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On becoming "la sombra/the shadow"

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3 On becoming 'la sombra/the shadow'

Paola Jirón

German philosopher Martin Heidegger wrote about the use of phenomenology to understand the experience of being in the world (Heidegger 1999). According to Seamon (2000: 161), this implies that it 'is impossible to ask whether person makes world or world makes person because both exist always together and can only be correctly interpreted in terms of the holistic relationship, being-in-world'. This experience is always already situated in a world and in ways of being.

This chapter proposes a hybrid and interdisciplinary methodology to understand the experience of mobility in the city of Santiago de Chile from a phenomenological point of view. This approach accepts that the totality of experience can never be fully apprehended by the researcher and she will never fully understand how the experience of being in mobility takes place, as this will always be partial, incomplete, in process, becoming. As Bruner explains, 'we can never know completely another's experience, even though we have many clues and make inferences all the time' (1986: 5). How do we address this limitation? Geertz (1986) suggests listening to what, in words, images and actions, people say about their lives. This chapter suggests embarking on a reflexive and intersubjective process from not knowing anything about the multiple and hybrid experiences of mobility to becoming increasingly closer to them, by getting very close, but never fully being, as, in Heidegger's sense, this being is always someone else's. This reflexive and intersubjective process entails reassessing methods as experiences become unveiled, accepting one's position and expertise as part of understanding the other's and situating the experience in a broader context.

Getting closer to experiences requires moving with people both physically and in interaction (in dialogue and embodied interaction), and one way that this chapter suggests doing this is to accompany urban travellers by shadowing their practices. Shadowing involves 'following selected people in their everyday occupations for a time' (Czarniawska 2007: 17). For this, an ethnographic approach is presented as the most adequate, given the possibility of immersing oneself deep in the observation of a practice by being there and providing an in-depth description of it through fieldwork. Thus 'becoming the shadow' of mobility practices, as a reflexive endeavour, involves not only acknowledging routines,

but also entering into practices, into dialogue and interaction in a constant engagement with the people whose lives they constitute. Throughout, the researcher's position and the methods of inquiry need to be adapted reflexively.

A deeper understanding of multiple and hybrid mobility experiences is important because mobility is such a pervasive feature and is constitutive of contemporary living and urban space. By looking closely at experiences, the ideas of fixity, permanence and duality present in most urban analysis are questioned and mobile experiences emerge as fluid, multi-scalar processes in their situated complexity. This way of analysing mobility practices is part of the mobility turn that is enabling considerable theoretical, methodological and practical advances in the social sciences and their role in shaping contemporary societies.

The mobile methods presented here attempt to capture the ways in which mobility is experienced in cities today; this involves adapting, combining and modifying traditional research methods. It also means that, as important as knowing how much, at what time or in what mode people travel, research on mobility needs to examine the experiences of mobility practices, that is, the way people enact, experience and give meaning to mobilities in the way they prepare, embody and construct them on a daily basis. This requires innovative methods of inquiry, analysis, representation and negotiation, which necessitate flexible and dynamic methods as opposed to strict adherence to predefined tools. The proposed mobile methods are always in construction, always becoming.

Moving with people – in the case of the research at hand, urban dwellers in Santiago de Chile – in this way allows the researcher to witness and share everyday mobility experiences and practices (Kusenbach 2003; Ingold and Vergunst 2008). To explain the methodology adopted, this chapter is divided into three sections, starting with a description of the various ways in which mobile methods have evolved. It then explains the ethnographic shadowing approach adopted for this research. It concludes with a description of one case study on how mobility practices in Santiago de Chile were studied by using narratives, time-space mapping and photography.

Towards mobile methods

Mobility has been studied extensively from a transport point of view, mainly from the disciplines of transport engineering, economics, geography, planning, business and regional sciences (Johnston 1981; Small 2001), which are mostly interested in understanding travelling patterns through origin and destination of daily trips. In contrast, the 'mobility turn' in social sciences has revealed that most transport research assumes space and people's use of space as fixed and contained within areas. This critique unveils a need to move towards methods that are able to better capture the way mobility practices take place and how these exert a major influence on urban environments, including transport networks. This section provides a brief overview of some of the methods sociologists, anthropologists and geographers have used to apprehend mobility over time.

