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Konstruktioner av mobilitet: Hållbara transporter i svensk policydiskurs

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Förord

Den här rapporten är en del av K2:s arbete med att utvärdera stadsmiljöavtalet, ett styrmedel för att främja hållbara stadsmiljöer. K2:s arbete har syftat till att öka kunskapen om stadsmiljöavtalet som medel för att främja hållbara stadsmiljöer där en större andel persontransporter sker med kollektivtrafik och, för vissa avtal i senare omgångar, även med cykel. K2:s arbete har haft två inriktningar, en processutvärdering och en effektutvärdering av avtalens åtgärder och motprestationer. Inom processutvärderingen har studier genomförts kring hur kommuner, landsting och regioner, statliga myndigheter, m.fl. agerar och samarbetar och hur detta har påverkat avtalens inriktning och genomförande. Effektutvärderingen å sin sida har framförallt behandlat resande, förändringar i styrande och vägledande dokument, satsningar på hållbara transporter samt bostadsbyggande och bebyggd miljö. Projektet har avgränsats till de avtal som slöts mellan åren 2015 och 2017 (dvs i de fyra första ansökningsomgångarna), vilka sammanlagt utgör 65 stycken. Arbetet har främst bedrivits inom ramen för två doktorandprojekt, ett med utgångspunkt i processutvärderingen (doktorand från samhällsvetenskaplig fakultet) och ett inriktat på att studera effekter (doktorand från teknisk fakultet). Dessutom har seniora forskare och civilingenjörsstudenter medverkat i projektet.

Denna rapport innehåller ett manuskript som är en halvtidstext inom ramen för det doktorandprojekt som genomförs på Statsvetenskapliga institutionen. Syftet med den första delen av rapporten är att ge en kort sammanfattning och kontextualisering av det mittseminarium manuskript som sedan följer. Halvvägs in i ett doktorandprojekt återstår fortfarande mycket, även om det mesta material och data ofta är insamlat. Således är texten ännu inte alltid skriven för presentation i den utsträckning som den i slutversionen kommer vara. Texten bör läsas med detta i åtanke. Handledare för detta doktorandarbete är docent Magdalena Bexell och lektor Åsa Knaggård, Statsvetenskapliga institutionen, Lunds universitet. Mittseminariet ägde rum den 20 november 2019.

Umeå och Lund, december 2019

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Introduktion till mittseminarietext

Dagens samhälle befinner sig i en situation med svåra avvägningar, i den akademiska litteraturen kallat *mobilitetsdilemmat* (Low and O'Connor, 2013, Bertolini, 2017). Å ena sidan är vi som samhälle och individer strukturellt och kulturellt beroende av hög mobilitet. Var helst vi tittar omkring oss ser vi rörelse och även i de stilla tingen kan vi spåra inbäddad mobilitet. Som maten fraktad från andra sidan världen eller telefonen med komponenter från tre olika kontinenter. Å andra sidan vet vi att dagens mobila livsstil är ohållbar. Transporter står ensamma för omkring en fjärdedel av alla utsläpp av växthusgaser (IPCC, 2014). Utifrån detta dilemma har ett antal politiska och intellektuella svar presenterats. Ett av de som den senaste tiden rönt alltmer framgång är vad som kallats *hållbara transporter* (*sustainble transport/mobility*). Syftet med detta avhandlingsprojekt är att kritiskt undersöka hållbara transporter som politiskt projekt. Detta kan göras genom en diskursiv fallstudie av policyn *stadsmiljövtalet*. Stadsmiljöavtalet sjösattes år 2015 men dess historia kan spåras längre bakåt i tiden. Förebilden för avtalet är de norska *bymiljøavtale* från 2014, men själva idén som policyn grundar sig på kommer från lanseringen av hållbarhet som ett politiskt enande begrepp på Riokonferensen 1992.

Stadsmiljöavtalet kan på många sätt antas utgöra en särskilt god utgångspunkt för en undersökning av hållbar mobilitet i Sverige. Policyn är på ett övergripande plan typisk för hållbar mobilitet, så som den beskrivs inom akademin och inom politiken (åtminstone i den politiska kontext som policyn befinner sig i, det vill säga, Nordeuropa). Såväl dess retoriska fokus på hållbarhetens tre dimensioner (ekonomisk, social och miljömässig), som dess premierande av kollektivtrafik, kompletterat av cykel och gång, kan ses som representativt.

En kritisk undersökning av stadsmiljöavtalet som en policy för hållbar mobilitet innebär att mer noggrant granska vilka problem som policyn formulerar och vilka lösningar som lyfts fram på dessa problem. Genom att studera policyn och de avtal[1] som den resulterat i går det att få en bättre förståelse för vilka problem och lösningar som faktiskt formuleras och blir en konsekvens av policy, snarare än de som formuleras som politiska förhoppningar. Det kan säga något om vår förståelse av transport som problem och lösning i vår strävan efter hållbar utveckling. Därtill är det viktigt att förstå policyn i dess politiska sammanhang. För att kunna göra detta används en diskursanalys i detta doktorandprojekt. Diskurs definieras här som de mönster av yttrande som återfinns i ett specifikt sammanhang (jmf. Boréus, 2010). Grundtanken är att diskurser är *konstruerade* och att denna process får återverkningar på politiken. Vårt sätt att beskriva verkligheten får återverkningar på hur vi agerar. I fallet med stadsmiljöavtalet innebär det att hur de problem som policyn ska lösa skrivs fram i olika policydokument och i ansökningarna, kommer att påverka förståelsen av hållbar mobilitet liksom vad som faktiskt händer i kommunerna.

[1] I policyn kallat *avtal* med egentligen ansökningar och myndighetsbeslut.

Mobilitetsbegreppet är centralt för att förstå *hållbara transporter* som paradigm och fungerar i denna avhandling som analytiskt nyckelbegrepp, genom vilket stadsmiljöavtalet analyseras. Den vägledande frågeställningen blir således:

Hur konstrueras mobilitet i policyer för hållbara transporter?

För att förstå de mönster som diskursen innehåller behövs dock frågor ställas om dess bakgrund och dess effekter (Hajer, 1997). Därför tillkommer följande fråga:

Vilka är dessa konstruktioners ursprung och effekter?

Ambitionen är att kunna bidra till ökad förståelse för hållbara transporter som politiskt projekt och transportpolitikens villkor.

Metod och Material

Den övergripande metoden som används i detta avhandlingsprojekt är diskursiv fallstudie. Detta betyder att diskursen i ett specifikt fall studeras med ambitionen att bidra med generella insikter om den population som fallet är en del av. Här ses policyer för hållbara transporter i Sverige och liknande kontexter (exempelvis andra europeiska länder) som den grupp som stadsmiljöavtalet är ett fall utav.

För att närmare kunna analysera materialet har ett antal analytiska kategorier konstruerats. Dessa har sammanställts i ett samspel mellan metodologiska, teoretiska och empiriska överväganden. Kategorierna med tillhörande frågor är:

1. Skäl till mobilitet: Varför mobilitet?
2. Mobilitetsnormer: Vilken typ av mobilitet? Mobilitet på vilket sätt?
3. Mobilitetsantaganden: Vilka antaganden görs om mobilitet?
4. Mobilitetssubjekt: Vilka subjektspositioner fokuseras på?

Dessa har tillåtit mig att sortera materialet tematiskt och på så sätt urskilja mönster i det - mönster som därefter sammanlänkats till vad jag kallar för *kluster*, sammansatta mönster, eller om man så vill, mönster av mönster.

Gällande material är det i nuläget primärt stadsmiljöavtalets, så kallade, avtal som har analyserats. Dessa avtal är ansökningar som har gjorts från kommuner eller regioner och som har godkänts av Trafikverket (de som inte har godkänts har inte analyserats). Totalt har 31 avtal inkluderats, alla från de tre första omgångarna som har utlysts. Dokumentens omfattning är mellan 7 och 25 sidor.

Utöver dessa kommer andra typer av policydokument (rapporter, regleringar, pressmeddelanden etc.) samt intervjuer att analyseras. Dessa kommer hjälpa till med den fortsatta kartläggningen av diskursen, men ännu mer användas för att komma åt den bakgrunden och de förmodade konsekvenserna av diskursen.

En diskursanalys producerar vanligtvis en rad olika resultat. Först och främst brukar de resultera i en kartläggning av en eller flera diskurser inom ett visst fält. Därtill brukar diskursens eller diskursernas inre dynamik analyseras. Slutligen sägs ofta något om diskursen eller diskursernas sociala konsekvenser. Syftet med avhandlingen är att i olika grad göra samtliga av dessa delar.

Tentativa resultat

Den analys som hittills har gjorts har framför handlat om att kartlägga diskursen.

Utifrån den metodologiska utgångspunkt som detta projekt har, utgör alla de mönster av utsagor inom en kontext en diskurs. Vissa av de mönstren som återfinns i stadsmiljöavtalsansökningarna kan dock sägas höra ihop. De kluster som dessa bildar presenteras här schematiskt och kan sägas utgöra det första resultatet.

Mobilitet som nödvändighet

Ett kluster som är tydligt i materialet handlar om hur ökad mobilitet framställs som nödvändigt. Denna nödvändighet rör, framför allt, befolknings- och ekonomisk tillväxt. Kausaliteten tycks gå åt båda hållen, det vill säga, ökad mobilitet syftar ibland till att generera mer tillväxt men andra gånger som ett nödvändigt svar på ökad tillväxt och de utmaningar det innebär. Till denna övergripande tematik är en rad andra mönster kopplade. Exempelvis är det tydligt att normer om det önskvärda i såväl ökad mobilitet som ökad hastighet hör ihop med idén om mobilitet som nödvändighet, de utgör helt enkelt två sidor av samma mynt.

Mobilitet som progression

Ett annat kluster handlar om hur hög grad av mobilitet ses som en viktig del av den progressiva staden. Ökad kollektivtrafik anses öka jämställdheten och skapa en attraktivare stad. Det är framförallt genom elektrifiering av kollektivtrafiken, tillsammans med det ökande resandet som antas följa, som denna progressiva stad ska skapas. Subjektspositioner som primärt adresseras är kvinnor, personer med normbrytande funktion samt barn och unga.

Mobilitet som lösning

Slutligen, ett tredje kluster som kan utskiljas framställer *rätt* form av mobilitetsökning som en lösning på de rådande klimatutmaningarna. Rationaliteten bakom ökad mobilitet är här att det antas minska utsläppen. Framförallt finns det en stark tro på att ökat resande i kollektivtrafiken leder till minskat bilresande och således lägre utsläpp.

Sammanfattning

Viktigt att påpeka är att dessa kluster är analytiskt separerade medan de i själva verket många gånger går in i varandra och återfinns i samma material. Samtidigt är de empiriska, i meningen att de diskursiva mönster de består av återfinns i stadsmiljöavtalet. Ett förenande drag dem emellan är att de grundar sig på det förgivettagna, men också till viss del vad det är som tas förgivet.

Först och främst ser alla kollektivtrafik som den givna lösningen på de problem som respektive kluster fokuserar på. Vidare handlar det primärt om kvantitativ ökning av denna typ av mobilitet. Slutligen exkluderas ofta mobilitetens sociala konsekvenser, framför allt de som rör fördelningseffekter.

