinforces the design and productivity of the building at first glance. As Mies Van der Rohe said, "God is in the details" (*The 20th-century Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright*, 2019). In addition, Zumthor narrativized the concept of detail and dealt with it together with the concept of material: ("... Our attention is caught—perhaps for the first time—by a detail, such as two nails in the floor holding the steel plates near the worn-out doorstep"). At the end of the story, we are confronted with a sequence of actions, and the impact of the Action code on us is discussed: ***ACT. Be caught. Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski's actor training system, detail can be related to the character creation of the actor in the theater due to its sensory and physical presence. The "Motivation" and "Imagination" that must be formed in the "The Physical apparatus (the actor's body)", which is the only material of the character, come into play. In particular ("... two nails in the floor holding the steel plates Emotions well up. Something moves us ...") in this narrative, the perception created in the user through the architect's physical, sensory and semantic knowledge of the detail has a similar attitude to the principle of "Truth, belief and the 'Magic If'". Just as the actor's belief in his own creation attracts the audience, the architect makes the user experience the same through his knowledge of detail.

AC: The body of architecture,
Surrounding objects,

(5) *"To me, the presence of certain buildings has something secret about it. They seem simply to be there. We do not pay any special attention to them. And yet, it is virtually impossible to imagine the place where they stand without them. These buildings appear to be anchored firmly in the ground. They give the impression of being a self-evident part of their surroundings and they seem to be saying: 'I am as you see me and I belong here.' I have a passionate desire to design such buildings that, in time, grow naturally into being a part of the form and history of their place (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 17)."* *SYM. Desire of the narrator. **HER. Building. ***CUL. Belonging, time, history.

SS: Communion.

In meaning unit No. 5, Zumthor starts the interpretation of the architectural codes *The Body of Architecture* and *Surrounding Objects* on the text by first referring to his own

desire and personal interpretation. The fact that the personal interpretation is secret and belongs to that person points to a section that explains the symbolic meaning. This situation constitutes the voice of the unknown and polysemy in the Symbolic code: ***SYM**. Desire of the narrator. The aim of architecture should not be “to be visible” but “to establish a genuine connection with place and man” (Norberg-Schulz, 1980). Architecture should derive its beauty from its silence. Thus, the meanings of a mysterious and enigmatic desire for the formation of buildings can be created infinitely within the framework of belonging, temporality, and historicity. In this context, all the reasons Zumthor lists for the building are placed in the Hermeneutic code range: ****HER**. Building. Because it is very personal, and therefore it will be pregnant with new meanings, with the possibility of interpretation. It belongs to time, history, and everything that constitutes it in its surroundings (*Surrounding objects*) (“... Such buildings, which have become part of the form and history of their places over time ...”), activates the Cultural code based on the sentence pattern: *****CUL**. Belonging, time, history. Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski’s actor training system, *desire of the narrator* is related to the “Communion” necessary for the actor’s character creation. Therefore, “Communion” undertakes the construction of cultural processes that are characterized by historicity and temporality, and that result in belonging. This is possible because of the infallible continuity between them. For some buildings, it is possible to shed light on a quality that says, “*I am as you see me and I belong here.*” In other words, the building belongs there so much that it is close enough to fill the void in the senses of that geography.

AC: The body of architecture,
Between composure and seduction,
Surrounding objects.

(6) “As John Berger says, what we remember cannot be compared to the end of a line. Various possibilities lead to and meet in the act of remembering. Images, moods, forms, words, and signs or comparisons open up possibilities of approach. We must construct a radial system of approach that enables us to see the work of architecture as a focal point from different angles simultaneously—historically, aesthetically, functionally, personally, and passionately (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 18).” ***ACT**. Remember. ****SYM**. A radial system. *****CUL**. At the same time, historical, ******SEM**. Aesthetically, functionally, personally, passionately.

SS: Units and Objectives,
Analysis of Text through Action,
Communion.

In meaning unit No. 6, Zumthor begins to make sense of the architectural code of *The Body of Architecture, Between composure and seduction, and Surrounding objects* in his text with the discourse of John Berger, one of the most important theorists of 20th century painting. Berger’s example has an important place in how to follow the ways of producing in architecture. The first sentence of the narrative (“... As John Berger says, what we remember cannot be compared to the end of a line”) draws