In the attempt to capture the experience of living in the city in and through the range of mobilities city life demands and is constituted of, qualitative methods have been applied in numerous ways by researchers. An early example of this is the work of George Simmel who aimed at understanding the sociology of the city in the nineteenth century by observing people, particularly in public areas in Berlin, including public transport (Simmel 1969; Frisby and Featherstone 1997). Moreover, by understanding the city as text, Walter Benjamin aimed to analyse the way modernity presented itself in the city from the character of the *flâneur* that strolls, in a seemingly aloof manner, the arcades of Paris, yet observes the crowds from afar. Benjamin analyses this through nineteenth-century literature, particularly that of Charles Baudelaire (Benjamin 1973, 2002).

More recently, French artist Sophie Calle controversially exposed urban experiences by following strangers and photographing them in Paris and Venice (Calle 1998). In the Latin American context, anthropologist Nestor García Canclini explored urban imaginaries by using historical and current photography and film of people travelling in Mexico City and presenting these for discussion to contemporary urban travellers (García Canclini *et al.* 1996; García Canclini 1997).

Closer to the aim of the research at hand, Michel de Certeau proposed walking the city as an elementary form of experiencing it, as for him it is on the streets that ordinary city life is made (de Certeau 1986). Although de Certeau's pedestrian speech acts are urban acts integral to the city, other forms of daily mobility are also significant in understanding urban living experiences. Along these lines, Augé's ethnology of the Parisian Métro provides detailed discussion of what travelling is like: the remembrances it evokes, the traces experienced and encounters it leaves behind, the cultural meaning that stations, connections, trains provide people (Augé 2002). Maspero contributes to this line of inquiry, but explores the diverse places and the production of their different senses of place surrounding the flow by travelling on the Roissy Express in Paris and getting off at each station to observe and participate in the spaces around it (Maspero 1994).

In human geography, time geography has made a major contribution to mobility studies by seeing 'time and space as universally and inseparably wedded to one another' (Pred 1996: 646; see also Haldrup, Chapter 4). Time geography suggests that the study of aggregate populations masks the true nature of human patterns of movement and highlights the importance of understanding disaggregated spatial behaviours (Hägerstrand 1970), arguing that time, while objectively the same everywhere, is not experienced, valued, used or available in the same way to all, as time is also spaced (Jarvis *et al.* 2001).

To illustrate how a person simultaneously navigates his or her way through the spatio-temporal environment, time-space mapping was developed. This notation device was used to demonstrate how human spatial activity is often governed by limitations and not by independent decisions of spatially or temporally autonomous individuals.

Time-space mapping has been criticised as being 'too physical, mechanistic and an exponent of social engineering' (Lenntorp 1999: 156), as it places too much emphasis on individuals as objects. Giddens (1985) considers the approach as theoretically naive in treating individuals as coming into being independently of their daily social settings, giving little attention to the essential transformative character of all human actions. Similarly for Harvey (1989), time geography and time-space mapping are a useful description of how the daily life of individuals unfolds in space and time, yet it reveals nothing about

how 'stations' and 'domains' are produced, or why the 'friction of distance' varies in the way it palpably does. It also leaves aside the question of how and why certain social projects and their characteristic 'coupling constraints' become hegemonic, and makes no attempt to understand why certain social relations dominate others, or how meaning gets assigned to places, spaces, history and time.

(Harvey 1989: 212)

Feminist critique of time geography highlights another shortcoming of time-space mapping. As discussed by Rose, 'time geography insists on a singular space, the space through which it traces people's paths claims to be universal. In other words, time geography assumes that its space is exhaustive' (Rose 1993: 19). These criticisms illustrate how time-space mapping neglects to question the transparency of space. As a tool it could be greatly enhanced if combined with other approaches that uncover the power relations, the meanings, embodiments and consequences of experience *in situ*.

Over the past few years, a sort of revival of time-space mapping has emerged, not least because it provides a much-sought-after sense of concreteness; it represents space and time not as simple social containers but as actual constraints on human action; it provides a geographical ethics in terms of the wise use of time and space; it offers a language to explain time and space, most importantly in terms of visual representations in maps and diagrams (Thrift 2005). It is currently being used in transport planning by mapping origin and destination surveys (Newsome *et al.* 1998) or in spatial mapping using Geographical Information Systems or virtual interaction (Miller 2005). Also, as a way of reflecting the way human activities affect the natural environment (Peuquet 1994), time-space mapping is being incorporated as a notation device. Moreover, it has been used in gender studies (Kwan 2002) and migration analysis (Southall and White 2005), all of which adopt a quantitative approach to human behaviour.

