

Session

SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND THE INTERACTION BETWEEN EVERYDAY LIFE STYLES AND SYSTEMS OF PROVISION

Chairs:

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Joint Actions on Climate Change
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SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE MAPS

THE RELATION BETWEEN APPROPRIATION OF SPACE AND CONSUMPTION
INFRASTRUCTURE

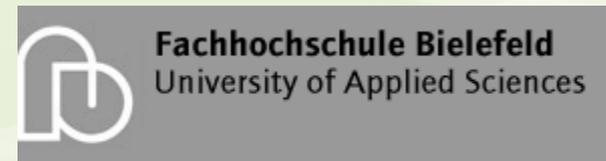
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Joint Actions

Research project

- Project: “Life events as windows of opportunity for change towards sustainable consumption patterns”
- Duration: March 2008 – February 2011

- Cooperation between



- Overall aim: creation and evaluation of a campaign motivating sustainable consumption after the birth of a child or moving to Berlin under consideration of consumption infrastructure

THEORETICAL ASSUMPTION

RELATION OF SPACE AND CONSUMPTION

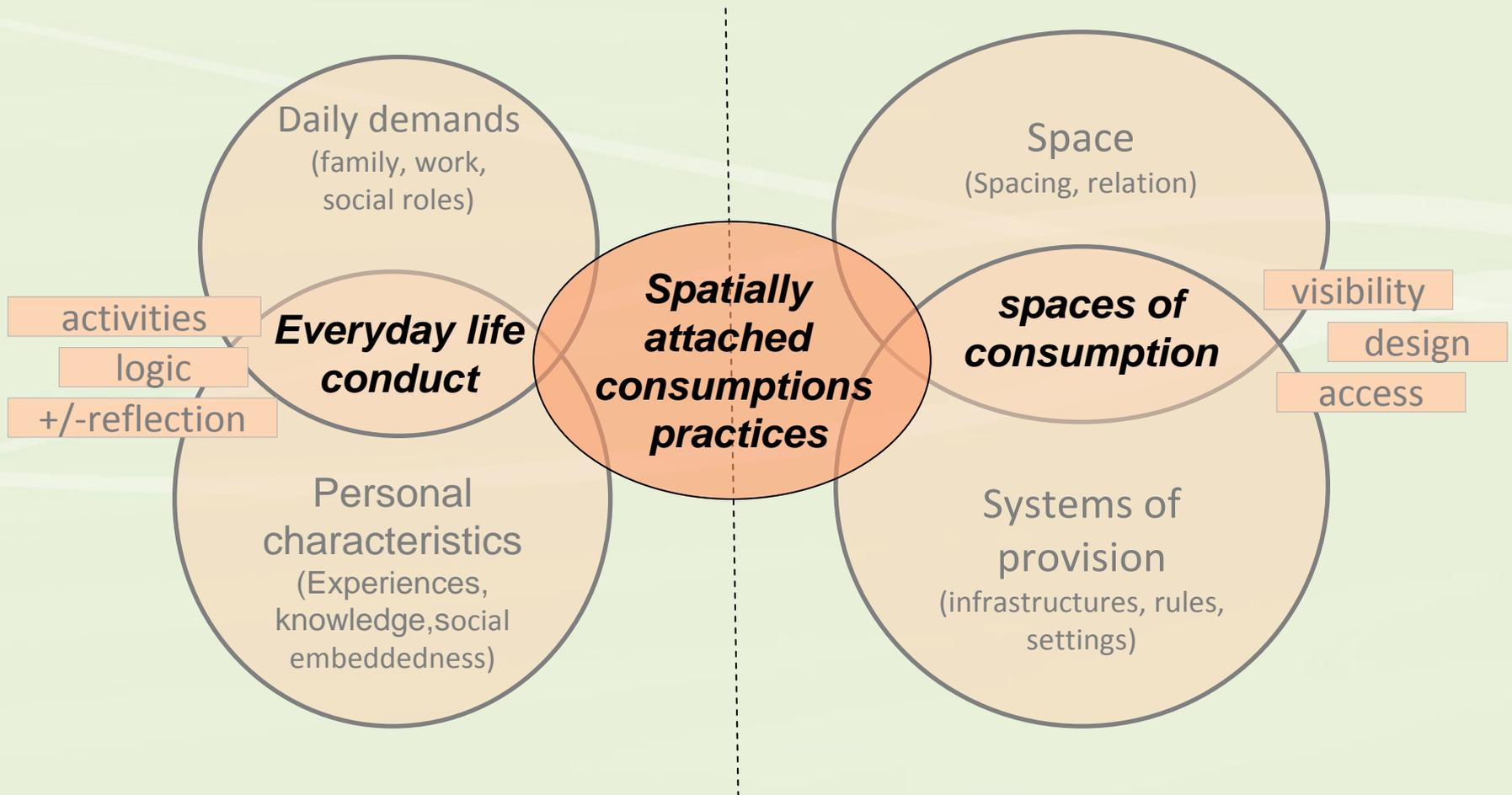
Three important assumptions from cultural geography/ sociology of space