attention to the story of the arrival of the images or associations we create in our minds. Berger speaks here of non-linear time and therefore of the cyclical, processual or multidirectional. In this way, he offers the reader a mysteriously thought-provoking field of agency. He includes a series of fragments (“... *Images, moods, forms, words, and signs or comparisons open up possibilities of approach ...*”) that are collected under the name of the act of remembering. This constitutes an experimental voice in the Action code: ***ACT**. Remember. This series of remembered cross-sections carries different cross-sections of meaning in the Radial system due to its versatility and its different possibilities, such as the concept of detail in (No. 4). As an explanation of the radial system, Zumthor (“... *the work of architecture as a focal point from different angles simultaneously ...*”) places his statement in a symbolizing field. In this sense, the symbolic code is characterized by a metaphorical concept that is open-ended, emphasizes circularity and allows for multiple meanings: ****SYM**. radial system. It is seen that the Cultural code is triggered based on *historical and at the same time* express, which refers to the wisdom and knowledge codes that will factor in the formation of this Symbolic code: *****CUL**. At the same time, historical. Radyal yaklaşım sisteminin yorumcu ve çoğul anlamlı ihtimallerin içeren (estetik, işlevsel, kişisel ve tutku) kavramları anlambirimcik kodunda birleşerek, onu yeni anlamlarla yeniden oluşturmaya açık bir kaynak haline dönüştürür. The radial approach system’s interpretative and pluralistic concepts of meaningful possibilities (aesthetically, functionally, personally, and passionately) merge into the Semantic code, transforming it into a resource open to reconstruction with new meanings. *****SEM**. Aesthetically, functionally, personally, passionately. Here, the productive terms and their meanings and the principles of Stanislavski’s actor training system are re-evaluated: The associative recollection of images through the radial system is followed by a passionate and personal product analyzed in terms of historical, aesthetic and functional relevance of the ancient knowledge of the architect mentioned in (No. 1). Stanislavski speaks of “Communion”, for example, that the architect must know how to read in every sense the discourse of the artists of the time, their work or the historical process in which they were involved, just as the actor needs to “Analysis of Text through Action”. It is important to remember that the common “Units and Objectives” used by the actor in the theater to create the character are also valid for the architect when creating a space.

AC: The body of architecture,
Material compatibility,
Between composure and seduction.

(7) “Working drawings are like anatomical drawings. They reveal something of the secret inner tension that the finished architectural body is reluctant to divulge: the art of joining, hidden geometry, the friction of materials, the inner forces of bearing and holding, the human work that is inherent in man-made things (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 18–19).” ***SYM**. Anatomical drawings. ****HER**. Secret inner tension. *****ACT**. Finished architectural body.

SS: Subtext,

The Physical Apparatus.

In meaning unit No. 7, Zumthor begins the interpretation of the architectural codes, *The Body of Architecture, Material Compatibility, Between Composure and Seduction*, in his text by referring to the similarity of two seemingly unrelated drawing techniques at first glance. First of all, what is meant by working drawing draws attention to the metaphorical link between freehand studies and *Anatomical drawings*, which is an important means of expression in architecture, especially sketching, which can also include the preliminary project technique. This actually coincides with the idea of architecture having a sensible vitality for Zumthor, who thought of architecture as a body (Merleau-Ponty, 1945). Therefore, we will interpret the anatomical drawing based on the metaphorical meaning that Zumthor wants to attribute to *the body of architecture*, for example, architecture itself, as a Symbolic code: *SYM. Anatomical drawings. (“... of the secret inner tension that the finished architectural body is reluctant to divulge ...”) is not concerned with the superficial physical presence and form of architecture, but with its affective, invisible inner aspects. In contrast to the coherent, static, and peaceful existence of the physical being, architecture in drawing is dynamic and tension-oriented, with forced relationships. Since the common point of the elements described here and a series of signs are shaped around the concept of latent inner tension, discourses about latent inner tension are developed in the Hermeneutic code. The fact that it starts in this semantic unit and overflows into subsequent semantic units makes it open to interpretation and continuous production: **HER. Secret inner tension. (“... the art of joining, hidden geometry, the friction of materials, the inner forces of bearing and holding, ...”) contains a series of poetic (productive term in the Symbolic code produced in No. 1) references to Zumthor’s methods for the atmosphere he wanted to create: Analyzing the joint detail correctly is an art, the discreet creation of geometric harmony is an art, the correct resolution of the “encounter”, which is meant by the friction of materials, is an art, the emotional contribution of the physical entity (the building or the materials that make it up) is art. All architectural comparisons to art will be examined in the unit of meaning (No. 8). (“... the human work that is inherent in man-made things ...”), the concept phrase mysteriously and multilayeredly directs the reader to the fact that architecture is something that must be created by manual labor and artisanal production against the industrialized, identity-less uniformity of architecture. In this way, it is seen that a series of sections gathered under the name of general action are pointed out. This situation creates an experimental voice in the Action code: ***ACT. Finished architectural body. Considering the productive terms and their meanings here and the principles of Stanislavski’s actor training system; the “The Physical apparatus” and *the body of architecture*, which are necessary for the actor’s character creation, constitute the first stage of production in their respective fields with their physical and affective presence. For the compatibility of the affective and the material, and for the interplay between calmness and charm, there is a need for the subtext in the theater, which first causes the formation and then the expression of the hidden and latent inner tension. The “Subtext” here is

the *finished architectural body*. It contains a hidden revelation of what it wants to be (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 8–10).

The meaning units numbered 8 through 17 have been analyzed in the Appendix.

AC: The body of architecture.