Critically, by aggregating mobility patterns, these studies dismiss the richness of experience and provide limited discussion on the power relations, meanings, embodiments and effects that are enacted in and through mobility practices. Approaching urban daily mobility using only time-space mapping is insufficient to capture the experience of urban living and more qualitative tools are needed to be able to highlight these issues. In mobility analysis, time geography can

highlight people's allocation of time in geographic space, the importance of quotidian routines, urban performances and geographies of rhythms and the constraints present in society that inhibit urban dwellers from accessing the city in an even manner.

A more sophisticated example of this is Alan Latham's work, which uses time-space mapping in a participative manner through a diary-photograph/diary-interview method, where people are asked to write diaries and photograph their daily experiences, the interesting and/or significant places and events of their week. These are then noted in a version of time-space maps to explain the travels along with photographic material (Latham 2003, 2004). Through this participatory approach, Latham minimises the researcher's input into what and how things are recorded (Bijoux and Myers 2006), providing rich data gathered by the participants who are in control of what is captured.

However, the difficulties with Latham's type of research relate to the reliability of participants' dedication. Their commitment becomes crucial in the success of the method, running the risk of being overly demanding on interviewees' disposition and willingness to participate, particularly when daily mobility experiences are filled with temporal and spatial limitations, thus risking the possibility of obtaining accurate, detailed or any information at all. This technique has proven to be quite useful with youth participants who appear eager to try them, as was the case with Dodman (2003).

For the research at hand, focused on the everyday mobilities of urban travellers in Santiago, the diary-photograph/diary-interview technique seemed inadequate because of the difficulty in having participants accept this extra work. However, Latham's approximation of mobility practices provides a useful way to capture the experiences and rhythms of mobility (see Haldrup, Chapter 4). As suggested by others using Latham's technique (Zimmerman and Wieder 1977; Dodman 2003; Meth 2003; Bijoux and Myers 2006), time-space maps could be complemented with interviews, focus groups, mental maps, among other methods. In order to get closer to travellers' experiences by becoming their shadow, this research considered an ethnographic approach as valuable.

Ethnography involves a researcher:

participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives, for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is being said, asking questions, in fact, collecting whatever data is available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research.

(Hammersey and Atkinson 1995: 21)

Ethnographic fieldwork is 'carried out by immersing oneself in a collective way of life for the purpose of gathering first hand knowledge' (Shaffr and Stebbins 1991: 5). An essential part of ethnography involves carrying out fieldwork as a way of 'being there' (Geertz 1988). Ethnographic research is characterised by a proliferation of styles and texts, and has reached into diverse areas of human experience, including medicine, education, journalism and urban studies (Atkin-

son *et al.* 1999; Hamnerz 2003). In the latter, it has provided more effective methodological means to apprehend urban practices and experiences than traditional research methods (see Wacquant 2007). Moreover, 'the flexibility of the ethnographic research approach, combined with the availability of new technologies for the storage, retrieval, and presentation of data, allows for the emergence of new directions to better understand how social behaviour is shaped and organised' (Shaffr 1999: 685).

A useful way to look at mobility practices from an ethnographic point of view is multi-sited ethnography, which has been developed as a way to follow 'the thread of cultural processes' (Marcus 1995: 97). Multi-sited ethnography involves research that is not 'confined within one single place. The sites are connected with one another in such ways that the relationships between them are as important for this formulation [of a topic] as the relationships within them' (Hamnerz 2003: 205). It is the linkages allowing for these connections that are relevant; these make multi-site studies 'different from a mere comparative study of localities' (Hamnerz 2003: 205), even if comparisons are also made. Among the many types of multi-sited ethnography, studies include observations of migration, social movements, cyberspace or the global cultural economy. Multi-sited ethnography can be classified according to the different ways in which the object of study is followed: following the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot, the story or allegory, the life or biography, the conflict, or it can also be strategically situated (Marcus 1995). Multi-site ethnography builds on the ethnographic tradition of studying cultures and their situated practices, but it seeks to enable a broadening of the investigation to study of movement, interactions on the move, connections and, as in this case, mobility experiences.