1. Consumption is an aspect of culture. Culture is produced and reproduced in (daily) activities which can be reflected and unreflected.
 2. Spatial contexts of cultural practices structure the activities occurring within them.
 3. *Spaces* are becoming *places* through the use and activities of people within them.
- The process of space appropriation is important to understand consumption practices.

(Some) Elements of space appropriation and consumption

HUMAN AGENT

STRUCTURES



(Some) Central questions

How is consumption organised in everyday life in relation to space and place?

What are challenges for everyday life organisation caused by life events such as 'moving to Berlin' or 'birth of a child'?

How is the (new) surrounding appropriated and how are consumption practices attached to space and place? How is the new surrounding shaping this process?

What is the relation between 'objectively given' and 'subjectively perceived' consumption opportunities/ consumption infrastructure?

QUALITATIVE DESIGN

Target group:

- Non- participants and participants of the campaign

Method:

Two-phase problem focused interview (1,5 – 2 h):

1. Narrative introduction concerning life event
2. Focus: Everyday practices and consumption patterns in the areas: energy use, nutrition and mobility (incl. Map drawing)

Analysis:

- Mainly Grounded Theory (supported by Atlas.ti)
- Identification of consumption relevant practices and development of practice-related typology

Current status:

- 14 interviews completed
- Comparison of 7 interviews with relocaters (4 w, 3 m, age 26 - 34)

First Results

CENTRAL CATEGORIES

Influence of life-event:

Definition of change-sensitive areas (areas of challenge)

- *Relevant question:* where is most change happening?

Change-sensitive area	Challenge	Relation to consumption
Socio- interactional (Social relations/life)	→ social negotiation of everyday (incl. consumption)	→ social experience through consumption
Self-referential (professional dev., self/ identity)	→ finding structure and sources for (altered) self definition	→ self-experiencing through consumption

First Results **CENTRAL CATEGORIES**

Influence of life-event:

Types of re-organisation of everyday:

„I buy stuff if necessary if I feel like... a cheese here and a bread there [...] mostly what is on the way... the Edeka here at the corner or sometimes even the Kiosk or Internetcafé in the house “

„that is something where you have to prioritize or not... it just changes the order...but that is nothing bad“