- (8) “If a work of architecture consists of forms and content that combine to create a strong fundamental mood powerful enough to affect us, it may possess the qualities of a work of art. This art has, however, nothing to do with interesting configurations or originality. It is concerned with insight and understanding, and above all, with truth (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 19).” *SYM. Work of art. **HER. Truth, insight.

SS: The Physical Apparatus,
Subtext,

AC: The body of architecture.

- (9) “The design process is based on a constant interplay of feeling and reason. The feelings, preferences, longings, and desires that emerge and demand to be given form must be controlled by critical powers of reasoning, but it is our feelings that tell us whether abstract considerations really ring true (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 21).” *HER. Design process. **SYM. Feelings. ***SEM. Critical powers of reasoning.

SS: Analysis of Text through Action,
Imagination,
Concentration,
Relaxation,
The Physical Apparatus.

AC: The body of architecture.

- (10) “To a large degree, designing is based on understanding and establishing systems of order. Yet I believe that the essential substance of the architecture we seek proceeds from feeling and insight. Precious moments of intuition result from patient work. With the sudden emergence of an inner image, a new line in a drawing, the whole design changes and is newly formulated within a fraction of a second. It is as if a powerful drug were suddenly taking effect. Everything I knew before about the thing I am creating is flooded by a bright new light (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 21).” *ACT. Design. **SYM. An inner image, feelings, insight. ***HER. A powerful drug. ****SEM. A bright new light.

SS: Imagination,

Tempo-Rhythm.

AC: The body of architecture,
Between composure and seduction,
Surrounding objects,
The sound of space,
The temperature of space,
The light on things.

- (11) “Naturally, it is concrete things that first define a space: the materiality of its walls and floors, the qualities of light and shadow, the play of hardness and brittleness, and of edges polished by use. But when I close my eyes and try to forget both these physical traces and my own first associations, what remains is a different impression, a deeper feeling—a consciousness of time passing and an awareness of the human lives that have been acted out in

these places and rooms, charging them with a special aura (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 25)." *ACT. Concrete things. **CUL. A consciousness of time passing. ***SYM. A special aura.

SS: Truth, Belief and the "Magic If",
Imagination.

AC: The body of architecture,
Between composure and seduction,
Surrounding objects,
The sound of space,
The temperature of space,
The light on things.

- (12) *"To me, buildings can have a beautiful silence that associates with attributes such as composure, self-evidence, durability, presence, and integrity, and with warmth and sensuousness as we live in a building that is being itself, being a building, not representing anything, its own being (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 25)."* *HER. Building (No. 5): A beautiful silence, self-evidence, durability, presence, integrity, warmth, sensuousness. **SEM. Not representing anything.

SS: Communion.

AC: The body of architecture.

- (13) *"The reality of architecture is the concrete body in which forms, volumes, and spaces come into being. There are no ideas except in things (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 37)."* *ACT. The reality of architecture. **HER. Things.

SS: Imagination.

AC: The body of architecture,
The sound of a space,
The temperature of a space,
Surrounding objects,
Between composure and seduction,
The light on things.

- (14) *"Images of places that I know and that once impressed me, images of ordinary or special places, inner visions of specific moods and qualities, images of architectural situations, which emanate from the world of art, of films, theatre. Sometimes they come to me unbidden, these images of places that are frequently at first glance inappropriate or alien, images of entirely different origins. At other times I summon them (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 41)."* *ACT. Remember, summon. **HER. Unbidden. ***CUL. At other times.

SS: Units and Objectives,
Through line of Actions and the Superobjective,
Imagination.

AC: The body of architecture,
Surrounding objects.

- (15) *"Producing inner images is natural process common to everyone. It is part of thinking. Associative, wild, free, ordered, and systematic thinking in images, in architectural, spatial, colorful, and sensuous pictures, this is my favorite definition of design (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 67–69)."* *SYM. An inner image. **SEM. Definition of design.

SS: Imagination.

AC: Between composure and seduction.

- (16) *"Something that has the radiation of beauty strikes a chord in me, and later, when it is over, I say: I was completely at one with myself and the world, at first holding my breath for a brief moment, then utterly absorbed and immersed, filled with wonder, feeling the vibrations, effortlessly excited and calm as well, enthralled by the magic of the appearance that has struck me (Zumthor, 2006b, p. 72)."* *ACT. Vibrate. **HER. At one with myself and the world, absorbed.

SS: Truth, Belief and the "Magic If",
Communion.

AC: The light on things.

- (17) *"I want to think about the artificial light in my buildings, in our cities and in our landscapes, and I catch myself forever returning, like a lover, to the object of my admiration: the light that meets the earth from afar, the unfold numbers of bodies, structures, materials, liquids, surfaces, colors, and shapes that radiate in the light (Zumthor, 2006b, pp. 89–90)."* *HER. Light. **SYM. Like a lover. ***CUL. Infinity.

SS: Through line of Actions and the Superobjective.