For the research in Santiago, a mobile multi-sited ethnographic approach was chosen as the most appropriate way to describe mobility experiences. It allows for flexibility and possibility of exploring, through thick description, the daily routines of mobile urban dwellers, offering a 'deep' and 'multi-faceted' description. Depth is crucial to understanding and explaining experience and I was particularly interested in the way different groups experience and enact urban mobilities. This approach allowed me to understand the hows, whys and whats (Shaffr 1999) of a specific urban practice, by allowing me to immerse myself in the way different people perform mobilities and produce knowledge about what the experience is like for them. Also, given that an ethnographic approach requires a considerable amount of time dedicated to fieldwork, it allows for reflexivity and the possibility of adapting methods as insights begin to manifest, and the researcher begins to understand experiences, becoming closer to them.

Although I was interested in observing travellers, I was not, unlike Augé, interested in observing strangers. In a very similar way to Latham's work, I wanted to know the meaning travellers gave to their experience, what had taken them to the journey and what happened to them during and afterwards, in a very similar way to Spunney (2007), who follows his participants on bicycles while filming them. In order to accompany the experience, I wanted to move with the people in my study, which was made possible by introducing a shadowing tech-

nique. Shadowing involves accompanying the participants individually on their daily routines, observing the way the participants organise and experience their journeys, sharing and collaboratively reflecting on their experience on the move. This is done either by discussing issues during the shadowing period or afterwards. The journey may be filmed or photographed during the shadowing process. This technique enabled me to capture important aspects of the experiences of urban daily mobility in Santiago, as will be detailed in the next section.

Becoming the shadow

It was important for me, as a researcher, to experience at least part of what travellers experienced, as one of my participants mentioned about the implementation of Transantiago, a new public transport system in the city of Santiago in 2007: 'if planners ever got on a bus like we do, they would understand why their proposals will never work' (Bernardo). To understand the complexity of changing transport modes, of climbing on and off buses, of body pressing against body, getting lost, feeling scared or disoriented, being fondled, robbed or amused, one needs to experience it. The lack of such understanding all too often leads architects, engineers and planners to ignore these complexities in transport innovation. I wanted to accompany travellers in order to understand what they did and how they did it and the traces left behind in their bodies and mental and emotional lives. I also wanted to discuss with them while they were travelling, see what they saw, understand why their gaze lingered or chose to ignore, and what they made of it afterwards. Also, understanding social-spatial experiences as embodied, multi-sensory and emotional (Bijoux and Myers 2006), I wanted to know what they touched, heard, smelled or tasted in the experience. Thus, I wanted to talk about the way the experiences were embodied. I also used photography to record mobility practices and to elicit reflection about them afterwards. The process of capturing the experience by becoming a shadow was a constant construction, shaped by constant reflexive inquiry into how and why which methods of mobile inquiry worked or not.

The overall structure of the methodology involved case selection, a period of access, a shadowing period and then returning to discuss the experience. When selecting the cases, I was primarily interested in analysing mobility practices of different income groups, since most studies which touch on urban inequality generally tend to focus on the poor, the excluded, though not on the relation they have with other social groups. As a way of making these associations, I compared travelling experiences of individuals living in different income neighbourhoods but located relatively close to each other. In this research, the cases were defined as urban travellers living in three different income neighbourhoods in a specific area of the borough of La Florida in Santiago (for detail on the case study, see Jirón 2007, 2008).

After explaining in detail what the research entailed, a process of exploring the field took place. Although my informants had agreed to participate, I began getting closer to their experience by carrying out extended interviews with each

one. Here we began to discuss their personal history, background, choice of current place of residence, how they came to live in their current neighbourhood as well as detailed description of their regular daily trajectories using maps and 24-hour time budgets to trace these and talk about them. As relations with each participant became more relaxed, longer informal discussions began to take place on more specific issues of their everyday life and mobility experiences in the city. Through these discussions I slowly became closer to their experiences and prepared the way for shadowing their mobility practices.

It was after this period of getting to know each other that we agreed that I would accompany them on their journey as a mobile shadow. I shadowed each participant on a regular weekday, from the time they left their house until their day was over. This involved arriving at their house, according to our prior arrangement, often before they left in the morning, observing how they prepared to leave the house, then going through the day with them, how they managed riding on an overcrowded bus at rush hour or driving around the city all day, the boredom of shopping or the fear of coming home late at night, among many other activities. Finally, it involved coming back home at night (or leave at night and come back in the morning in the case of security guards). Although I had a broad idea of their journeys from previous discussions, the actual journeys were very different from what I would have expected, particularly in terms of the precision and coordination in executing them. This required me to always be on time, as I could not delay their routines, and I had to be flexible, in case their plans changed or something unexpected happened.

