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WHAT DOES YOUR TIME MEANS?

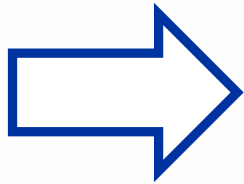
SOME CRITICAL REMARKS ON
THE CLASSIFICATION OF ACTIVITIES

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MINIMAL TIME-BUDGET DIARY

- 
- **Kind of activities**
 - **When these activities take place**
 - **For how long these activities take place**

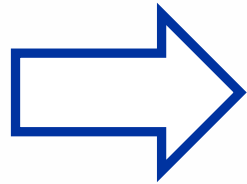


Optional: place, interaction partner, satisfaction, ...

ACTIVITIES

Categories referring to the 'lexical' meaning

Pre- or post-coded (schemes, activity lists)



The exclusive reliance on this kind of lists contributes to the underestimation of time-use data for more profound, and theoretically oriented analyses

COMMON CATEGORIES OF TIME-USE

Lexical activities are usually recoded into broader, meaningful categories, such as **'necessary time'**, **'contracted time'**, **'committed time'** and **'free time'** (Dagfin Ås)

Drawbacks of these classifications:

- **Externally coded: meaning of activity is attributed on basis of lexical meaning: what is 'committed time', 'necessary time', ...?**
- **The meanings are considered as logically exclusive (e.g. cooking is committed time, eating is a necessary activity)**

WORK: THE THIRD PARTY CRITERIUM

“If an activity is of such character that it might be delegated to a paid worker, then that activity shall be deemed productive ...” (Reid, 1934)

???

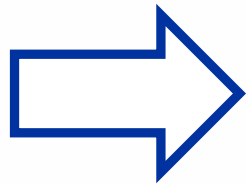
Playing with my children, reading stories, making love, pregnancy and childbirth ...

WORK: THE THIRD PARTY CRITERIUM

“An activity is considered personal if it must be **performed by a particular person** not because of special ability but because of a personal relationship between the performer and the one whose want is satisfied.” (Reid, 1934)

Or ...

“Work is anything that you might ask a third party to do on your behalf **without losing the direct utility that derives from it**”



the utility of an activity can not be derived from the ‘lexical’ activity, but **you need to know the meaning of the activity** (motivation, evaluation, ...)

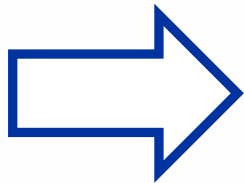
MEASURING MEANING IN TIME-USE DIARIES



Nothing indicates that the same lexically defined activity always has, under all circumstances, the same meaning: e.g. swimming, eating, cooking, ...

Meaning is dependent of the context of the activity

Different meanings can be relevant for the same lexically defined activity, it is therefor not appropriate to ask for meanings in general



Time-use diaries are very relevant to study meanings of activities since data are collected at the level of activities

TOWARDS A MORE ELABORATED SCHEME OF 7 MEANINGS

**Meaning refers to a value:
something that motivates or can be used to evaluate actions**

- (1) time spent out of a sense of duty**
(which refers to internalized values)
- (2) time spent to please others and maintain relationships**
(social alliance)
- (3) time spent as an obligation enforceable by others**
- (4) instrumental time, used as a means to an end**
- (5) time for physiological gratification or to maintain or improve my body**
- (6) time for personal gratification**
- (7) 'meaningless' time, spent to 'pass' or 'kill' time**

TOWARDS A MORE ELABORATED SCHEME OF 7 MEANINGS

Each meaning was formulated as both a motivation, and as a criterion of evaluation

Time as duty, for instance, was formulated as:

- **I do this because I consider it my duty; should I not do it, I would feel guilty**
- **The feeling that I did my duty, is important in evaluating this activity**

Respondents were asked to indicate on a 5 point Likert scale to what extent each of the seven motivations and seven criteria of evaluation applied to each of the recorded activities