4.2. The productives of trilogy of Space – Action –Text

Barthes' new lexical terms have been extracted from selected texts on the architectural code, specifically the atmosphere chapters. It is assumed that these terms enhance the relationship between the sub-headings of Zumthor's atmosphere and the Therme Vals, thereby supporting it with Stanislavski's principles. As is well known, Giuseppe Terragni's translation of the Divine Comedy from text to architecture in the Dantenum demonstrates that this quest dates back nearly a century (Tschumi, 1996). As shown in Fig. 4, the productive terms of the five codes in the *text* column and the systematic representation of the clustered principles of the alienation effect in the *action* column are classified through the architectural codes in the *space* column. In this context, Fig. 4 comprehensively analyzes the overall results of the study through the space-action-text columns.

In Fig. 4, the terms produced through Zumthor's narratives in the Thinking Architecture book, including the chapters of *atmosphere*, and the principles of Stanislavski's "System" are summarised as follows.

- **The body of architecture** is analyzed using 50 productive terms and 12 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **Material compatibility** is analyzed using 11 productive terms and 7 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **The sound of a space** is analyzed using 19 productive terms and 6 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **The temperature of a space** is analyzed using 16 productive terms and 5 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **Surrounding objects** are analyzed using 34 productive terms and 8 principles of Stanislavski's "System".



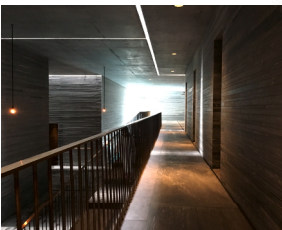
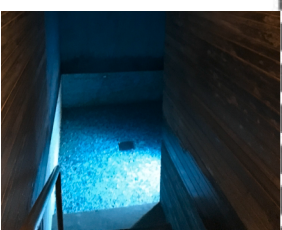
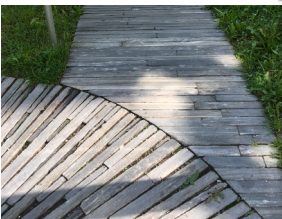
SPACE ARCHITECTURAL CODE	ACTION THEATRICAL CODE	TEXT NARRATIVE CODE
<p>The body of architecture</p>     <p>Material Compatibility</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Physical Apparatus (3), (7), (8), (9), (10) • Communion (3), (4), (5), (6), (12) • Motivation (4) • Imagination (4), (9), (10), (11), (13), (14), (15) • Units and Objectives (6), (14) • Analysis of Text through Action (6), (9) • Subtext (7), (8) • Concentration (9) • Relaxation (9) • Tempo-Rhythm (10) • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (3), (11) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (14) • The Physical Apparatus (1), (7) • Communion (1) • Imagination (1) • Adaptation (1) • Subtext (1), (2), (7) • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (2) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (2) 	<p>ACT. Architecture (3) Be caught (4) Building (5) Remember (6), (14) Finished architectural body (7) Design (10) Concrete things (11) The reality of architecture (13) Summon (14)</p> <p>HER. Unity of contrast (4) Building (5), (12) Secret inner tension (7) Truth (8) Insight (8) Design process (9) A powerful drug (10) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Things (13) Unbidden (14)</p> <p>SEM. Detail (4) Critical powers of reasoning (9) A bright new light (10) Not representing anything (12) Definition of design (15) Aesthetically (6) Functionally (6) Personally (6) Passionately (6)</p> <p>CUL. Belonging (5) Time (5) History (5), (6) At the same time (6) A consciousness of time passing (11) At other times (14)</p> <p>SYM. Envelope (3) Background (3) Desire of the narrator (5) A radial system (6) Anatomical drawings (7) Work of art (8) Feelings (9), (10) An inner image (10), (15) Insight (10) A special aura (11)</p> <p>ACT. Revealing (1) Vibrate (2) Finished architectural body (7)</p> <p>HER. Material (1) Meaning (2) Secret (7)</p> <p>SEM. Secret inner tension (7) Convey of knowledge (1)</p> <p>CUL. Poetic (1) Sense (2) Anatomical drawings (7)</p>

Fig. 4 Systematic representation of principles of the *atmospher's* chapters and *productive terms* of the five codes and in the trilogy of text–action–space. The drawing is carried out by the authors. Sources of the photographs: E. Yılmaz.

- **Between composure and seduction** is analyzed using 33 productive terms and 9 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **Tension between interior and exterior** is analyzed using 3 productive terms and 3 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **Levels of intimacy** are analyzed using 6 productive terms and 3 principles of Stanislavski's "System".
- **The light on things** is analyzed using 18 productive terms and 5 principles of Stanislavski's "System".

In total, among 190 productive terms, 59 are unique, while 131 productive terms are repeated. "Imagination and

Communion" principles of Stanislavski's System are repeated all chapters of *atmosphere*.