Avhandlingen som en del av utvärderingen av stadsmiljöavtalet

Det vanligaste sättet att utvärdera en policy så som stadsmiljöavtalet är att studera dess effekter. Dessa kan mätas i kvantitativa termer, exempelvis antal kronor eller ton koldioxidekvivalenter, men också beskrivas kvalitativt, till exempel hur saker upplevts av berörda aktörer.

Därtill kan en processutvärdering göras. Här är inte resultaten i fokus utan allt det som lett fram till resultaten. Detta avhandlingsprojekt fokuserar primärt på denna andra typ av utvärdering. Det är dock viktigt att påpeka att en avhandling bygger på andra grundvalar än en traditionell utvärdering. En avhandling kan således inte ensam täcka in alla kriterier för en god utvärdering och kommer ha delar som ligger utanför en utvärderings fokus. Men, en avhandling kan belysa viktiga element som tillsammans med annan rapportering kan skapa en mer heltäckande bild av det som utvärderas.

Fokuset på vilka typer av språkliga konstruktioner som återfinns inom stadsmiljöavtalet hjälper oss att förstå vissa av de begränsningar och möjligheter för politiskt handlande som finns inom detta politikområde. Detta förstärks ytterligare genom att ställa frågor om vilket ursprung dessa konstruktioner har och vilka effekter (i termer av politiska och intellektuella begränsningar och möjligheter) som kan antas följa. Att genom en kritisk analys ta ett steg tillbaka och titta på det förgivettagna är något som sällan görs inom transportforskningen. Här finns det viktigt arbete kvar att göra och förhoppningen är att denna avhandling kan vara en del i detta.

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1 Introduction

At the heart of social scientific research on transport is a simple but difficult dilemma facing modern societies: the dilemma of mobility (Bertolini, 2017; Low & O'Connor, 2013). On the one hand, as society and individuals we are structurally dependent on high levels of mobility. Mobility is fundamental for our economy and embodied in almost everything around us. On the other hand, our mobile way of living is inherently unsustainable as transport contributes to approximately a fourth of the total amount of greenhouse gas emissions (IPCC, 2014, p. 603). This dilemma has created distinct political responses. One is "business as usual", downplaying the severity of climate change, while at the same time putting great faith in technological innovations. A second one is what academia and politics labels *sustainable transport*. Although the relative power of these responses can be debated, the latter have undoubtedly gained increasing attention. As Neil Carter puts it in relation to the concept of sustainable development, "not surprisingly, policymakers the world over, told that they can have their cake and eat it, have seized on the idea" (Carter, 2007, p. 208). However, recent events, such as the yellow vests movement in France and the rise of local transport parties in Sweden, have taught us that transport polices are full of political tensions and conflicts, despite what is being promised rhetorically.

Even though sustainable transport has attracted a great deal of scholarly work, it has mainly been discussed from "within" the paradigm and often used as a stepping stone in order to criticize traditional transport theories and policies. Policy and academia are somewhat inseparable in transport (being a field that highly emphasizes instrumental knowledge). Yet, sustainable transport itself builds on certain assumptions, favours certain subjects and, most importantly, is becoming increasingly influential and powerful in both academia and politics. Critical investigations of the paradigm of sustainable transport are thus called for. This is the point of departure of this thesis. The empirical focus of the thesis is on *policies that aim at achieving sustainable transport*. To this field I count all policies that share this ambition, regardless of their individual constitution, content or consequences.

Critical policy scholars have shown that policies construct reality, including the very problem they set out to solve (Bacchi, 2000, 2009; Goodwin, 2011; Taylor, 1997). Consequently, there is a need to study the process of problem construction within policies and its effects in order to properly understand them. As elaborated more thoroughly in the literature review below, there are two purposes of this thesis: the development of an understanding of discursive power as a way to analyse transport policies; and a critical analysis of sustainable transport as a paradigm. Merging those purposes, the **aim of this thesis is to critically analyse the discourse underpinning sustainable transport policy in the Swedish context**.

The distinction between mobility and transport is discussed in Chapter 3. For now it is sufficient to state that mobility will act as a central analytical concept. Thus, it is through

the lens of mobility I will analyse the policy discourse of sustainable transport. In order to do that, the following questions will guide the inquiry:

> How is mobility constructed in sustainable transport policies?
>
> What are the origins and effects of these constructions?

The first question follows from the aim and the additional specification of mobility as a central analytical concept. The second question, in contrast, is rooted in methodological ideas on the study of discourses, nicely summarized by Maarten Hajer as aiming to analytically ”make sense of the regularities and variations in what is being said (or written) and try to understand the social backgrounds and the effects of specific modes of talking” (Hajer, 1997, p. 44).

In order to answer the above research questions, I will examine a Swedish sustainable transport policy called *The Urban Environment Agreement*[2], launched in 2015. As developed in Chapter 5, I argue that this policy is in many aspects representative of the field of sustainable transport policies in Sweden (and similar countries), and thereby lends itself well to a case study that fruitfully illustrates political tensions, recurring in comparable cases throughout the transport realm. The Urban Environment Agreement is a sustainable transport policy initiated by the first government of the Social Democrat Prime Minister Stefan Löfven. The aim of the policy is to create sustainable urban environments by providing financial support for municipal infrastructure investments that increase the share of individual travels made by public transport (SFS 2015:579, 2015). So far, the total amount of applications for funding by Swedish municipalities is 197 of which 94 have been approved and received in total SEK 4 billion (The Swedish Transport Administration, 2019).

1.1 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 contextualizes the thesis in relation to the field of *critical transport studies*. More importantly, the chapter also discusses what I perceive as shortcomings of the literature, which is where I hope to make my contribution. ***Chapter 3*** introduces several theoretical concepts which together form the theoretical framework of the thesis. The primary concepts are power and mobility. ***Chapter 4*** delves into the methodological issues pertaining to the study of *discourse*. In particular, I discuss how to properly define the concept and the possibilities of explaining the patterns of statements. ***Chapter 5*** is a continuation of the previous chapter by going into details of the method actually used and questions on operationalization, coding and thematization. In addition it presents the empirical material of the dissertation. ***Chapter 6*** gives a brief overview of the Swedish transport policy context, as well as presenting the case, The Urban Environment

[2] The policy is most of the times called *Stadsmiljöavtal* in Swedish. In this dissertation, *stadsmiljö* is translated into *urban environment* and *avtal* into *agreement*. I use definite article and the *agreement* in singular purposefully due to the fact that it is *one* policy.

Agreement, more thoroughly. ***Chapter 7*** is the first analytical chapter and describes how mobility is constructed within the Urban Environment Agreement. Then follows three chapters containing analyses of one cluster of patterns each. Accordingly, ***Chapter 8*** concerns *mobility as necessity* with a focus on the origins and effects of the clusters. ***Chapter 9*** concerns *mobility as progression* whereas ***Chapter 10*** studies *mobility as solution*. ***Chapter 11*** is the final analytical chapter which synthesizes previous chapters by a critical investigation of *the (sustainable) mobility norm*. ***Chapter 12*** is the concluding chapter were the findings of the thesis are presented. This is also where I reflect upon my own position (the mobility of a thesis) and my thoughts on future research.

2 Critical Transport Studies

As of yet, there is no properly discernible literature that could be labelled critical transport studies. I therefore wish to contribute to the establishment of such a field. There are a number of interesting works on transport that, in my view, could be categorized as *critical*, even if they do not self-identify as such. Nancy Fraser has defined the *critical* in critical theory as the framing of research "with an eye to the aims and activities of those oppositional social movements with which it has a partisan" (Fraser, 1985, p. 97). Neil Brenner, on the other hand, emphasizes the need for critical theory to be *theoretical*, *reflexive*, *normative*, and *sceptical of instrumental reasoning* (Brenner, 2010). For me, a critical theory needs the dual process of deconstruction and construction to be counted as such. That is, criticizing assumptions whilst at the same time being driven by a normative ethos.

In relation to the study of transport, being critical goes beyond advocating electricity, hyping "smart" vehicles and emphasising mobility management measures, which all are commonly seen within mainstream sustainable transport research and policy. Rather, to be critical in this field is to question and challenge the very assumptions that the transport system is built upon and to reflect upon how it could be organized differently.

One important distinction is between *mobility* and *transport*. In this literature review the two concepts are consistently mixed and used synonymously. This is unfortunate but inevitable due to the heterogeneity of the field. Partly this can be explained by the conceptual usage in different academic disciplines, where transport is more common in economics and engineering, while mobility (and mobilities) is used to a larger extent in the social sciences. This will be untangled in the coming chapter, so for now, the slight conceptual confusion should be disregarded.

Another related term is *planning*. Planning and transport research are overlapping, as the transport system is planned, and the planning of cities involves transport. Still, the works I engage with are primarily focused on transport-related issues, which, as a consequence, is the main focus of this chapter.

This literature review could be structured in a variety of ways. I have chosen to organize it according to three different themes of critique: Sustainable Transport and Critical Concepts; Power and Politics; and Critical Methodologies and Discourse. All of these themes will be important parts of my thesis and the literature review aims both to contextualize my research, and to identify aspects I perceive as problematic and/or downplayed in the literature.

2.1 Sustainable Transport and Critical Concepts

One common theme amongst transport researchers engaged with environmental and social issues is to analyse barriers to sustainable transport (for example, Curtis & Low, 2012; Forward et al., 2014; Hull, 2008; K. Isaksson, Antonson, & Eriksson, 2017; Kronsell, Smidfelt Rosqvist, & Winslott Hiselius, 2015; Sturup et al., 2013). Although different understandings of sustainable transport are at times discussed, the notion as such is pretty much treated as a given. In this kind of work, the task of researchers is, thus, to analyse the barriers, and conceptualize the normative challenges, to reaching sustainable transport. In contrast, a number of critical scholars have questioned both transport (mobility) in itself, and the merging of sustainability and transport (mobility).

The term *hypermobility* was coined to capture the fact that in the case of mobility, "it is possible to have too much of a good thing" (Adams, 2001, p. 2). The amount of travel has increased exponentially in the last decades, but the social consequences of this are seldom recognized. Scott A Cohen and Stefan Gössling discuss the "darker side" of hypermobility, and its many unacknowledged costs for individuals and societies in terms of negative physiological, psychological, emotional and social effects (Cohen & Gössling, 2015). In a similar vein, Patrick Moriarty and Damon Honnery have reviewed the possible constrains of ever-increasing mobility, concluding that the technical optimism that combine increased mobility with decreased negative consequences is both empirically and ethically questionable. Instead, they propose that the future might be a *low-mobility* one (Moriarty & Honnery, 2008; Moriatry & Honnery, 2013). Furthermore, with a theorizing ambition, Antonio Ferreira, Luca Bertolini and Petter Næss have developed the concept of *immotillity*. Drawing on Kaufmann's term *motility* and the notion of mobility as social capital, they conceptualize immotility as "stillness as social capital" (Ferreira, Bertolini, & Næss, 2017, p. 26). While being aware of the many benefits of high mobility levels, they argue that there might be trade-offs, and that thinking in terms of immotillity could be helpful in creating more resilient societies (Ferreira et al., 2017).