I adapted to their situation, and although most participants were quite organised in terms of knowing ahead of time their daily activities, the details of how they were pursued were often unexpected. Sometimes participants would cancel at the last minute; other times I would stay with them until very late. They also asked me to help them and I never refused; consequently, I ended up packing shirts for delivery, choosing tomatoes, corn and beans in the street market, carrying elderly women's shopping, tucking children into bed, selecting gifts for clients or filling out forms in the hospital, among other things. Through this form of participant observation, 'being there' in their daily routines became possible.

The time-space dimension of the practice was incorporated through time-space maps, for which time and location were recorded to be later geo-referenced in the maps. The maps were used in a qualitative manner to provide a clear expression of the spatial use of the city. These were complemented with narratives, to describe the experiences people had during their daily journeys, particularly in terms of the strategies used for mobility and the consequences these have on their daily lives.

Details of the journeys were recorded as well as photographed by the participants or myself. As a visual method, photography was used as a way of reporting the journey and to carry out photographic interviews (Rose 2001) or photo-elicitation. As a visual reporting tool, the journeys were photographed to accompany the narratives and time-space maps, to 'follow' the journey and see specific aspects of the trajectory (see Figures 3.1-3.6). Photographs provide a closer

approximation to the journey than the time-space maps on their own would depict. In this sense, the maps and photographs attempt to create a 'moving picture' of what is being described in the narrative. This moving picture provides a better idea of the spatial approximation of the traveller through the city, while at the same time it allows for rich and immediate perception of the spaces travelled by, as well as the spaces travelled in (the car, the bus, the tram, the metro). Each element on its own would not provide as rich a picture of the journey as when observed together. This does not attempt to provide an exhaustive or comprehensive account of the journey, but to expose several interconnected dimensions of travelling.

In post-fieldwork photo-elicitation during individual and group interviews, photography was used to evoke discussion on specific topics. Here the photograph loses its claim of objectivity and presents the subjectivity of those who see the image differently from the researcher (Harper 2004). The participants often provided description of situations that would be very difficult to become aware of by simply observing the situation. After shadowing them and returning to talk about the journey, I would present the photos that would lead them to talk about experiences, motivations, practicalities, thoughts and emotions. This was particularly useful to identify processes of place-making. Both types of visual methods are recognised as not being neutral, as suggested by Rose (2003), and produce difference, as through their selection of captured moments and views certain people or elements remain invisible or hidden. Although I played a major role in the production of the images, I tried to be participative in letting my interviewees take photographs and reflect on them in discussion. As a result, part of their spatial experience was revealed, and they were able to explicate in depth their own interpretations, thoughts and reflections.

During the trips I also took notes, and some issues were discussed as they occurred, while others were saved for later discussion, depending on the convenience of the situation, the people around us or the topic of discussion. Although travelling with someone constantly and continuously during a full day had the potential of difficulty, all my experiences were quite positive regardless of participants being tired or stressed. Soon they started calling me 'la sombra' (the shadow) and that is what I became. Shadowing their moves became the closest way to understanding their experience. I was clearly unable to grasp it fully, but I came as close as I could. Their explanations and interpretations were crucial to this process.

This process of understanding the experiences of mobility involved going back to talk to each participant about the journeys, asking specific questions about the experience and discussing the photographs and maps with them. This provided a chance for deeper discussions on issues that had either been said or observed. It was also a way of being reflexive, after taking some distance, of returning to discuss with them the things that struck me. At this point, there were often issues that the participants brought up and wanted to discuss with me, reflections of their own lives that had come out of the research process.

The amount of data collected was considerable. Analysis was carried out by systematising the information as quickly as possible: most interviews were tran-

scribed or notes about them were written as soon as the interview was over, photographs were downloaded and organised right after the interview; maps were elaborated within a few weeks of having carried out the journeys. This expediency was important to be able to discuss issues with participants by showing the time-space maps and photographs, which made it easier to elicit discussion on issues of travelling experience. The following section provides an example of how this information was put together to understand mobility experiences in Santiago de Chile.

Getting by with a little help from my friends: Laura's journey

Contemporary work patterns are increasingly mobile, requiring some to move around, while others' multi-job lifestyle obliges them to move from one work location to another. Flexible jobs also involve working nightshifts or seeking extra work to compensate for low-paying jobs or to pay off debts, as is the case for Laura. Her flexible and multiple work patterns are woven together with other activities that include household chores and social and family relations.