5. Discussion

The research in this paper attempts to access the multidisciplinary productivity of architecture, while simultaneously questioning the transfer of knowledge that this productivity can inform future work. The structure of the study is shaped by the Stanislavskian perspective that Zumthor's Therme Vals points to in reference to its semantic plurality. It is observed that the narrative of the

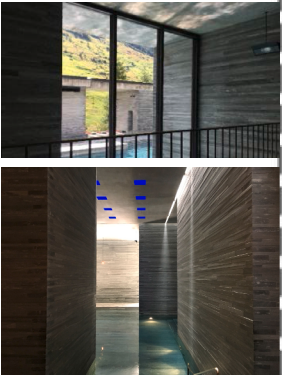

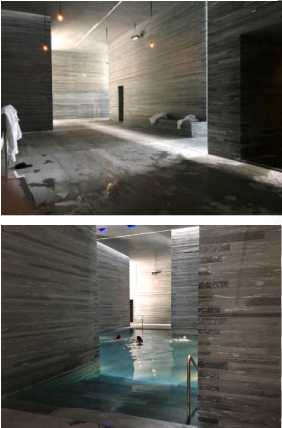
SPACE ARCHITECTURAL CODE	ACTION THEATRICAL CODE	TEXT NARRATIVE CODE
<p>The Sound of Space</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Physical Apparatus (3) • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (3), (11) • Imagination (11), (14) • Communion (3), (12) • Units and Objectives (14) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (14) 	<p>ACT. Architecture (3) Concrete things (11) Remember (14) Summon (14)</p> <p>HER. Building (12) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Unbidden (14)</p> <p>SEM. Not representing anything (12)</p> <p>CUL. A consciousness of time passing (11) At other times (14)</p> <p>SYM. Envelope (3) Background (3) A special aura (11)</p>
<p>The Temperature of Space</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (11) • Imagination (11), (14) • Communion (12) • Units and Objectives (14) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (14) 	<p>ACT. Concrete things (11) Remember (14) Summon (14)</p> <p>HER. Building (12) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Unbidden (14)</p> <p>SEM. Not representing anything (12)</p> <p>CUL. A consciousness of time passing (11) At other times (14)</p> <p>SYM. A special aura (11)</p>
<p>Surrounding Objects</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (2), (3), (11) • Subtext (2) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (2), (14) • The Physical Apparatus (3) 	<p>ACT. Vibrate (2) Architecture (3) Remember (6), (14) Concrete things (11) Summon (14)</p> <p>HER. Meaning (2) Building (5), (12) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Unbidden (14)</p> <p>SEM. Not representing anything (12) Definition of design (15) Aesthetically (6) Functionally (6) Personally (6) Passionately (6) A consciousness of time passing (11)</p>

Fig. 4 (continued).

architecture of atmosphere, which he mentions in his book *Thinking Architecture*, is not serialized (Petrović, 2017). The study does not present the nine structures of meaning that it mentions as parts of the concept of atmosphere in a sequential manner, and even jumps between the structures and the concepts of atmosphere. This is reminiscent of the deceptive and riddling semiotic code of the story, which Barthes interprets in Balzac's *Sarrasine* using five codes. However, it is not believed that Zumthor does this consciously. This book makes the work visible because it does not propose a sequential structure and does not offer the reader a temporal and spatial pattern. This contradicts Stanislavski's principle of the temporal and

sequential creation of the cycle of events (Stanislavski, 1989, 2007).

Among the 33 productive terms of *The body of architecture* are those that relate to and prioritize "the reality of architecture" and "the creation of an inner image". These terms are intertwined with the presence of all the "things" that constitute architecture itself. Temporal elements are often analyzed with reference to the concept of "history". The relationship of Therme Vals, or the architecture itself, with the environment in which it is built, its existence within it, and its impact on the stage of history reveals the 'truth' in architecture. This coincides with Emina Kristina Petrović's claim that the meaning attributed

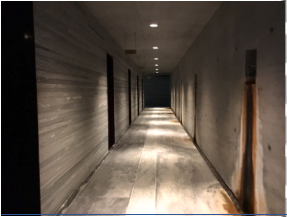
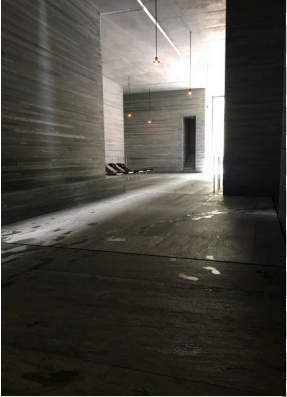