Others have discussed sustainable transport more broadly, in particular the difference between theory and practice. Kobe Boussauw and Thomas Vanoutrive use seven Belgian cases to analyse how "orthodox sustainable transport vision" leads to problematic consequences (Boussauw & Vanoutrive, 2017). Similarly, Nina Vogel have theorized this disparity using the concept *hypocrisy* (Vogel, 2014a, 2014b). Contradictions, she writes, "become subordinated and reveal themselves in the hypocritical character of goals when striving for both growth and sustainability" (Vogel, 2015, p. 166). Delving deeper into sustainable mobility, Maja Essebo and Guy Baeten discuss the contradictions within the concept itself (Essebo & Baeten, 2012). They suggest that sustainable mobility could be understood as a myth "that turns the illogical into something perfectly acceptable through the naturalisation of beliefs", which, furthermore, should not be seen as something false, but merely a "story based on belief which alleviates anxiety and guides and rationalises everyday practices" (Essebo & Baeten, 2012, p. 563). Finding great inspiration from these works, I still find most of the studies suffering from being either narrow in scope or lacking depth. For sure, this is partly due to the dominance of the article-format. Nevertheless, viewing reality as containing systems of knowledge (cf. Foucault, 1994), one of the aims of this thesis is to study sustainable transport, not as a concept, but as a

paradigm (Kuhn, 1996). I have found few examples of in-depth analysis of sustainable transport as a paradigm in the literature.

2.2 Power and Politics

Along with others, I find politics to be under-theorized in general transport research (Cresswell, 2010; Macmillen, 2013; Marsden & Reardon, 2017). At the same time, there has been an increased effort to tackle this deficit (Avelino, Grin, Pel, & Jhagroe, 2016; Cresswell, 2010; Givoni & Banister, 2013b; Legacy, 2016; Low, 2013; Meadowcroft, 2011; Patterson et al., 2017). As a field traditionally dominated by engineers, planners and economists, this newfound appreciation of politics is still in its infancy. Power, on the other hand, is important in most of the more critically oriented transport studies.

One way to capture power dynamics is through the lens of regulations. Fujio Mizuoka has discussed the idea of global regulatory regimes (Mizuoka, 2013). He argues that what he labels the neo-liberal regime of regulation has now replaced the previous regime of Fordism, denoting a change from active regulations to less involvement by the state (Mizuoka, 2013, p. 89). Mizuoka argues that this has led to an increased power for market actors to determine the political development of the mobility regime (Mizuoka, 2013, p. 95). Also looking at the influence of neoliberalism, works by Guy Baeten (2000, 2012), Tuna Tasan-Kok and Guy Baeten (2012), and by Steven Lang and Julia Rothenberg (2016), have studied its power on the local level.

Another way of going about the question of transport and power can be found in a study of a sustainable mobility policy in the municipal setting made by Robert Hrelja, Karolina Isaksson and Tim Richardson. Trying to understand the difficulties these kind of policies are up against when being implemented, they demonstrate how the power of traditional administrative structures led to fierce opposition that made radical changes more or less impossible (Hrelja, Isaksson, & Richardson, 2013).

A sub-field of critical transport studies particularly engaged with power and politics, is the one discussing equity and gender equality. Many of the scholars highlight the importance of social sustainability, and how social sustainability often comes into conflict with the economic and environmental dimensions of the sustainability triad (Markovich, 2013). Moreover, the point of departure is that mobility is connected to the power relations of society. As Tim Cresswell writes:

> Mobility is a resource that is differentially accessed. One person's speed is another person's slowness […] Speeds, slownesses, and immobilities are all related in ways that are thoroughly infused with power and its distribution. (Cresswell, 2010)

Enhanced mobility is many times advocated as something inherently good, but as the literature shows, “although disadvantaged groups contribute to increasing mobility levels, they are not necessarily the ones who are benefiting from this contribution in the end” (Beyazit, 2013, p. 18). Furthermore:

> The cost are social and environmental, and many of the individual costs are very unevenly distributed […] the impact of climate change […] displaces the cost of mobility on to those who are least mobile and who cannot move away from threatened places. (Low & O'Connor, 2013, p. 13)

The other part of this strand revolves around the relationship between mobility and gender. Power is inherent in gendered relations, and the most striking aspect relating to transport is the extent which men as a group are responsible for substantially more emissions of CO_2 (Kronsell et al., 2015; Polk, 2009). As an explanation, Meritt Polk points to power and the male dominance in transport politics and planning, which are constituted by a male norm (Polk, 2009, p. 76). Tackling a more general question about gender and mobility, Susan Hanson aims to synthesize two strands of literature, on the one hand, how a lack of mobility creates gender relations, on the other hand, how gender relations shape different mobility patterns. She argues for this double focus in order to achieve sustainable mobility (Hanson, 2010).

While providing many interesting analyses of power-related issues, power is seldom thoroughly conceptualized. This is somewhat troublesome, as the critique tends to lose some of its force without a proper conceptualization of power. The second ambition of this thesis, as a consequence, is to further the study of power in the nascent field of critical transport studies. That is, to make power centrepiece in both the theoretical and the empirical parts of the analysis.

2.3 Critical Methodologies and Discourse

In traditional transport literature, quantitative and positivist accounts dominate (Marsden & Reardon, 2017; Schwanen, Banister, & Anable, 2011). Although critical transport studies incorporate alternative methodologies to a larger extent, it is still not autonomous in relation to the overarching trends of the field as a whole. Having said that, a number of studies uses qualitative methods, and some even employ a discursive perspective.

Fredrik Petterson, for example, merges discourse and frame analytical approaches in his study of regional transport infrastructure planning (Pettersson, 2013). Along the same lines, Timothy Kevin Richardson uses a Foucauldian perspective to analyse the "new communicative planning paradigm" through the case study of the trans-European transport network (Richardson, 1999).

Sometimes a discourse analysis means no more than studying *how things are talked about*, originating from the common understanding of discourse as "discussion of a subject in speech or writing" (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2019). For these studies, the discourse *per se* is not in focus, but the term is used as a way of discussing related aspects, such as the discrepancy between words and actions (Boussauw & Vanoutrive, 2017), barriers to achieving change (Curtis & Low, 2012) and the competition over transport-related resources (Paget-Seekins, 2013). Although it has been argued that discourse analysis is gaining ground in planning research (Sharp & Richardson, 2001, p. 193), in-depth analyses are still hard to come over, in particular when transport is viewed as field separated from planning. As I argue throughout this

dissertation, discourse matters. Acknowledging the omission of in-depth discourse analysis in transport and critical transport studies goes beyond mere gap-spotting (Sandberg & Alvesson, 2010) and is in fact crucial. Thus, the final purpose of this thesis is to develop and employ discourse analysis as a method to deepen our understanding of transport policies in general, and sustainable transport policies in particular.

3 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the concepts of power and mobility is discussed. The two of them represent the foundation of the thesis. The present text in this section roughly and tentatively sketches key concepts, themes and authors that I plan on including as I continue elaborating my theoretical framwork.

The conceptualization of power has two major functions in the thesis. First, it structures the form of the research via methodology, method and research design. The method I use, and the methodology that follows, is based on ideas about power. Second, it gives me the necessary tools to analyse the effects of certain constructions, where concepts such as *naturalization* and *silencing* guide the concrete analysis.

Mobility is the other foundational concept of the thesis. Similar to power, mobility serves two purposes. First and foremost, it has informed the starting point of the investigation, visible in the research problem, the research aims and the research questions. In addition, the discussions centred on mobility provides me with theoretical arguments for the critical analysis.

3.1 Understanding and Defining Power

Despite its long history as a key concept of social theory, *power* is still elusive and notoriously difficult to pinpoint. Many of the big names in the Western political and philosophical canon, such as Aristoteles, Machiavelli and Hobbes, have brought forward their own understanding of the concept. However, it was not until the 1960's and 1970's that theorists attempted to formulate a general definition. With Dahl, Bachrach & Baratz, and Luke *power* got one, two and three *faces* (Göhler, 2009, p. 29). All three faces were concerned with, what since that, have been categorized as *power over*. In contrast, scholars such as Arendt, Parsons and Foucault wanted to emphasize the productive role of power, i.e. *power to* (Clegg & Haugaard, 2009).

Aiming to develop Foucault's understanding of power, Andrew Sayer has created a theoretical framework of power from a critical realist perspective. The first premise is that the kind of power we deal with in the Social Sciences, i.e. social or political power, is a case of *causal power*. Even though the notion of causality is viewed upon with scepticism within certain methodological traditions, a cause is in its broadest sense simply "whatever produces change" (Sayer, 2012, p. 4), and is thus fundamental to most research. The second point is that *power* has two parts or dimensions, which correspond to the theoretical discussion between *power over* and *power to*, as well as to the common use in English were it refers to a "capacity or potential that some thing, person or institution possesses, and sometimes to refer to the exercise of that capacity, perhaps 'over' something else" (Sayer, 2012, p. 2). Sayer calls them power$_1$ and power$_2$. Nick Hardy explains this conceptualisation in a concise way: "power$_1$ is the possession of

properties; power$_2$ is merely the activation of those properties. Sayer goes no further than this in accounting for power$_2$: the effects/outcomes of power$_2$ are always contingent" (Hardy, 2015, p. 4). Although power is limited to this conceptualization, the contingencies are theorized further as they constitute the conditions and limits of power. Contingency$_1$ regards the activation of power, as the mere ability does not guarantee that it can be activated. The second contingency (contingency$_2$) is about whether power create as certain effect or not. Finally, contingency$_3$ relates to the ability for human beings to actively, albeit within limits, "control their interventions" (Sayer, 2012, p. 5), and thus influence the two aspects of power and the two belonging contingencies. The whole framework is neatly illustrated by Nick Hardy:

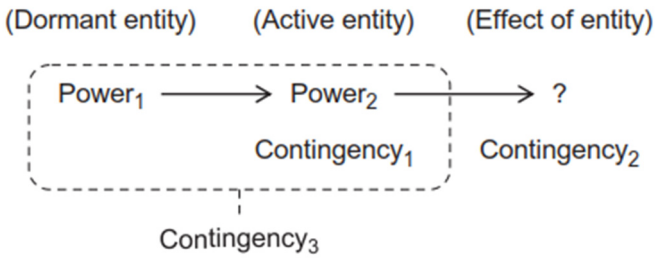


Figure 1. Sayer's conceptualization of power, taken from Hardy (2015).

While abstract definitions definitely have their purpose, it is important to note that "there is no such thing as power-as-such, just powers of concrete particulars" (Sayer, 2012, p. 4). Furthermore:

> To say that a certain institution or person is powerful, or has power, is just a shorthand for identifications of the powers of concrete particulars such as forms of authority, availability of means of violence, or control of others and needed resources. (Sayer, 2012, p. 4)

The concept of power used in this thesis relates to one such "concrete particular", namely, *discursive power*.

3.2 The Power of Discourse

When it comes to discourses, the critical realist concept of *emergence* seems to be particularly useful. Emergence signifies the idea that societal or natural objects often are made up by smaller parts which give the object certain powers from the way they are structurally related to each other. So, the power of the object cannot simply be deduced to its parts, but it is the parts and their specific configurations in the framework of the object that create the power (Elder-Vass, 2005). By this definition, *discourse* could also be viewed as something with emergent powers (Sayer, 2012, pp. 6-7). Sayer explains this as discourse "like any set of causal powers can make some difference, by bringing about or blocking some change, though again, depending on the conditions in which it is situated" (Sayer, 2012, p. 6). The latter part is important, as the power of discourse must

be analysed in its context. The patterns a discourse analysis might discover and their ideological effects are only, in the words of Sayer, a *capacity* or a *potential*. Whether these potentials are realized depends on the three types of contingencies identified in Sayer's framework (cf. Boréus, 2010).

