

IDENTIFYING COLOUR KNOWLEDGE IN DESIGN PRACTICE



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This project explores use, knowledge and understanding about colour among a respondent group (n=49) of Textiles MA students at the Royal College of Art, London. The students are from many nationalities: American, British,

Chinese, Russian, Turkish and Thai, with diverse prior educational and cultural experience. The project hopes to provide a platform for reflection on common interests in nomenclature, visualisation or specification, and preference.

Respondents listed colours they regularly used in designs, those they preferred and those they disliked. They described their colour palette. There is indication of preference leading use, of not using preferred colours, and some

evidence of use of a light/dark axis with a set of distinct hues, and more colour-orientated palettes with one or two neutral notes. Disliked colours are more specific, and in some places not expressed.



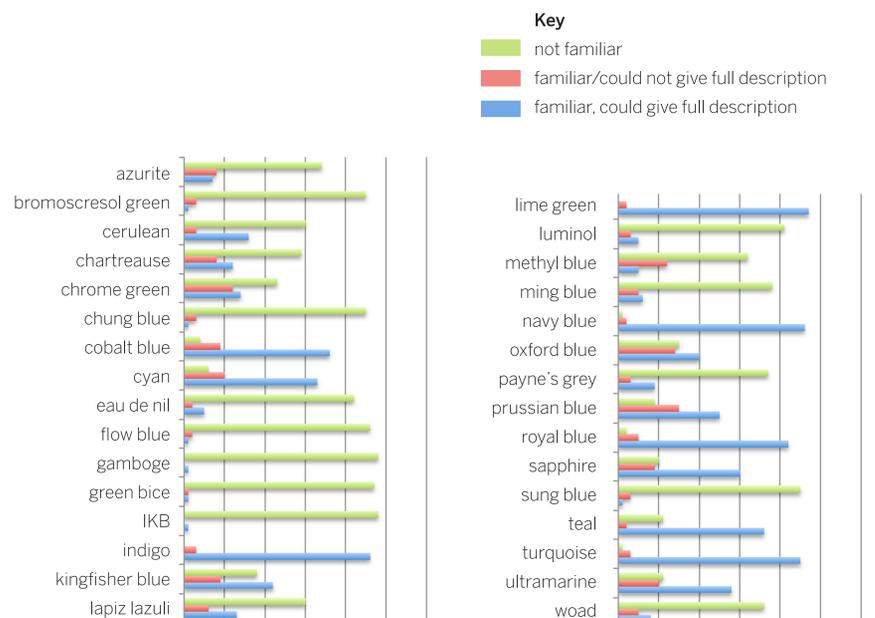
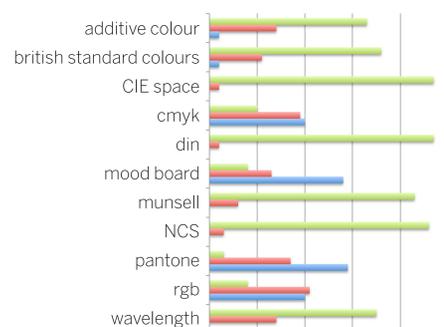
Familiarity with Colour Terms

The survey explored familiarity with 11 colour system terms and 31 terms used to describe colours in the blue-green dimension as used in several different art and craft arenas (artists pigments, ceramic glaze colours and natural language). The colour term dimension was constrained to blue-green focus for the study.

The range of ways to describe some specific colour samples to different audiences confirms the challenge for specification and variability in perception.

Next steps/further work will include a second survey with new students, follow-up survey with original group, focus groups with original group to explore range of palettes, interviews with industry professionals, and further analysis of use/prefer/dislike data.

The limitations of the study to date are known to include: researcher interpretation of non-specific colour terms, the rendering metallic, neon and pearlescent colours, and possible questionnaire fatigue influencing responses.



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