Laura is 45 years old, separated and lives in Jardín Alto with her 19-year-old daughter Catalina who just started university. For the past 16 years Laura has been working as a health professional at the Municipal Health Corporation and as a nurse at a public surgery two or three nights a week for extra income. Most of her activities are carried out within the borough she lives in, she hardly moves further away into the city. Laura's extensive network of friends and colleagues help her get by, especially through rides from friends, colleagues and even Municipal ambulances, hence she seldom pays for transportation. These details of her experience of mobility practices and her multiple connections are difficult to capture through traditional transportation analysis, where multiple connections and uses of mobility opportunities are generally missed. With the use of a variety of tools, as presented here, the richness of Laura's journeys, co-presence in mobility and innovative ways of moving are unveiled.

She gets up at around 07:00 and quickly cleans the house and prepares her things for work. She leaves the house at 08:00; five minutes earlier her friend had rung her to tell her she was leaving.

She walks for less than five minutes to Rojas Magallanes, the main street (see Station 1 in Figures 3.1 and 3.2) and waits at the corner until her friend Julieta picks her up at 08:10. Julieta has two children who go to a private school nearby. They drive through the back streets to avoid traffic. While Julieta walks the children to the entrance, Laura puts on her make-up in the car (see Station 2 in Figures 3.1 and 3.3). She tells me that she prefers using this time to do it instead of earlier in the morning when she can have breakfast and watch the news. On the way to work they drive through rough neighbourhoods which they call 'barrios peludos' (Chilean slang for difficult neighbourhoods), they say they have to be careful, keep the windows and doors shut, and hide their handbags to avoid being robbed, as has happened before. Laura doesn't really look at the

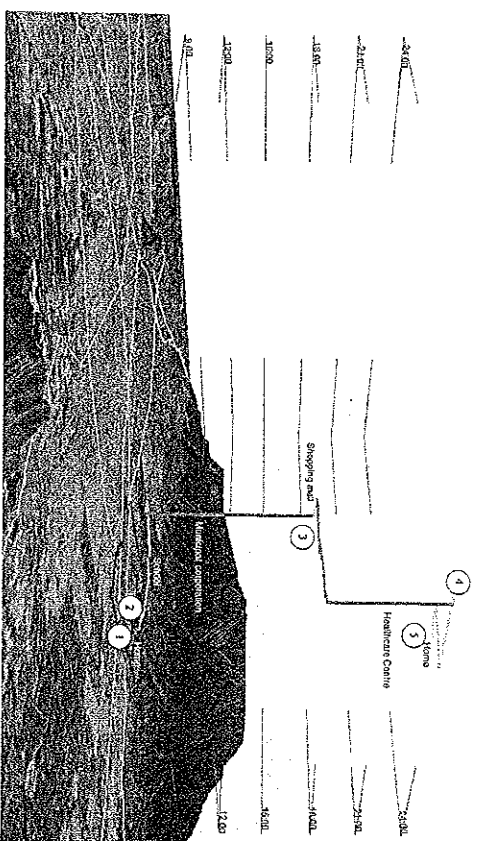


Figure 3.1 Map of Laura's journey.



Figure 3.2 Laura walks to street corner.



Figure 3.3 Laura waits for a friend.

cityscape outside; she tells me later how important this time with her friend is to her, as once in the office, they can't talk about intimate details. They talk all the way and arrive at work at 08:40. Although she can arrive later, it is important for her to arrive before 09:00 today, so she can leave by 17:30.

She mentions that on the days when she doesn't have a shift, she sometimes goes to the mall to pay bills after work, or for drinks or shopping with her girlfriends; many live close to her, so she gets lifts back home. Today, however, she leaves the office at 17:30, gets a lift from a friend to the shopping mall, then walks a few metres to the 'colectivo' stand, quickly finds hers and it leaves by 17:45. They head towards Los Quillayes, a large social-housing estate known for security problems, but she knows it well as she used to live there a few years ago (see Station 3 in Figures 3.1 and 3.4). She arrives at 17:55, changes into her nurse outfit and works non-stop until midnight, when Dr Santos, who lives in one of the gated communities close to her house, gives her and another nurse a lift home at 00:10 (see Station 4 in Figures 3.1 and 3.5). They mention how at this time of night the streets are dangerous, which is why they don't stop at the traffic lights, to avoid thieves, but they are also on the lookout for car races on the main streets. It has been a very long day and she gets home by 00:25 (see Station 5 in Figures 3.1 and 3.6). Tomorrow she has to get up early for an out-of-town session with her regular job.