SPACE	ACTION	TEXT
ARCHITECTURAL CODE Surrounding Objects (cont.) 	THEATRICAL CODE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communion (3), (5), (6), (12) • Units and Objectives (6), (14) • Analysis of Text through Action (6) • Imagination (11), (14), (15) 	NARRATIVE CODE CUL. Belonging (5) Time (5) History (5), (6) At the same time (6) At other times (14) SYM. Sense (2) Envelope (3) Background (3) Desire of the narrator (5) A radial system (6) A special aura (11) An inner image (15)
Between composure and seduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communion (4), (12), (16) • Motivation (4) • Imagination (4), (11), (14) • Units and Objectives (6), (14) • Analysis of Text through Action (6) • Subtext (7) 	ACT. Be caught (4) Remember (6), (14) Finished architectural body (7) Concrete things (11) Summon (14) Vibrate (16) HER. Unity of contrast (4) Secret inner tension (7) Building (12) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Unbidden (14) At one with myself and the world (16) Absorbed (16) SEM. Detail (4) Not representing anything (12) At one with myself and the world (16) Aesthetically (6) Functionally (6) Personally (6) Passionately (6) CUL. History (6) At the same time (6) Time passing (11) At other times (14) SYM. A radial system (6) Anatomical drawings (7) A special aura (11)
Tension between interior and exterior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Physical Apparatus (7) • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (11), (16) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (14) 	CUL. History (6) At the same time (6) Time passing (11) At other times (14) SYM. A radial system (6) Anatomical drawings (7) A special aura (11)
Levels of intimacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communion (4) • Motivation (4) • Imagination (4) 	ACT. Be caught (4) HER. Unity of contrast (4) SEM. Detail (4) CUL. SYM.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communion (4), (5) • Motivation (4) • Imagination (4) 	ACT. Be caught (4) Building (5) HER. Unity of contrast (4) Belonging (5) SEM. Detail (4) CUL. History (5) SYM.

Fig. 4 (continued).

to the object value of architecture as an entity is related to its relationship with the means on the built plane (Petrović, 2017).

Within the 11 productive terms of *Material Compatibility*, it is inferred that the meaning of the material precedes its form. In the relationship of material with architecture, the concept of "poetry" is inferred, and it is emphasized that this is a textual symbol. In the design idea of Therme Vals' relationship with nature, its unity with the environment in which it is built, and the vitality of the material refer to Zumthor's inner and hidden imaginations. Zumthor's reinterpretation of mental images in the design process and the poetics of the material in this context

supports Hisham Abusaada and Abeer Elshater's claims of topological structuring and textuality (Abusaada and Elshater, 2024).

In the 19 productive terms of *The Sound of Space*, it is inferred that the sound of space envelops the space like an envelope. As the materials and functions used in the spaces change, different timbres emerge in the sounds of the space. For instance, the spatial atmosphere changes. In this context, it supports the work of (Sørensen, 2015), which refers to the perception of all sounds surrounding the space through sensory experiences.

In the 16 productive terms of *The Temperature of Space*, the importance of the presence of both tangible and

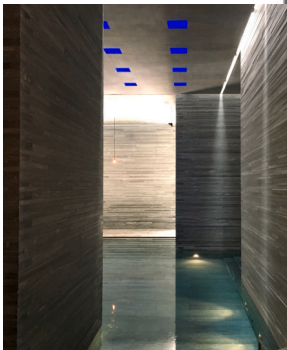
SPACE ARCHITECTURAL CODE	ACTION THEATRICAL CODE	TEXT NARRATIVE CODE
<p>The light on things</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth, Belief and the 'Magic If' (11) • Imagination (11), (14) • Communion (12) • Units and Objectives (14) • Through line of Actions and the Superobjective (14), (17) 	<p>ACT. Concrete things (11) Images of any places (14)</p> <p>HER. Building (12) A beautiful silence (12) Self-evidence (12) Durability (12) Presence (12) Integrity (12) Warmth (12) Sensuousness (12) Light (17)</p> <p>SEM. Not representing anything (12)</p> <p>CUL. A consciousness of time passing (11) At other times (14) Infinity (17)</p> <p>SYM. A special aura (11) Like a lover (17)</p>

Fig. 4 (continued).

intangible things in perceiving the temperature of space is highlighted. These terms refer to the fact that the space has a specific temperature and a special aura in defining the space. There are two common materials that cover all the spaces in Therme Vals: water and stone. However, as the spatial functions change, the temperature of the water, the indoor-outdoor relationships, or the “temperature” of other spaces become specific. For instance, the spatial atmosphere changes. In this context, it supports the work of (Gabrijelčić, 2016), which refers to the perception of all the warmth surrounding the space through both physical and sensory experiences.

It is observed that the concept of “enigma” is partially emphasized in the productive term *Surrounding Objects* 34, and that the abstract and concrete things, senses, inner images, nothingness, etc., surrounding the space gain importance among these terms and surround the space. These terms suggest that everything that makes up the space has a soul and is a part of the space that makes it complete. There are two relatively common materials that cover all the spaces in Therme Vals: water and stone. However, it is all the traces within the space that make up the space, and they are the soul of the space. For instance, the spatial atmosphere is exactly what is perceived by those who experience the space from their spirits. In this context, it supports the works of (Heidegger, 1971; Kim and Kwak, 2024), which refer to the perception of all the things surrounding the space through sensory experiences.