3.2.1 Power Processes in Discursive Constructions

- Naturalization (De-politization?)
- Silencing (Universalisation?)

3.2.2 Power Effects in Discursive Constructions

- Empowerment
- Reproduction of status quo
- Ideological function

3.3 Power, Discourse and Agents

> "what happens in the interaction of A and B is dependent on the powers and susceptibilities of both (and usually on a host of enabling and constraining conditions too). It therefore makes no sense to attribute changes in individuals either purely to those individuals or solely to forces external to them, for any changes always depend on the causal powers and susceptibilities and interactions of both" (Sayer 11)

[Here I probably need to discuss Sen's capability approach as it is sometimes used in transport/mobility research, and figure out the differences and similarities between Sen's concept of capability and Sayer's conceptualization of power]

3.4 Understanding and Defining Mobility

Mobility is similar to *power* in that it can be defined both as *an ability* (to move) and as *an exercise of the ability* (to move). The first definition is the one frequently used in ordinary language, relating to different forms of mobility, such as the mobility of different body parts. The Oxford Dictionary, for example, defines mobility as "the ability to move or be moved freely and easily" (2019). Using mobility in this sense does not necessitates that things actually move, but simply that they have the ability to move. In contrast, the second way of using *mobility* can be found in parts of the academic literature and signify "the total amount of travel that is undertaken on all forms of transport, and it includes the physical movement from one place to another. It covers both the movement of people and freight" (Givoni & Banister, 2013a, p. 2).

If power is defined as ability, then ability is power. Moreover, if mobility is the ability to move, then it follows that mobility can be defined as the power to move. Through this

deductive maneuver, we can begin to reflect on the contingencies in Sayer's framework and how to understand them in relation to mobility. Different factors represent barriers to the realization of mobility, for example, physical infrastructure built to accommodate cars might hamper the ability to walk.

[Here I am going to discuss how this understanding of mobility relates to the thematic categories I use for the empirical analysis]

3.4.1 Mobility and power

"Politics of mobility also represents political struggles over modes and urban configuration and in a broader sense, an extension of ideologies and normative values about how cities should be configured and by whom" (Md. Musleh Uddin & HasanaJulio D.Dávila, 2018)

3.4.2 Mobility and Transport

'Transport' is broader than mobility and includes the modes of transport as well as the supply of transport through various institutions and organizations" (Givoni & Banister, 2013a, p. 2)

3.5 Mobility and Economic Growth

The relationship between mobility and economic growth is highly debated within academia, despite being treated as self-obvious by many actors of the political establishment. Rather than searching for answers to whether and how transport and growth is correlated, critical studies have investigated the political role of growth in transport policy and the consequences thereof. Moshe Givoni and David Banister argue that politicians perceive the relationship in at least three ways:

> First, increased transport is seen as necessary for economic growth. Second, increased transport is, even more, seen as a facilitator of economic growth. Third, as 'time is money', an increased 'smoothness' of the flows of capital, commodities and people in society is seen as pivotal for the economic system which relies on increased consumption. (Givoni & Banister, 2013a, p. 8)

This is tied together with an argument on the environmental impact of mobility as "the centrality of economic growth in mainstream political, policy and socio-economic discourses" in addition to "the positive correlation between economic growth and mobility levels" leads to the high degree of carbon emissions from transport (Givoni, 2013, p. 211). This is echoed by Nihan Akyelken, who claims that "Past transport investment trends with the aim of increasing economic growth – particularly ones focusing on road transport infrastructure in developing countries – have led to the current unsustainable transport patterns" (Akyelken, 2013, p. 134).

As Cathy McKenzie claims "Transport has found itself at the cutting edge of the conflict between those promoting continued economic growth and those wishing to contain it"

(McKenzie, 2003, p. 20). In this climate, the prospects of a sustainable transport system has grown popular. However, when goals of economic growth and environmental improvements are conflated, the results of the sustainable transport policies might as well turn out to be something else than promised (Banister, Anderton, Bonilla, Givoni, & Schwanen, 2011, p. 263). As Nina Vogel writes:

> Coupling of and striving for growth and environmental sustainability is a powerful discourse. People become enwrapped in this propaganda […] Contradictions become subordinated and reveal themselves in the hypocritical character of goals when striving for both growth and sustainability. (Vogel, 2015, p. 366)

A few have taken this as a call to criticize mobility in itself. Patrick Moriarty and Damon Honnery points to several negative consequences of mobility and how they are difficult cope with in the present paradigm of growth (Moriarty & Honnery, 2008; Moriatry & Honnery, 2013).

4 Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to construct a methodological framework which uses the insights of discourse theory in an accessible and coherent way. This is somewhat of a challenge since the fear of methodological rigidity at times have led to a dismissive attitude towards method (Torfing, 2005). Furthermore, since discourse theory often emphasizes questions of ontology and epistemology there is a tendency not to properly tackle the step from the meta-theoretical to the operational. In terms of the overall thesis, the ambition of this text is to put together a discourse analytical framework that can be used to investigate current transport and sustainability policies empirically.

4.1 In Search for a Definition of Discourse

When trying to find a definition of discourse, we are not short of choices. All of the different approaches to discourse analysis have their own understanding of this central concept, and more often than not, the differences between definitions will be considerable also within different schools of thought. This framework has no clear domicile, but finds great inspiration in the works of Michel Foucault, as well as in critical realist interventions. Thus, I will leave many of the more post-structuralist and linguistic approaches undiscussed[3].

I would like to start by proposing a preliminary definition of discourse as *the patterns of collective language use* (Boréus, 2010, p. 175). This definition will be revisited and modified throughout this chapter, and will also act as a central point of reference for the other parts of the methodological framework.

4.1.1 Patterns of Statements

If we define discourse as *the patterns of collective language use*, there is a need to determine what these patterns of language use consist of. Foucault argues that the most basic element of discourse is the *statement* (Foucault, 2002 [1969], p. 90). A statement is not simply another word for sentence, but alludes to the content or meaning of an utterance[4]. This meaning is determined by its relationship to other statements as well as

[3] For a good overview, see Jørgensen & Phillips (2002). On post-structuralist discourse theory, see Ernesto Laclau & Chantal Mouffe (2001). Even though I am inspired by some of the work done in Critical Discourse Analysis, I do not engage with the more linguistic aspects of the approach. For more on that, see Norman Fairclough (2015).

[4] It is noteworthy that Foucault might have been resistant to this understanding of statements. Nevertheless, I agree with the argument made by Elder-Vass (2010, pp. 145-147) that statements are best understood in terms of meaning.

the context[5]. To exemplify this, let us look at the statement "transport is polluting". This sentence could be formulated in different ways, for example, "our ways of moving are causing emissions", or in different languages such as Swedish "transporter förorenar", but it remains the same statement. However, if we change the context, the same sentence represents a different statement. Today, "transport is polluting" often refers to GHG emissions by vehicles with a combustion engine, but if we go back some fifty years, pollution instead meant local exhaust gases, such as nitrogen dioxide (which is still the main problem in many contexts). Traveling back even further, before the cars were introduced, "transport is polluting" might have referred to animal droppings from carriages. Consequently, we will need to take contextual aspects in consideration when interpreting statements.

Because my interest lies in the substance of utterances, conceptualized as statements, *language use* might be misleading formulation. With that in mind, we can now alter the definition slightly to the following: *collective patterns of statements*. Although statements represent the core unit of discourse, we still need to formulate an idea of why these statements create certain patterns. First, however, something needs to be said about the *context*.

4.1.2 The Context

The definition of discourse that I to this point have elaborated lacks one important element. *Collective patterns of statements* is too broad a phrase, so it needs to be specified in terms of context. To my mind, there are two ways of dealing with the question of context, highlighting two distinct ways of understanding discourse.

The first and most common one is to define (or more often assume) *discourse* to be something homogeneous. As a consequence, when analysing an empirical context which by necessity includes contradictions, interruptions, diversity, etc., the analysis is forced to either ignore these anomalies (poor research) or to accept multiple discourses within the same empirical field. However, this creates immense difficulties of delimitation. What constitutes the borders of the discourse? What makes a certain statement belong to one discourse rather than another? One consequence is that this approach tends to treat discourses as ideologies, internally logical in structure.

By contrast, the approach that I propose is explorative in that it does not presuppose any characteristics of the discourse that it investigates. Instead the empirical context constitutes the borders of the discourse and all the regularities within this context represent one discourse. As a consequence, the discourse will include all those contradictions and heterogeneities that are usually excluded. Another benefit is that the delimitation is made already in the definition. The problem is that it might either make the scope of discourse too narrow or too wide. On the one hand, if the studied context is big, the discourse will be extremely complex, while on the other hand the discourse of a small context might be perceived as irrelevant or uninteresting. The logical conclusion

[5] Slightly confusingly, I am using *context* in two distinct ways. The first one is rather loosely defined and points to cultural understandings which determine the interpretations of certain statements. The second one, which will be introduces in the next part, is included in my definition of discourse and refers to an empirical context, for example a policy or an institution.

would be to propose medium size contexts. However, I believe that this problem can be solved by combining analyses of small and specific contexts with a single case study design. If we can argue that the specific context being analysed discursively is generalizable to a larger field, then the overall research can shed light on more profound trends and phenomena of society. I will discuss the possibility of a *discursive case study design* further in the next chapter.

To sum up, by including *context* in our definition we make it specific enough, as well as facilitate some of the otherwise difficult questions of delimitation. Accordingly, I arrive at the following definition of discourse: *the collective patterns of statements in a specific context*.

4.2 Explaining the Patterns?

When studying statements in a specific context, patterns can be observed. Why is this? And how can we explain them? A crucial aspect of Foucault's methodological work is the study of the discursive rules that govern the production of discourse[6] (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 60; Foucault, 2002 [1969]). The idea is that observed regularities in the use of statements can be explained by rules that influence their production, or as Dave Elder-Vass puts it: "what the rules do […] is to restrict what can be said. They tend to exclude many possible statements while encouraging only specific subsets of the whole possible range of statements" (Elder-Vass, 2012, p. 150). However, how to understand these rules further is less evident. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow claim that Foucault's reluctance to look for explanations outside of discourse itself leads him to the "the strange notion of regularities which regulate themselves" (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 84). Elder-Vass has tried to tackle this question by treating the rules as norms (Elder-Vass 2012, p. 14). Discursive norms are a subset of social norms, concerned with the production of discourse, and are distinct from, for example, linguistic norms which are "concerned with the words and syntax […] that may be used to express a given statement, whereas discursive norms are concerned with what statements may be made" (Elder-Vass 2012, p. 149).

Elder-Vass conceptualization of discursive norms seems promising[7]. However, I find it problematic on a number of accounts. The first problem is of epistemological character. The concepts of discursive norms appear to provide a solution to Foucault's ontological problem of conceptualizing the causal link between discursive rules and regularities of statements. At the same time, the ontological problem is replaced by an epistemological one. Namely, how can the norms governing the production of regularities be discovered without taking the regularities as a starting point and thus making the reasoning circular? As Labovitz and Hagedorn explain:

[6] The terms that Foucault himself uses are *discursive formations* and *rules of formation* (2002 [1969], pp. 41-42).

[7] Elder-Vass also introduces the concept of *discursive norm circles*, which, in the words of critical realism, represents the causal mechanism between norms and regularities (Elder-Vass, 2010). I discussion of this concept is, however, beyond the scope of this Chapter.