Reactivity and coincidence

Designing everyday

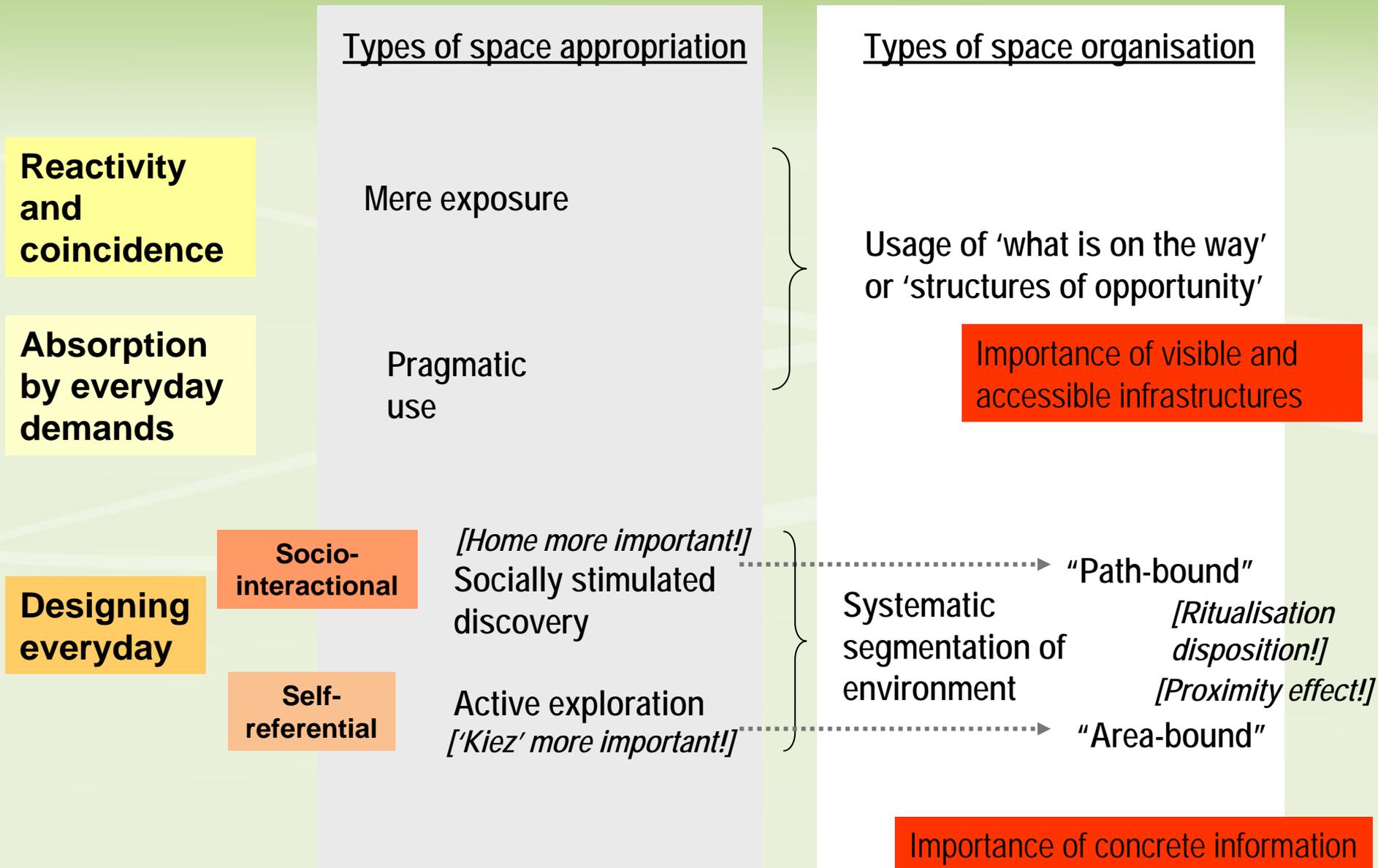
less 'ritualisation/
routinization disposition'

less regularity (e.g.
job, rhythms of others)

Absorption by everyday demands

„than it was the job that totally absorbed me...so I could have lived anywhere “

Relation between **CENTRAL CATEGORIES**



Preliminary conclusions

- Same surroundings are appropriated differently considering
 - ‘development challenge’ of live-event (socio-interactional, self-referential)
 - Type of ‘everyday re-organisation’ (absorption, reactivity, design)
- Consumption practices are differently well-defined concerning their space bondage (coincidental/ pragmatic vs. meaningful/ ritualised bondage)
- Campaign can be relevant for both types of space appropriation
 - Brings information to the door, makes visible ‘what is on the way’
 - Offers different levels of ‘information concreteness’, offers the opportunity to choose and to take part in special activities

Thanks for listening 😊

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