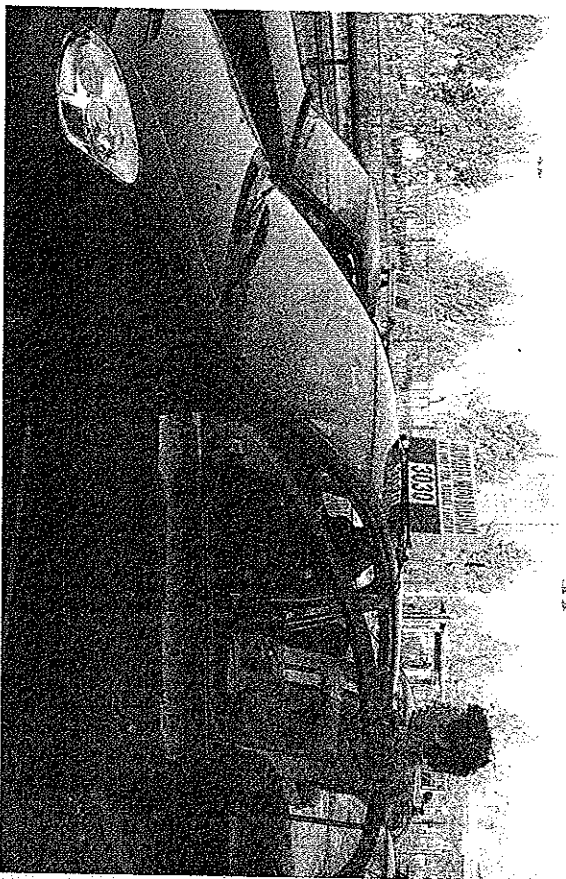


Figure 3.4 Laura on 'colectivo' (shared fixed-route taxis).



Figure 3.5 End of shift: waiting for lift home.

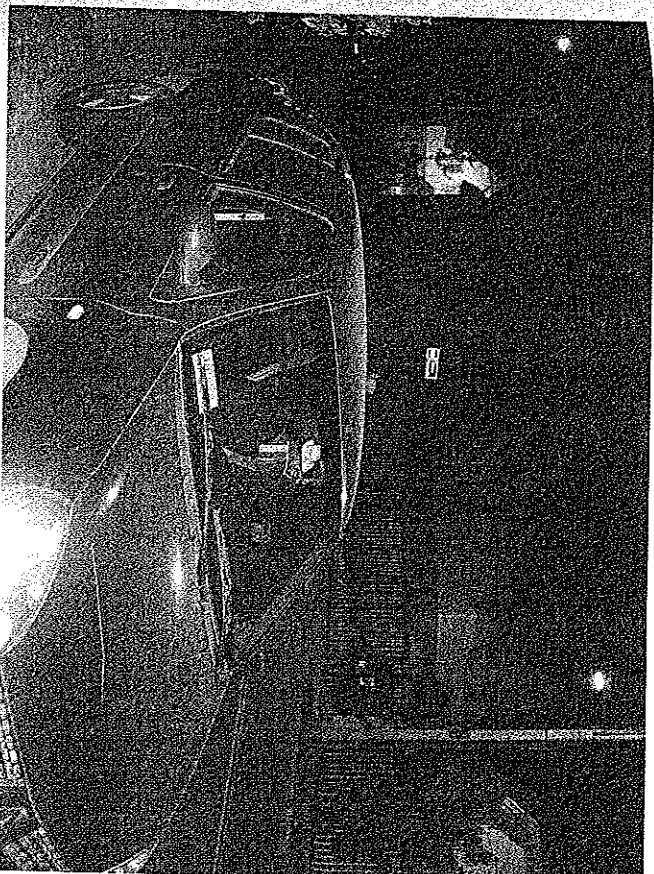


Figure 3.6 Dr Santos drops Laura off at home.