> Besides the possibility that behavior may not reflect a social [or discursive] norm, the attempt to explain a behavior by a norm leads to circular reasoning if the norm is first measured by inferring from the behavior in question. (Labovitz & Hagedorn, 1973, p. 300)

In their article, they discuss four distinct ways of discovering social norms: "questioning people, […] inferring norms from behavior, […] measuring the implications of hypothetical norms, and […] written documents" (Labovitz & Hagedorn, 1973, p. 285). They conclude that the preferable way is to use more than one of the methods and compare the results. As discourse analysis is a text-centered method, the difficulty is further increased because the solutions of using questionnaires or experiments are not available.

The second problem with discursive norms is that the analytical value of the concept can be questioned. Take, for example, the notion of economic growth that is present in many policies. How can we best explain the regularity of statements about the necessity of economic growth within public policies? There is obviously a social norm in most society that economic growth is important. However, the theoretical framework on discursive norms seems to suggest that this social norm ought to be understood as a discursive norm. That is, the reason why statements about economic growth is frequent in policies is due to a discursive norm that create pressure to include it in discussions and policies. This is all very well, but problem arises when we ask questions about the origin of this discursive norm. The most straight forward answer is that it exist because it reflect a social norm, raising the question why we need the concept of discursive norms in order to explain the regularity in the first place.

Alison Sealey and Bob Carter argue in a similar way when they criticize Elder-Vass concept of linguistic norms[8]. They claim that "the options in the language system(s) at issue become symbols of other kinds of norms: they are proxies for other resources and the control of these" (p. 271). In a response to this criticism, Elder-Vass argues that "For any given linguistic phenomenon, the correct causal explanation may involve many other factors as well as either (or, logically, both) of these. The claim that *some* aspects of language use are *causally influenced* by linguistic norms does not entail that *all* aspects of it are *determined* by those norms" (Elder-Vass, 2014, p. 283, italics in original). However, this answer is unsatisfactory as it opens up the analytical framework too much and leaves us without much help on how to actually analyse discourses.

The consequence of all of this, is that neither Foucault's all-embracing *rules of formation*, nor Elder-Vass' elusive *discursive norms*, provide enough guidance in our quest to explain discourses[9]. Thus, raising the question if we should drop the ambition to explain the patterns of statements altogether. I think the answer is yes, if we by explanation mean a set of rules or norms that govern all the regularities of statements within a certain context. Conversely, if we are more modest in our ambition and focus on certain elements of the discourse, then these could probably be given plausible explanations. The

[8] Elder-Vass' concepts of discursive norms and linguistic norms are similar to such an extent that criticism against one of them apply to the other one as well.

[9] It is perhaps a bit unfair to demand this of Foucault as the discourses he was interested in were of quite different character than the policies that I look into. To my mind, his archeological method seems much more suitable to the grand discourses he studied.

explanatory factors, I would argue, could be a number of possible things: discursive norms, social norms, regulations, physical infrastructure, social structures, etc. Thus, to find out the factors that produce particular regularities within a discourse will ultimately be an empirical question, but also, as I will argue later, depend on your theoretical framework.

4.3 The Dual Explanation of Discourse

Although the previous part concluded by downplaying the difficult goal of explaining the formation of discourse, we are not yet ready to drop all of the explanatory ambitions. Instead, we shift the attention from Foucault to theories of discourse analysis inspired by critical realism, found in the works of, amongst others, Norman Fairclough, Lilie Chouliaraki and Andrew Sayer (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 2003, 2015; Fairclough, Jessop, & Sayer, 2002). This will help me to answer the second question of the thesis, about the origins and effects of the constructions of mobility.

4.3.1 The Origins of Discourse

A discourse analysis starts with descriptions of a discourse. Every discourse, however, has a history and a future. It is determined by societal forces and will, in return, produces effects on society. Thus, to properly understand a discourse we need to trace its roots and show its consequences (Fairclough, 2015, p. 172; Fairclough et al., 2002). First of all, it needs to be made clear that we are dealing with two different forms of explanations, requiring two different ways of conducting research. Starting with the origins of discourse, the question to ask is what power relations that help to shape the discourse (Fairclough, 2015, p. 175). Lilie Chouliaraki and Norman Fairclough argue that these explanations are made through re-describing "properties of a text (including the range of understandings it gives rise to) by using a particular theoretical framework to locate the text in social practice" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 67). Marianne Jørgensen and Louise Phillips describe this as a need to "draw on other theories – for example, social or cultural theory – that shed light upon the social practice in question" (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 86). As a consequence, what we end up with is a need for an adequate theoretical framework that can help us interpret the empirical findings rather than far-reaching methodological tools that aim to provide evidence of causal links between dependent and independent variables (Howarth, 2000, p. 131). In this sense, the explanation will be a theory-informed argumentation of how to interpret the empirical findings in relation to the wider context.

4.3.2 The Effects of Discourse

Turning to the effects of discourse, Fairclough explains his understanding (informed by critical realism) of causality:

> Nor is causality the same as regularity: there may be no regular cause–effect pattern associated with a particular type of text or particular features of texts, but that does not mean that there are no causal effects. (Fairclough, 2003, p. 8)

Fairclough's approach is very text-oriented, and it is, as the quote above suggests, the case that a text can have causal effects without being regularly occurring (i.e. a declaration of war). The same holds true for discourse as I defined it above, namely patters of statements in a specific context. However, it is important to make a distinction here. The single text will not produce discursive effects as discourse is based on regularities. Nevertheless, in accordance with Fairclough, the regularities need not to produce certain effects in a law-like fashion for them to be causally significant. If they produce effects, and what kind of effects it is, is in last instance determined by the context.

A discourse analyst is inevitably interested in the consequences that discursive constructions have on the social sphere. The reason why discourses are important to study comes from the fact that they enable us to better understand why society looks like it does. However, to actually prove that certain constructions causally produce particular effects is very difficult. As discussed in Chapter 3, the most easily explored effects relate to the conceptualization of power as an ability. The effects of discourse, then, becomes a question of what potential they hold. Even so, how to best describe this potential needs to be developed further.

One way to go about this, is to look at the *usual suspects*. Several authors, from diverse traditions, have discussed different types of effects. Carol Lee Bacchi, for example, suggests that the analysis should focus on three types of effects: discursive effects, subjectification effects, and lived effects (Bacchi, 2009). Within the category of discursive effects more specific effects can be found, such as naturalization, depolitization etc.

Another effect that is commonly analysed is ideological effects, namely "the effects of texts in inculcating and sustaining or changing ideologies" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 9). Or in line with how Kristina Boréus describes the rationale of discourse analysis: "It is the specific patterns that these phenomenon make up in a certain discourse, and the ideological implications of these particular patterns, that well-done discourse analysis can demonstrate" (Boréus, 2010, p. 175).

To summarize, the analysis can highlight several different kinds of effects depending on the emphasis of the investigation, but for the most part, it is potential rather than factual effects that are analysed. However, at the most general level, we are concerned with whether certain discursive constructions reproduce or challenge the current social order (status quo), and the power relations it cement. Essentially this is a comparative endeavor which requires a thorough understanding of the dominant structures and power relations of society. The underlying methodological assumption is that a discourse (or a construction), is reproduced by repetition. That is, if the patterns are followed, they will deepen, or at least not fade away, much like how tracks on a gravel road are cemented and kept free from vegetation by constant usage. By doing this, overarching structures will be reproduced.

4.3.3 Clusters of Patterns

Some patterns belong together. They are linked logically, either through *resemblance* or *dependence*. So, for example, two of the reasons for mobility described in Chapter 7 are population growth and economic growth. These two are connected, both in the way that they can be attributed the general notion of mobility as necessity, and also in their mutual inter-dependence (increased population is seen both as a prerequisite for and a consequence of economic growth, and vice-versa). However, it is difficult to go beyond this concrete conceptualization and give a thorough explanation of how and why patterns are connected in general. We therefore have to be content with persuasive arguments of the particulars. Which is, after all, often the best we can hope for when working in traditions skeptical towards general truth-claims. In this thesis I have come to use the term *cluster* to signify these relationships between patterns[10].

4.4 Discourse and Constructions

In the introduction I presented two research questions, aiming to understand constructions of mobility. Now is the time to conceptualise the term *construction* as I intend to use it here and to clarify how *construction* differs from *discourse*.

In this thesis, *discourse* represents the totality of patterns in a context, while *construction* is a way to focus on certain patterns in the discourse. *Construction* might lead the thought to something more active, as in "to construct", while *discourse* seems more passive. However, discourse analysis is based on a constructivist foundation and as a consequence, *discourse* and *construction* share the idea that social reality is actively being constructed by human beings. The alternative to this way of understanding *construction* and *discourse* would be to simply use the latter. However, this would require me to consider mobility as a discourse, asking questions about how to understand the discourse of mobility in sustainable transport policies. I earlier discussed limitations and difficulties involved in this way of treating *discourse*, as it stipulates certain homogeneity.

[10] The idea bears a resemblance to the concept of *story-lines*, most notably developed by Maarten A. Hajer (1997). Hajer explains story-line as a "generative sort of narrative that allows actors to draw upon various discursive categories to give meaning to specific physical or social phenomena", with the key function "that they suggest unity in the bewildering variety of separate discursive component parts" (1997, p. 56). Still, I would argue that, at least for the case that is studied in this thesis, cluster is more suitable as story-lines seems to suggest a certain degree of coherence and linearity beyond the relationships discussed above. Furthermore, for Hajer story-lines are a way to bridge the concrete statements and the general discourse, which according to him can be seen as "a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations" (Hajer, 1997, p. 44). Since I use a completely different definition of discourse, my concept of cluster aims to demonstrate *patterns of patterns*, rather than to bridge the concrete and the abstract.

5 Method and Material

In contrast to the previous chapter's more overarching methodological concerns, this chapter is intended to deal with research design and how I have gone about doing my research more concretely. Below I sketch the parts that this chapter will contain.

5.1 Discursive Single Case Study Design

Discourse and discourse analysis have been discussed thoroughly in the last chapter, and before we discuss it even further, it is now time to take a step back and look at the overall design of the thesis. I use the overarching design of single case study for two primary reasons.

First, a single case study will enable me to go into depth empirically, which is crucial when doing the kind of discourse analysis that I want to do. This is a way of analysing discourse that is otherwise difficult to find examples of in (critical) transport research as pointed out in Chapter 2. It thereby contributes to developing this field of research.

The second reason, mentioned in the previous chapter, is that the logic of generalization found in certain forms of single case study design alleviates some limitations of my conceptualization of discourse. It enlarges the relevance of the thesis by claiming that the case can be generalized to a larger context of sustainable transport policies. Even though I would argue that a discourse analysis often involves ambitions of generalization, this is seldom explicitly acknowledged and the combination of discourse analysis and generalizable case study design is uncommon. Obviously this stretch of how we usually understand discourse analysis and case study design opens up to criticism (see Howarth, 2000, p. 140, for a comment on this criticism). I would like to respond to two of the most common points of critique.

It is often viewed problematic to mix methods and designs that are considered to rest on fundamentally different ontological and epistemological assumptions. This is true for the general picture but as often the case, it is a question of scale, not of absolutes. Kristina Boréus expresses something similar to my ambition, when she states that:

> It is […] more difficult and less comfortable to depart from the moderated versions of the approaches [in theory of science] than to defend those approaches that are taken to their extreme logical consequences. (Boréus, 2010, p. 176, *my translation*)

My intention is, thus, to make a constructive effort to explore this middle-ground.