VALIDATION OF THE SCALES FOR MEANINGS

A factor analysis yielded separate factors for the 7 meanings (eigen value=.6)

A factor analysis with an oblique rotation and more conservative eigen value (=1) yields 4 factors:

- **Duty**
- **Instrumental**
- **Obligation**
- **Solidarity**

come together in 1 factor, referring to **social meanings**

A MORE ELABORATED SCHEME OF 7 MEANINGS

(1) social meaning of time

- 1.1. time spent out of a sense of duty
- 1.2. time spent to please others and maintain relationships
- 1.3. time spent as an obligation enforceable by others
- 1.4. instrumental time, used as a means to an end

(2) time for physiological gratification or to maintain or improve my body

(3) time for personal gratification

(4) 'meaningless' time, spent to 'pass' or 'kill' time

RELEVANCE OF TIME-USE DATA ON MEANING

The consequence of unemployment

- The sociale meaning of paid work
- The changing meanings of unpaid work for (longtime) unemployed

The social meaning of paid and unpaid work for women and men

- The different meaning of paid work for men and women
- The different meaning of unpaid work for men and women and full-time, part-time and non-working women
- The importance of family relations for the social orientation of women

RELEVANCE OF TIME-USE DATA ON MEANING

The meaning of social relations

- The involvement in work relations, and to a lesser degree in primary relations, has a positive effect on the social meanings of activities
- Although work relations have a positive effect on the social meanings of activities, too much commitment to them (in terms of time) leads to a decline of social meaning
- People that can be considered as 'socially isolated' - those who spent more than 50% of their time alone - score very low for all social meanings
- Those who spent most of the time together with other members of the household score very high for all social meaning