Between Composure and Seduction 33 is a productive term in which the concepts of “remember” and “absorbed” come to the fore and refer to the tension or attraction in the space. These terms are used to describe the character of the spaces. It is possible to experience this enigma or tranquility in all the spaces within Therme Vals. For example, while the saunas’ distance from natural and artificial light increases the tension of the space, the balanced presence of natural light and artificial light makes the users of the central pool space experience peace. In this context, it supports the studies of (Kim and Kwak, 2022), which refer to the perception of all sounds surrounding the space through sensory experiences.

In *Tension between Interior and Exterior*, 3 productive terms—detail, contrast, and absorption—were produced. Of all the atmosphere chapters in this book, this is the one with the least amount of discourse in terms of productive terms.

Levels of Intimacy is not a prominent term in the 6 productive terms, and the terms refer to the scale of the space. Among the atmosphere chapters in this book, spatial details are supported by terms such as belonging and opposition. In this context, the work of (Gehl, 2013; Relph, 1976) can be exemplified in describing the relationship between belonging and the scale created by the activities and values within the space.

In the productive term *The Light on Things* 18, is supported by a relatively diverse set of terms to describe the relationship of space to light. These terms define light as something that has no representation, treating it as a mass, for example, concrete. In all the spaces inside Therme Vals, light can also be used as a material, an enclosing object, a spatial temperature, a scale, or an element of tension between inside and outside. This is why Zumthor speaks of it admiringly in the book, “like a lover.” However, there is no material or semantic study that explains the concept of atmosphere through “light”.

When the quantitative repetitions of productive terms are classified, it is observed that the terms exhibit balanced productivity. However, the word “enigma” stands out the most. This supports the hypothesis of the study and the existence of shifts in meaning, e.g., plural meanings.

6. Conclusion

Within the boundaries of the coding framework employed in this study, it has enabled the mapping of sensory and performative aspects in architecture as an affective process and highlighted the trans-discursive relationship between Stanislavski’s creative acting and Zumthor’s spatial teachings. Nine concepts from Zumthor’s *Atmospheres* chapter were selected as architectural codes and classified based on the narratives in *Thinking Architecture*. The

authors refer to this systematic form as the architectural code.

The analysis method of the architectural codes was established on two related and sequential rule sets:

(1) Konstantin Stanislavski's 13 principles, (2) Roland Barthes' five codes of the Structural Analysis of Narratives.

The systematic structure formed by Stanislavski's 13 principles is referred to as the theatrical code. Through the encounter of the texts in the architectural code with the theatrical code, and their analysis via Barthesian five codes, a total of 190 productive terms were produced.

From a quantitative perspective, of the 190 productive terms, 59 are unique, and 131 are recurring. Among the 59 unique terms: the Action Code has 10, the Hermeneutic Code 19, the Semantic Code 9, the Cultural Code 7, and the Symbolic Code 14 unique productive terms. Furthermore, at least three of Stanislavski's 13 principles were classified for each *Atmospheres* chapter, and in *The Body of Architecture*, 12 principles were observed to be present. From a qualitative standpoint, the fact that the number of recurring terms is more than twice the number of unique terms indicates a fluid and soft boundary among each of the architectural codes. The most unique terms appear in the Hermeneutic Code, while the fewest are in the Cultural Code. The Hermeneutic Code, which generates polyphony through enigmatic discourse, riddles, and deferred information, is the most productive, indicating that the book is open to multiple layers of meaning. The second most productive code, the Symbolic Code, produces productive terms through oppositions, tensions, and deep relational meanings, forming a multilayered structure within the text. The high occurrence of this code suggests an intensive presence of unconscious, philosophical interpretations and interdisciplinary references in the text. The Action Code and Semantic Code have produced relatively fewer productive terms, closer in number to those of the Cultural Code. The lower productivity of the Cultural Code, typically associated with social, scientific, and cultural elements, is attributed to Zumthor's emphasis on sensory perception. Moreover, the dominance of the Hermeneutic and Symbolic Codes suggests that the mysteries under the Hermeneutic Code and the philosophical and interdisciplinary layers under the Symbolic Code should be discussed in relation to Stanislavski's 13 principles. However, while an increase in unique productive terms derived from these two codes does not directly correlate with a higher number of Stanislavski principles in the Action column, it does indicate a trend where the richness in Barthes' narrative codes strengthens the depth and consistency of the analysis based on Stanislavski's system. Among Stanislavski's principles, Imagination and Communion stand out as recurring structures across all *Atmospheres* themes. In addition, The Physical Apparatus, Truth, Belief, and The "Magic If" are also frequently observed and contribute to these two principles. For instance, *The Physical Apparatus*, as the actor's bodily tool in character creation, can be directly related to *The Body of Architecture*, one of the nine principles in Zumthor's *Atmospheres*. The character created through *Imagination* is conveyed to the audience through *Truth*, *Belief*, and the "Magic If". This parallels Zumthor's notion of material embodying ancient knowledge, enriched by poetry, and the perception of merging with the world—of being

drawn into it. With his emphasis on Communion, which reflects continuous transmission and interaction on stage, Stanislavski aligns with Zumthor, who places at the heart of architectural thought not fashion-driven architecture, but an architecture of timelessness.