The other aspects that could be seen as problematic is the possibility to generalize from a single case study. The usual response to this criticism is to acknowledge its validity but

to argue that it, nevertheless, is possible to generalize under certain circumstances. Flyvbjerg convincingly makes this argument and claims that a single case study could provide generalizable knowledge through several different designs (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

One thing to keep in mind is that certain aspects of the case will always be specific while others will be part of general features of the whole "population". Without doubt, it is crucial to make this judgment. However, it is something which cannot be made before the study, but rather needs to be formed on theoretical and empirical argumentation. Another aspect, pertaining to the particularities of discourse, is that the patterns of meaning that occur in a specific context only analytically can be separated from other contexts. In reality, these patterns will often be present in other contexts, which means that the discursive case study faces different methodological challenges and opportunities than case studies of a non-discursive orientation. One of them relates to the explanatory ambition and tracing origins, discussed in the previous chapter.

5.1.1 Case selection

The case of choice in this thesis is, as mentioned in the introduction, the Swedish policy called The Urban Environment Agreement. In this section I justify this selection and argue for why it is possible to draw general conclusions from this single case.

Following Flyvbjerg (2006), I argue that the urban environment agreements can be viewed as a *paradigmatic case*. This is based on the idea that it is a particularly good (paradigmatic even) example of the more general category in that it enables the researcher to discover interesting features of the very same general category, in this case, sustainable transport policies and the tensions they contain.

First, let us go about the question of justification in a slightly unusual way. If we were to imagine the ideal (paradigmatic) sustainable transport policy, what would it look like? If we begin with the sustainability part of the concept, I am confident that it would, in some way or form, include the sustainability triad: environmental, economic and social sustainability. I also think the emphasis primarily would be on the first of these three. If we add transport, another triad can be expected, namely, public transport, cycling and walking. Again with the first one being the most important. As it happens, this is pretty much exactly how The Urban Environment Agreement was initially framed:

> The Urban Environment Agreements should stimulate sustainable transports, primarily through improved public transport, and by that, contribute to an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development in the Swedish cities. (Government Directive, N2015/532/TS, p. 3)

At several other places in the directive, it is made clear that besides public transport, cycling and walking are the other forms of transport that should be promoted (Government Directive, N2015/532/TS).

Although the arguments for classifying The Urban Environment Agreement as a paradigmatic case in the Swedish sustainable development policy context are not based on a systematic review of, for example, European transport policies, it is fairly simple to find similarities in other policies in Europe.

Comparing with the quote above, the Mid-term review of the European Commission's 2001 Transport White Paper, states that: "The objective of an EU sustainable transport policy is that our transport systems meet society's economic, social and environmental needs" (European Commission, 2006, p. 3), and a bit further down, "Shifts to more environmentally friendly modes must be achieved where appropriate, especially on long distance, in urban areas and on congested corridors" (European Commission, 2006, p. 4). In these quotes, the sustainability triad is apparent, and the connection between environmentally friendly modes of transport and congestion is similar to formulations in The Urban Environment Agreement (Government Directive, N2015/532/TS). Another comparison could be made with the UK White Paper on the Future of Transport, which emphasizes that: "We have had to make hard choices on how to combat congestion and pollution while persuading people to use their cars a little less - and public transport a little more" (DETR, 1998, p. 2). Again, connections are made between public transport, congestion and pollution. Finally, the Norwegian "sister-policy", *Bymiljøavtale*, express that "The goal of the government is that the growth in personal travel within the metropolitan areas should be accommodated by public transport, cycling and walking" (Oslo kommune, Akershus fylkeskommune, & Staten v/Samferdselsdepartementet, 2017, p. 1). This triad of sustainable modes of transport is, as previously mentioned, important in the Swedish version as well. These kinds of statements represent the manifest part of the policies, but since it is only through discourse analysis (or similar methods) that we can find out what is latent in them, this is what we have to consider in our case selection.

In contrast to the argument above, there are of course some traits of The Urban Environment Agreement that are unique. The most important, which will become evident in Chapter 6, is that The Urban Environment Agreement is a policy focusing on sustainable transport as such. This should be contrasted to the history of transport politics in Sweden which mostly contains general environmental policies or tax-based instruments to promote bio-fuels. On the flipside, the policy was an important part of Fossilfrihet på Väg (SOU, 2013:84) which was, and still is, the most comprehensive commissioned inquiry on sustainable transport in Sweden.

Taken as a whole, I do believe that The Urban Environment Agreement is a good case study of sustainable transport policies in Sweden and in similar countries. However, it is important to be aware of the provisional nature of this proposition, as Flybjerg states, "it is not possible consistently, or even frequently, to determine in advance whether a given case […] is paradigmatic (2006, p. 233). Re-evaluation might, thus, be needed further along the line.

5.2 Operationalizing Discourse

Arguably, the discussion of *patterns of statements* in Chapter Four to some degree already operationalizes how I work with the concept of discourse. Nevertheless, some clarifications are in place.

When understanding discourse as patterns of statements two operational questions arises: How do we recognize a statement and how can we discover the patterns they form? Sometimes academics make things more difficult than they are and perhaps this is the

case in regards to the first question. If we stick to the definition of statements as the meaning of an utterance, then it is clear that we perform the task of recognizing statements each and every day. The contextual decoding of statements (that is, to use the context in order to determine the meaning of the utterance) is something we usually do subconsciously and without any great difficulty. Naturally, there are some differences between individuals' everyday interpretation and scientific interpretation. First of all, scientific inquiry usually adheres to the idea of intersubjectivity, that is, the interpretation needs to be made in a way which others acknowledge as plausible. Secondly, research is made in a, more or less, systematic manner which reduces the risk of random errors. Finally, in analysing political discourses the context will be a political one. Hence, it will be crucial to have a thorough understanding of this political context when interpreting the statements.

Turning to the question of discovering the patterns of the statements, this can be done through coding and thematization (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 124; P. Svensson, 2019, p. 127ff). How I have done this will be discussed below.

5.2.1 Thematization and Coding

Through thematization and coding it is possible to organize the material in a way which sets the stage for the first part of the discourse analysis: the description of the discourse. The idea is quite straight forward and is based on the method of creating theoretically and methodologically informed thematic categories to structure the material and make patterns visible.

Clearly, it is not a neutral endeavour to create thematic categories, but an integrated part of the analysis which is dependent on theoretical preconceptions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 124). This is not a problem in itself, as long as it is done explicitly. My categorization owes a great deal to Carol Lee Bacchi's methodological work on how to analyse policy discourses (Bacchi, 2000, 2009, 2015). It also resembles the operationalizations of environmental discourses made by John S. Dryzek (Dryzek, 2013). However, most of all it is grounded in a back and forth movement between my research interests (manifested in my research questions) and the empirical material. The categories have changed over time, but for the most part the main ideas have stayed the same. In the end, the four following categories have been used:

Reasons for mobility: Why mobility?

In addition to asking questions about policy objectives etc., this category also aims to capture implicit goals by sorting the material through a more general question of which purpose mobility is being attributed in the texts, summed up in the question: why mobility? For example, the The Urban Environment Agreement application by Malmö city can be quoted to illustrate this: "Measures can be made to make public transport better and to increase its attractiveness, and in this way contribute to a more sustainable Malmö"(Malmö City, 2016, p. 2)[11]. The reason for mobility (in this case public transport) should, according to this example, be to contribute to sustainability.

[11] All quotes from primary sources are translated from Swedish by myself.

Norms of mobility: What kind of mobility and mobility how?

While the previous category captured the reasons, motifs and functions of mobility, this investigates how mobility as such is understood. This might perhaps not seem like something normative at first glance, but what kind of mobility that is promoted and how it is proposed to be organized is highly normative. For example, Malmö city writes that "Since long, the city of Malmö is working actively to make the city environment better and to prioritize sustainable modes of transport – walking, cycling and public transport – in city planning" (Malmö City, 2016, p. 2). By putting a sustainability label on walking, cycling and public transport, a normative understanding of sustainability is put forward. Furthermore, it also singles out certain modes of transport as good.

Subjects of mobility: Whose mobility and mobility where?

Who is supposed to benefit from different constructions of mobility? Or the opposite, who is targeted in order to make them change their behaviour? This category focuses on which societal groups are targeted and recognized in the material. This also sheds light on those that are not included, not least by the geographical location of investments. Again, the agreement by Malmö city exemplifies this:

> [Through densification] a city with short distances between different functions, and not least to social services of different kinds, is created. This closeness is beneficial for all, but in particular for children and elderly. (Malmö City, 2016, p. 6)

In the quote, it is clear that children and elderly are singled out as those that primarily will benefit from the measures. An important point is that this category is based on the statements that can be found without too much interpretive work. So for example, if an agreements states that an important goal is to facilitate regional enlargement, I have categorized it as a *reason of mobility* and not, through the interpretation of which subjects this statements might imply is important (such as commuters etc.), included in this category. I have also excluded groups based on the mode of transport used because this fits better into the category of norms of mobility (what mobility and mobility how).

Truths of mobility: What assumptions are made about mobility?

In a discourse there are patterns of assumptions and things taken for granted, which is what this category calls attention to. The kinds of truths found in the documents can roughly be divided into empirical and normative assumptions. This category deals only with the former, as normative assumptions are addressed in the *Norms of mobility* category. Although empirical assumptions is the general theme, in reality, the analysis has mainly been about *causal assumptions*. A quote from Örebro Municipality illustrates this well, stating that "Lower emission of greenhouse gases is a direct effect of increased public transport travel" (Örebro Municipality, 2016, p. 7). It is clear from this statement that there is a causal relation taken for granted, namely that of increasing public transport travel leading to decreasing levels of GHG emissions.

To sum up, the above categories will enable me to discover patterns in the material. How strong these patterns are, if there are conflicting patterns, and how they relate to each other will be investigated in the analytical chapters.

5.2.2 Explanatory Questions

According to Fairclough, the explanatory analysis needs to relate to three analytical contexts: Situational, institutional and societal[12]. Naturally, these are highly interconnected. It is, nevertheless, helpful to keep them analytically separated.

In contrast to the linguistic micro-level analysis in CDA, the methodology of the analysis at the sociocultural level is deeply undertheorized. Consequently, we are given few guidelines on how to actually perform the analysis. In my interpretation, the situational, institutional and societal contexts are be understood as sources of explanations for determents of the discourse, as well as, places were the effects of the discourse are visible. Fairclough uses the situational level in relation to the text, to analyse its conditions of production. Due to the difference between Fairclough's and my own approach, I have decided to replace the situational level with the local level, which for the Urban Environment Agreement is synonymous with the municipal level.

This enables me to form a number of questions about the origins of discourse:

- Which local factors have influenced the construction of mobility?
- Which institutional factors have influenced the construction of mobility?
- Which societal factors have influenced the construction of mobility?

However, as discussed in the previous chapter, the actual effects on these different levels are difficult to study with the help of a discourse analytical framework. Thus, with regards to effects, the following questions are instead used:

- What discursive effects are produced by the construction of mobility?
- In what way is the status quo challenged or reproduced by the construction of mobility?