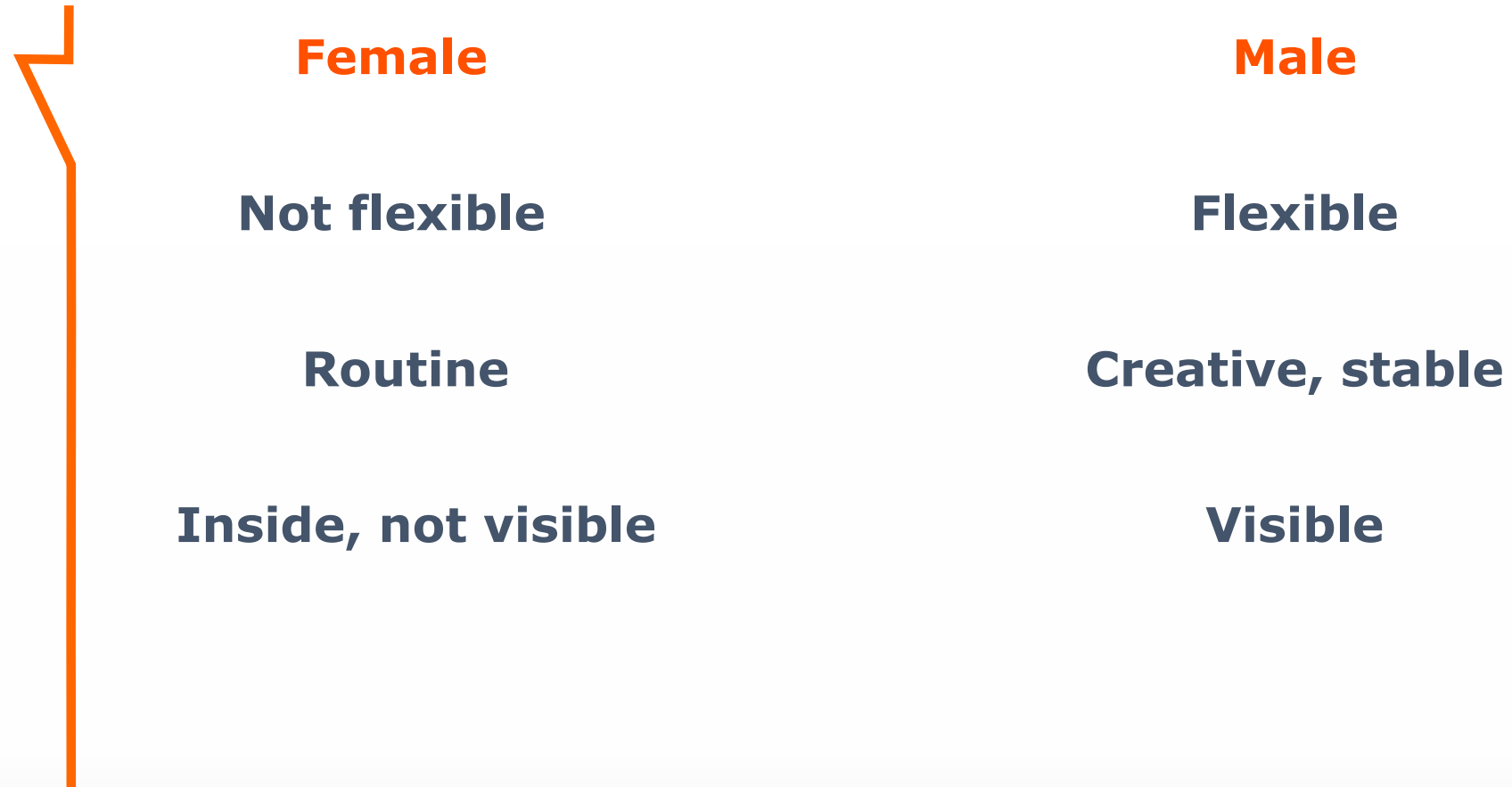
MEASURING MEANING – LIGHT VERSION

Why did you do this activity?

(different answers possible, preferably one answer)

- (1) Because I am obliged or compelled to**
(obligation)
- (2) Because to please others or because I consider it as my duty**
(others/duty)
- (3) Out of necessity, because it is necessary to make other things possible or because there is no other choice**
(necessity)
- (4) Because I like it, because it is pleasant**
(pleasure)

FEMALE AND MALE TASKS IN HOUSEHOLD WORK



FEMALE AND MALE TASKS IN HOUSEHOLD WORK



	Time per week	% Time women	% Time men	% Part. women	% Part. men
FEMALE TASKS					
Clothes	1u55'	88%	12%	87%	27%
Cleaning	3u11'	80%	20%	92%	47%
Meals, cooking	5u39'	72%	28%	97%	77%
MALE TASKS					
Chores	2u03'	24%	76%	47%	63%
Gardening	1u43'	35%	65%	34%	45%
NEUTRAL TASKS					
Shopping	3u06'	60%	40%	94%	81%
Care for pets/plants	0u30'	53%	47%	35%	22%
Organization, admin.	0u42'	51%	49%	57%	49%

DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF FEMALE AND MALE TASKS IN HOUSEHOLD WORK

	Obligation	Others/ Duty	Necessity	Pleasure
FEMALE TASKS				
Clothes	17%	19%	60%	7%
Cleaning	16%	19%	61%	7%
Meals, cooking	12%	19%	54%	18%
MALE TASKS				
Chores	13%	16%	54%	20%
Gardening	4%	10%	31%	60%
NEUTRAL TASKS				
Shopping	11%	10%	56%	26%
Care for pets/plants	26%	9%	54%	13%
Organization, admin.	9%	13%	34%	47%

CONCLUSIONS

- **behavior \neq action**
behavioral data (activities) should be enriched with data on meanings to study action (w.i. motivated, intentional)
- **time-use diaries are very relevant to study meanings of activities (or action) since time-use data are collected at the level of activities**
- **time-use data enriched with information on the meanings of activities will lead to more profound, nuanced and theoretically oriented analyses**

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