Although her monthly income is approximately CLP\$1,200,000 (approximately £1,200) at the Corporation, classifying her among the top 20 per cent of income earners in the country, she still needs the extra CLP\$200,000 (approximately £200) she makes at the surgery to cover her debts. She enjoys being a nurse, she says, but she finds it tiring as she goes to bed at 01:00 on the days she has shifts and gets up at 07:00 the next day. She relies on friends to perform her routines, making travelling convenient, comfortable and friendly, but she also saves money. Without the lifts she gets, she would end up using this extra money she needs to cover her debts, mortgage and her daughter's university, and to pay for transport when necessary. However, her accessibility is influenced by the financial, physical and temporal dimensions of her life. She lacks the financial means to buy her own car and drive or pay for daily transport. Her travels may be dangerous as she travels after midnight and also through very poor areas of the city. However, she manages her constraints through her social capital; her networks allow her to make use of lifts that will support her to move around, easing access to her various jobs.

Understanding the complexity of the journey and travelling decisions was possible because of the depth of the observation of Laura's daily activities and by being with her during her mobility practices. This required more than just interviewing or just following her, or just photographing. It was the whole

process of becoming her shadow that allowed for this comprehension. As the relationship with her became closer and more relaxed, details began to be unveiled. However, because the process was reflexive and it involved spending long hours with her over a long period of time, it allowed for discussing these issues with her and her daughter and observing them and going back to expand explanation when necessary.

Conclusions

The attempt to capture mobility experiences is always an incomplete one, always in process, always becoming, and understanding it will always be partial. This means that in the process of understanding the experience, the actual methodology becomes unveiled as the experiences unveil. This understanding is situated, and it requires a reflexive process whereby the researcher is constantly questioning and returning to understanding his/her position as a researcher. This also means that the knowledge of practices is not only subjective but intersubjective, as the researcher's own experience is also part of understanding others'.

An essential part of ethnography involves the need for fieldwork as a way of 'being there'. One possibility of becoming closer to the experience is to follow the practice in the form of a shadow using a multi-sited ethnographic approach. Furthermore, part of becoming the shadow involved a reflexive, flexible, open and vigilant approach, so as to dynamically adapt to the unfolding fieldwork experience. Undertaking this type of fieldwork with the disposition to modify ideas, methods and timing as required greatly enhanced the possibility of becoming closer to the participants and their experience. Although other methods and tools could have been used, including video, the information gathered was rich and diverse enough for the purposes of describing the experience of urban daily mobility practices.

It is clear that, as with any methodological approach, the whole picture is never completely revealed, nor is this the intention. However, the moving picture through which mobility experiences can be observed requires a complex and adaptive methodology. This means tools that can capture the different knowledges regarding mobility experiences, in terms of production, interpretation and representation. In this case it included mobile multi-sited participant observation through shadowing travellers in their daily journeys, time-space mapping, participatory photography, interviewing and collaborative analysis.

Future research could include further investigation into more situated knowledge of mobility experiences, as well as combining these methods with aggregate travel patterns (see also Ahas, Chapter 11) and moving towards creating methodologies to generate greater participation from those involved in the research process. This would facilitate the dialogue between the experience of mobility and mobile spaces/places with more traditional urban and transport planning methods, in order to make effective contributions in the mobility field.

One challenge presented by this method is how to generate knowledge that effectively informs policy. There is an urgent need to produce information

regarding these everyday experiences of urban living to be fed back into the urban and transport planning process. This does not eliminate the need for other methodological approaches, including those used in planning or transport, but an ethnographic approach, for instance, would certainly enrich them by providing different views, and this would probably generate different transport or urban-planning interventions. These views are not necessarily better or worse, but are just as relevant as traditional planning views; however, they are often missed. Thus, capturing another way in which urban life is experienced requires broadening the epistemological scope of research and policy and requires finding ways in which these can capture experiences and their meanings.

Time-space mapping, complemented with photography and ethnographic narratives, can be useful as a way of tracking mobility in order to understand the way people move about the city, comparing movement while using the same base information. It can also help to visualise movement as a way of dimensioning the extent of mobility (or immobility) within the city. It can help to compare different trajectories and the time and space used. But more importantly, it can be a complementary way of providing more depth to a description of a situation, especially if combined with ethnographic narratives of urban daily mobility. This methodological approach enhances contemporary urban research as it provides a whole range of possibilities for generating knowledge of urban living experiences that would otherwise be lost in the research process. Mobile methods must include the way life is woven together by mobility practices, the way this experience affects life as a whole and the way spatial practices become embedded in space and vice versa.

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