This study demonstrates that architecture, through the discourses it has developed over the past century, has revealed its textual nature and opened its theoretical framework to reinterpretation within an interdisciplinary structure. Architecture and theatre are treated not merely as physical objects or fields of experience, but also as arenas of text and action shaped by multilayered narratives. In this context, from the moment it is read, the study will continue to generate new meanings through the reader's interpretation, offering both a new analytical orientation to architectural literature and reinforcing the conceptual bridges between theatre theory and architectural discourse that have remained underexplored. However, the limitations of the method and the possibilities it offers for future studies necessitate a separate evaluation. The following section discusses the limitations of the study and potential directions for future research within this framework.

6.1. Limitations of the study

This study, constructed at the intersection of architecture and theatre through Barthesian discourse analysis, presents certain limitations that should be considered. First, the analysis was conducted within the framework of two distinct but human-related disciplines, focusing on two specific case studies and two particular theatre theories. This scope may have prevented the findings from achieving a level of generalizability or may have restricted the results. Although the study is considered to offer an original perspective due to its interdisciplinary approach, other theoretical approaches may have been excluded from the study as a result of the in-depth examination of the selected cases. Lastly, as the study employs a qualitative research method using a discourse analysis design, the measurability of the interpretations may become a subject of debate in future research. Supporting future studies with additional empirical methods and comparative analyses may generate new outcomes as envisioned by this research. Another limitation of the study is that its object of analysis remained at the textual level. The study was conducted based on the architect's written narratives, and the physical characteristics of the space were interpreted indirectly rather than directly presented. In this regard, the research findings were concluded as systematic, Hermeneutic, and post-positivist, rooted in a theoretical and text-based discourse analysis. The method based on Roland Barthes was framed with Konstantin Stanislavski's theoretical model and synthesized into the architectural context of Peter Zumthor, forming an interdisciplinary fusion. However, by its nature, this transfer may give rise to interpretative subjectivities due to certain contextual shifts.

6.2. Future research directions

Future research may apply the theoretical model developed in this study to different theatre theories or

architectural examples from diverse historical and cultural contexts to expand the findings. Architects focusing on performative and sensorial spatial production may also be systematically classified using the same model parameters in relation to theatre theory, thus enriching the literature. Additionally, a book may be produced as a final output. Furthermore, incorporating empirical methods such as surveys, interviews, or ethnographic observations may help establish or refute the semantic correlations of bodily experiences discussed in this study. This proposition frames architecture as a “stage text” composed of narratives, offering a structuralist analytical method rooted in references from theatre theory. This approach, with its theoretical model and analytical flexibility performed by the interpreter, requires validation and refinement through testing in different contexts. Accordingly, the following directions are proposed for future research:

- The narrative-based analytical method proposed in the study can be adapted not only to theatre but also to other art forms that involve performativity and sensoriality, such as the works of Peter Zumthor and Bernard Tschumi, who operate both in theory and practice.
- Written texts by architects such as Steven Holl, Peter Eisenman, Daniel Libeskind, Rem Koolhaas, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Jean Nouvel, who emphasize performativity and sensoriality in design practice, can be re-evaluated within a similar analytical framework by incorporating theatrical perspectives.
- Structuralist analysis of architectural narrative can be compared with post-structuralist/phenomenological or even object-oriented ontology approaches by integrating them with theatrical codes. Such theoretical diversity would expand the contextual scope and deepen the content of this current study.
- The developed method can be integrated not only into theoretical analyses but also into studio practices or creative design processes in architectural education through interdisciplinary (architecture-theatre) workshops, offering practical contributions. In terms of productivity, the method can support both theoretical and applied dimensions.
- Lastly, this method can be adapted to other creative fields outside of architecture (e.g., theatre stage design, cinematic space analysis, performance art, digital dramaturgy, experiential museums, installation art, etc.) and tested across disciplines. This would provide new insights into interdisciplinary discourse production beyond architectural contexts.

From past to present and into the future, architecture demands evaluation not merely through the analysis of a building's formal features, but through its relationship with itself, its environment, and its representation via the user. The study, using a literary system, opens new textual paths through the language of architecture by producing meanings at the intersection of theatre and architecture. For this is the representation of a text that—though written and completed—continues to proliferate in meaning as it is read, experienced, and perceived, and will continue to do so.

Author contributions statement

In this study, E. Yılmaz conceptualized the research idea and designed the study. E. Yılmaz and M. T. Akbulut conducted data collection and analysis. E. Yılmaz performed the statistical analyses and interpreted the results. The initial draft of the manuscript was written by E. Yılmaz and M. T. Akbulut. All authors reviewed the manuscript, provided critical revisions, and approved the final version. All authors have agreed to take responsibility for all aspects of the study.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foar.2025.06.007>.

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