5.2.3 The structure of the analysis

In this final part of the method section I would like to provide a brief list to illustrate the entire analytical process of my empirical work process. The steps in bold are not directly described or explicit in the thesis.

[12] The way CDA treats contexts and its tendency to assume certain explanatory factors have been criticized, for example by Blommaert (2004, pp. 51-53). Although problematic, it does not appear to be a constitutive aspect of the framework, but rather areas that are methodologically underdeveloped and/or the problem of hyper-critique (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000, p. 182) amongst critical researchers.

1. **Read**
2. **Create categories**
3. **Re-read**
4. Re-create categories
5. **Code quotes**
6. **Organize quotes according to categories**
7. **Summarize quotes, bunch them together, and determine the strength of the pattern**
8. Map connections between the patterns in different categories
9. Bring them together into clusters
10. Analyse the origins and effects of the clusters
11. Synthesize the clusters

5.3 Empirical Material

The main bulk of empirical material analysed in this thesis is the Urban Environment Agreements themselves. This will be complemented by two other sources: interviews and texts that are being referred to by the main material.

Agreements

One unique feature of The Urban Environment Agreement is that it is based on a large number of, so called, agreements[13] between the national and the municipal (sometimes regional) levels. I have decided to include all the agreements from the three first rounds that took place year 2015 and 2016, which sums up to a total of 31 documents. The documents are between 7 and 25 pages, and include both technical and political parts. The ins and outs of the agreements will be discussed in the next chapter.

Since The Urban Environment Agreement is continuously expanding through new projects being co-funded, I have had to delimit the empirical material in some way. The decision to draw the line after the three first rounds has two reasons. First, using an in-depth qualitative method, such as my version of discourse analysis, puts limits on the amount of material possible to go through. For me, analysing 31 documents appears to strike the right balance between quantity and quality. The second reason relates to the policy itself. After the third round the secondary regulation of policy was amended to also accept cycling infrastructure projects (SFS 2017:9, 2017). However, due to cycling infrastructure projects generally being smaller, and because the measures had to be finished before the end of 2018, the quality of documents (in terms of being suitable for the type of discourse analysis I do) was drastically reduced.

[13] The term *agreement* is misleading as it is rather an application submitted by a municipality to the Swedish Transport Administration, rather than a proper agreement in the first place (E. Isaksson & Knaggård, 2019, forthcoming).

The agreements represent the most important type of material and they create the empirical foundation of the thesis, being the only material used in the first analytical chapter.

Interviews

Seven semi-structured interviews with civil servants and politicians at the local, regional and national levels have been conducted so far. They have all been recorded and transcribed, and have lasted between 20-60 minutes. Additional interviews will most likely be necessary. The selection process have been guided by recommendations (so called snowball selection). The interviews help me to get a better understanding of the policy context, as well as enabling me to answer the questions about the origins of the constructions.

Other relevant documents

Except for the agreement texts and the interview transcriptions, a large number of other texts are included, such as legislation (SFS 2015:579, 2015; SFS 2017:9, 2017), government directives (Government Directive, N2015/532/TS), preparatory reports (Boverket, 2014; SOU, 2013:84; The Swedish Transport Administration, 2015) and debate articles/press releases (Johansson & Kaplan, 2014a, 2014b; Regeringskansliet, 2015). What they have in common, is that they all explicitly relate to The Urban Environment Agreement in some way. This kind of material has the same function as the interviews, namely to provide information about the context and to give clues about the origins of the constructions.

5.3.1 The Material in Relation to Fairclough's Three Contexts

The agreements are in a position where the regularities they demonstrate are dependent on a local context (municipalities), an institutional context (the Swedish transport administration and the formal regulations surrounding it) and a societal context (structures and discourses at the national and global levels). These levels are similar to conceptualization of *local*, *institutional*, and *societal* contexts as sources of explanations discussed above. In terms of empirical material, these three contexts are visible in distinct parts of the material. The agreements are highly intertextual, as a large number of local documents and policies outside of the agreements are being referred to. These texts are from the local level. As for the institutional level, the preparatory and instructional texts by the Swedish transport administration reveal formal and informal norms and regulations. Finally, reports, debate articles and other argumentative documents provide insights to the societal context. In addition, field notes and interviews shed, to various degrees, light on all three contexts.

6 Policy Context

This chapter will contextualize the case study by sketching the general traits of about 100 years of Swedish transport policies, especially focusing on the introduction of sustainability. It also gives a more detailed description of the case, The Urban Environment Agreement, which was briefly presented in the introduction.

6.1 Traditional Transport Planning and Automobility

In Europe and North America, automobility has been completely dominant throughout the second half of the twentieth century. Paterson argues that the emergence of automobility is both linked to the economic realities of capitalism, and to the discursive and cultural notion of cars as freedom (2007, pp. 132-134). Dennis and Urry conclude that "cars are the exemplary manufactured objects produced by the leading business sectors and iconic names within twentieth-century capitalism" (Urry & Dennis, 2009, p. 36). However, they stress that "the car system developed significantly through the undermining of alternative systems" (Urry & Dennis, 2009, p. 35), and that

> The strategy was to control urban transport systems so as to force a shift away from electrified buses and streetcars to motorized petroleum-fueled transport. Local citizens were left without alternatives other than cars and buses. (Urry & Dennis, 2009, p. 35).

This is relatable to the Swedish context. Gunnar Falkemark argues that, although there are a number of mechanisms that seem to self-reinforce the advancement of automobility, these are alone insufficient to explain the development. Instead, political decision, such as increased road construction, tax-reduction on commuting and the omitting of negative external effects, have worked in favour of cars (Falkemark, 2006, pp. 401-404). For example, taxes directed towards cars were not introduced until year 1922. In addition, the increasingly powerful car-lobby, which was formed around automobility, came to influence transport politics when the system first began to take shape and has continued to do so afterwards (ibid.).

Another crucial aspect of automobility is transport planning. With inspiration from USA, Sweden started to create an automobile society, where crucial aspects were a separation between modes and the flow of traffic. As Lundin writes, "Through a conscious planning, the car had successfully been integrated in everyday-life, and in many cases become an indispensable part of both work and freedom" (Lundin, 2008, p. 281, *my translation*). This way of catering for cars, which has been labelled *predict and provide* (Owens, 1995), was the dominant mode of thinking for a long period, even though the rising

environmental awareness and the oil crisis in the seventies started to raise questions about the validity of *automobile dependency* (Newman & Kenworthy, 1989).

6.2 Sustainable Transport

Sustainability was raised as an issue in Swedish politics in the aftermath of the 1991 Rio Summit and a couple of years later the newly elected leader of the Social Democratic party, Göran Persson, began to formulate the idea of the environmentally friendly state, the so called *gröna folkhemmet* (the green version of the People's Home)(Persson, 1996)[14].

As far as transport is concerned, ideas of sustainable transport appear increasingly from the mid 1990's and onwards. The process was dual, were, on the one hand, sustainability was given an increased role in transport politics, and on the other hand, transport was increasingly emphasized in environmental policies.

The process of increasing attention to sustainability in transport politics saw one of its first manifestation in the governmental report *A New Direction of the Transport Politics* (SOU, 1997:35)[15]. The so called *commission of communication*, which was responsible for the inquiry, argued for improved public transport as a mean to, amongst other things, improve the environment, lower the emissions of CO2, enhance accessibility, and decrease congestion (ibid.). In 1997 the government put forward a bill labelled *Transport Politics for Sustainable Development* (Government Bill, 1997/98:56), which modified the goal of transport politics to include sustainability in addition to socio-economic efficiency (ibid., p. 2). A couple of years later, this was amended, and gender equality was included (Government Bill, 2001/02:20). All of the above-mentioned was put forward by Social Democratic governments. The last year before they would lose power, *Modern Transports* (Government Bill, 2005/06:160) was presented, which clarified the relationship between transport and the environmental goals proposed in 1997 (Government Bill, 1997:98:145).[16]

The second process was the inclusion of transport in environmental policies. In 1998, *Local Investment Programs* (LIP) was launched, of which approximately 10 per cent, or SEK 454 million, went to the transport sector. Measures such as bio-fuel, infrastructure construction and car pools were given support (SEPA, 2008). This was followed up by *Climate Investment Programs* (Klimp) of which about 27 %, or SEK 320 million, were

[14] In this section I do not engage in the question of which policies that *actually are* sustainable, but merely present those transport policies that historically have been given a sustainability label. Just to take two examples of how things could be analysed critically: Gunnar Falkemark describes the work of the Commission of Communication as a complete failure when it comes to challenging car dependence (Falkemark, 2006). Similarly, John Whitelegg have questioned the construction of high-speed rail, discussed in Sweden in relation to *The National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure*, on both social and environmental grounds (Whitelegg, 1993, 2009).

[15] The titles of the reports and government bills in this section have been translated by myself.

[16] The environmental goals were passed by the parliament two years later (Parliamentary Record, 1998/99:87)

given to transport. The emphasis in this policy was less on bio-fuels and more on public transport and mobility management (SEPA, 2013).

Between 2000 and 2012 the primary policy measures have, through taxes and subsidies, been directed towards a transition to bio-fuel (SOU, 2013:84, p. 193). In year 2008, the Reinfeldt cabinet introduced the goal of a fleet of vehicles independent from fossil fuels by year 2030, or as it was expressed in the government bill *Goals of the Travels and Transports of the Future* (Mål för framtidens resor och transporter):

> The transport sector shall contribute to fulfilment of the environmental quality goal *Limited impact on the climate* through a gradually increased energy efficiency in the transport system and a terminated dependence on fossil fuels. By 2030 Sweden should have a fleet of vehicles that is independent from fossil fuels. (Government Bill, 2008/09:93, p. 2)

Shortly before the election, after which Sweden would get a new government, the Reinfeldt cabinet put forward the terms of reference of a commission of inquiry on high-speed rail between the three metropolitan areas of Sweden (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö). The process, that later would be named *The National Negotiation on Housing and Infrastructure* (Sverigeförhandlingarna), aimed to prepare the introduction of high-speed rail through, amongst other things, investigation of the financial situation, negotiations with concerned municipalities, and the relation to housing construction (Government Directive, 2014:106; SOU, 2017:107). Half a year after the Social Democrats and Green Party got to form the government, the idea of *urban environment agreements* was presented.

6.3 The Urban Environment Agreement

The history of The Urban Environment Agreement starts with a group of transport experts and civil servants working on a government report on a transport sector free from fossil fuels, called *Fossil freedom on the road/on the way* (Fossifrihet på väg) (SOU, 2013:84). Earlier, Norway had launched a policy called Bymiljøavtale, which was picked up by the commission and served as a blueprint for one of the policy-suggestions in the report. Given attention by several later reports (Boverket, 2014) Energimyndigheten), it finally received funding through ear-marked money in the 2015 spring budget made by the red-green government. This budget famously passed, by the, so called, *December Agreement,* where the centre- and right-parties let the budget pass despite being in majority together with the Sweden Democrats. At a later stage the policy was heavily criticized by liberal and conservative politicians, although not leading to any significant public debate (ref).

At that stage, the Ministry of Enterprise, Energy and Communications formulated directives for The Swedish Transport Administration to investigate the best suitable formulation of the policy. The government agency produced a suggestion, which in all relevant aspects was approved by the government and made into a secondary legislation (thus never being debated in the parliament). Finally, it was sent back to the Swedish Transport Administration for implementation, which created a form with additional

guidelines. Finally, it was opened up for applications, which, when submitted by municipalities, went through a review process conducted by a number of civil servants from The Swedish Transport Administration and related agencies such as the Swedish Environment Protection Agency. If an application got approved, the application became a binding agreement.

In terms of financial support, the municipality receives a maximum of 50 per cent of the total cost from the state. In addition to paying half of the cost themselves, the municipality is committed to provide, so called, *counter-measures*. The counter-measures need to be external to the main project and financed entirely by the municipality. Generally, it is expected that the number and/or magnitude of counter-measures should be commensurable to the size of the measure applied for.

6.3.1 Applications and Agreements

The agreements between the Swedish Transport Administration and the municipality/region is the foundation of The Urban Environment Agreement and represent the most important material for the empirical analysis. Therefore, a more detailed description of the structure and content of the applications/agreements is in its place.

The applications contain many different questions, but at a general level they can be divided into questions either about how the public transport measures proposed by the municipality and counter-measures live up to the requirements of the regulation or about finance- and project-related matters, such as time schedules of the projects. For my study, the former turned out to be of most relevance. Below, I present the headlines/questions in the applications which generally contain the most interesting descriptions. They will serve to exemplify the kind of texts my analysis draws most on.

The first headline/question, requiring a free text answer, was titled: "A general description of how the applied measures and counter-measures fit the overarching work with a sustainable urban environment by the municipality or the county council (8 §)" (The Swedish Transport Administration, 2016a, p. 1). The answer to this "question" tended to be on an abstract, city-planning, level and include discussions about the overarching aims of both the measures and transport policies in general.

After several quite specific questions about the particularities of the measures, yet another question called for more general descriptions. The headline was: "An analysis of how the measures lead to a greater share of the city's personal travel being made by public transport, and help to fulfil the environmental quality goal Good build environment [God bebyggd miljö] 8§" (ibid., p. 3). Further down, it was specified, adding that the analysis should include how the measures will lead to energy-efficient solutions with low levels GHG emissions. The answers to this question also contained rich descriptions, but were, for the most part, more closely related to the measures themselves in comparison the previous mentioned policy- and city planning-level.

Finally, a third part of the application that turned out particularly significant concerned the effects, headlined "A description of how applied measures, the counter-measures, and their effects will be followed up (8 §)" (ibid., p. 6). Especially the sub-headline, requiring

the applicant to “Describe the expected effects”, was useful for my purposes in order to study causal assumptions within the agreements.

6.3.2 Measures and Counter-measures

In terms of the actual measures the agreements revolves around, they can be divided into several categories, general refurbishment and development being the most common, followed by public transport stops, separate public transport lanes, and terminals/travel centres. The below graph gives an illustration of how all of the 70 measures can be divided.

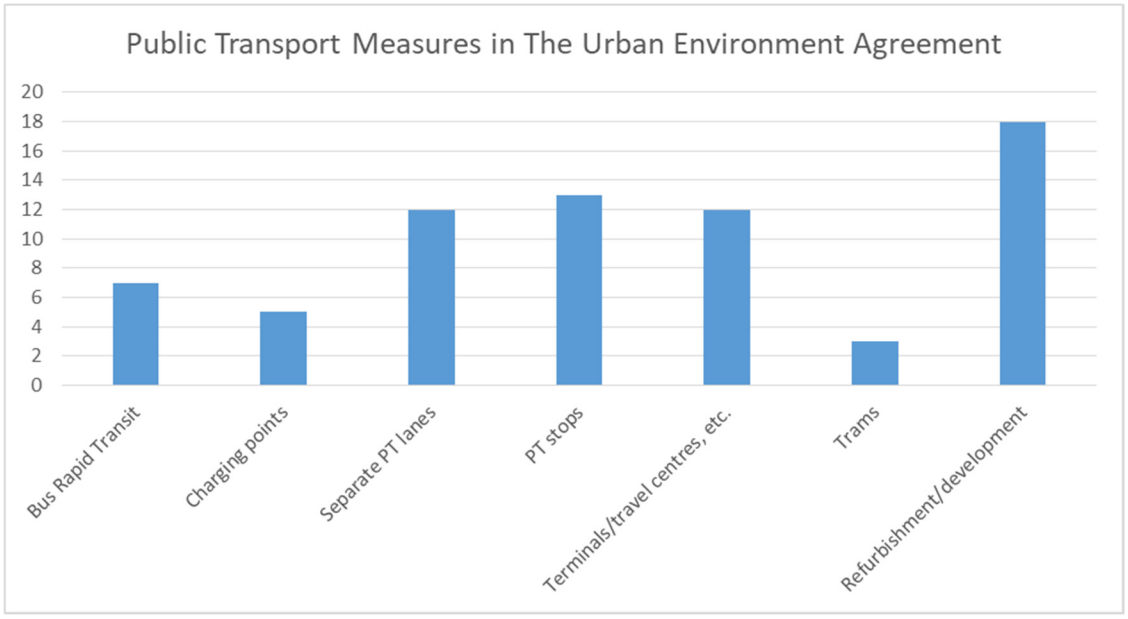


Figure 2. Public transport measures in The Urban Environment Agreement. Adapted from Svensson, 2017

All of the agreements also include several counter-measures. The three most common counter-measures are detailed development plan (for housing construction), cycle lanes, and footways (The Swedish Transport Administration, 2016b, 2016c).

7 Constructions of Mobility

This chapter aims at giving an initial account of how mobility is constructed in the empirical material. The structure follows the thematic categories used for coding the material which is described in more detail in Chapter 5. In the present text I provide a rough outline of what the analysis in this chapter will look like.

7.1 Reasons for Mobility

Mobility is seldom seen as a goal in itself, but rather a mean to an end. This holds true for The Urban Environment Agreement. In this section the reasons, or rationalities, for mobility is analysed. Often the reasons relate to specific forms of mobility (public transport, bicycle and walking), nonetheless I have chosen to keep the more general concept of mobility as a way not to exclude any patterns. When relevant, specific forms of mobility are mentioned in the sub-sections. The reasons found have been divided into five themes: Economy, population, environment, attractiveness and housing.

7.1.1 Economy

A reoccurring reason for mobility is its effect on the economy. It is generally perceived that enhanced transport infrastructure leads to increased economic growth. For example, Norrköping concludes that ”New public transport infrastructure, in particular, creates growth through increased interest from commercial and service actors to establish along the line“ (Norrköping Municipality, 2016, p. 3). I interpret this as related to economic growth through increased commercial activities, rather than growth simply in terms of geography or population.

Furthermore, economic growth is either connected to increased opportunities for commercial investments, or to regional enlargement and larger labour markets, the latter being described by Linköping: “Good regional public transport benefits sustainable regional enlargement and thus economic growth and access to more attractive workplaces” (Linköping Municipality, 2015, p. 1). Here the common idea of regional expansion is visible, and how it is thought to connect to increased economic growth.

7.1.2 Population

Another pattern, (related to the abovementioned), is the relationship between mobility and population growth. Here, three different types of statements can be observed. First, population growth is seen as something that potentially poses problems, particular in terms of congestion and emissions. In this line of reasoning, a specific form of mobility, namely public transport, becomes the solution. Thus, the reason for mobility, in form of public transport, is to tackle the negative effects of population growth, or as Lund explain

it: “The public transport in the city has to develop in order to cater for the increased travel and the planned growth of the city” (Lund Municipality, 2015, p. 2). A similar account can be found in the agreement by Göteborg:

> Taken as a whole, the strategies [to improve sustainable transport] aim at enabling Göteborg to reach both local, regional and national climate objectives while the city growths by about 150.000 inhabitants. (Göteborg Municipality, 2016, p. 8)

Both of these quotes clearly demonstrate the function of public transport as a mean to tackle population growth (a highly *naturalized* growth, something which will be discussed in later chapters).

Second, the material contains a different way of understanding the relationship between mobility and population. In this, mobility is seen as a tool to achieve population growth. Approximately one third of Swedish municipalities have explicit goals of population growth (Fjertorp, 2012, pp. 20-22), which might explain why this reason is frequent in some of the agreements. The logic is that increased mobility is perceived as vital in order to reach such goals of growing population. Karlstad exemplifies this well:

> The goal is 100.000 inhabitants, to be compared with 88.000 of today. A number of strategic, future-oriented, investments will contribute to the fulfilment of the vision. One is the new travel centre close to Karlstad central station […] the third is an investment in Karlstadsstråket, an attractive and high-capacity public transport line, inspired by BRT. (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 2)

Thus, the investments in new transport infrastructure is described as directly linked to the vison of population growth.

The final type of statements is a combination of the two above. Here, population growth is a goal, but the consequences of this objective are also recognized. Consequently, public transport is thought to be a way of promoting population growth without having to face increased congestion and levels of emissions. Kungälv municipality writes:

> The overarching goal for central Kungälv is to double the number of inhabitants, and to create an attractive and sustainable city centre. At the same time, Kungälv municipality is to reduce its emissions of carbon dioxide, improve its air quality through reducing the driving distance by car, and to transition to a greater share of sustainable travels in the municipality, primarily through increased share of travel by public transport. (Kungälv Municipality, 2016, p. 15)

This twin-challenge of promoting growth in population, while working to reduce the negative transport-related effects of the very same development, is a local version of the dilemma of mobility (Bertolini, 2017) described in the introduction.

7.1.3 Environment

Hardly surprising, the most frequent reason for mobility is to achieve a sustainable urban environment. Whether this is a genuine goal or simply a consequence of the policy-requirements is debatable, but doubtlessly the formulation of the policy can be thought to have a strong influence on this pattern (which will be discussed in more detail in the coming chapters). Regardless, it constitutes an important reason for mobility. As in the case of population growth, it is generally public transport mobility that is implied. Luleå, for example, writes that:

> The municipality has several purposes for introducing electrical buses in the city traffic. The overarching goal is that Luleå wants to be part of a sustainable society. (Luleå Municipality, 2015, p. 1)

This fits well into the overarching aim to create the sustainable city. Also interesting, in its particularity, is the desire to be a *part of* a sustainable society, almost as if sustainability were an exclusive association (an interpretation which, ironically, benefits from translation as *society* means both community and association in English, while the Swedish word *samhälle* only means the former). To investigate this view on sustainability and its mechanism of conformability, is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis.

Moreover, sustainable urban environments acts as an umbrella concept, under which two specific reasons can be found. First, the aim is to be climate neutral, also formulated as becoming free from fossil-fuels and reducing emissions of CO_2. As exemplified by the agreement of Östersund:

> The measure supports the work by Östersund Municipality to create a sustainable urban environment and its goal of being free from fossil fuels and energy-effective by year 2030. (Östersund Municipality, 2015, p. 1)

Sustainability, in this usage, points towards internationally and nationally set goals of reducing CO2. Interestingly, an even more common specification of sustainable urban environments is the reduction of local emissions, such a nitrogen dioxide. Norrköping states that "Increased travel by public transport results in reduced car traffic, and thus improved air quality" (Norrköping Municipality, 2016, p. 3). Similarly, Värnamo writes that "the project imply an improvement of the air quality of the urban environment and reduced congestion in the form of cars in the central city (Värnamo Municipality, 2016, p. 2). These quotes connect sustainability to effects that are highly local in character. To this might be added the problem with congestion, which is also highly local and often framed as an environmental problem, and in connection to air quality.

7.1.4 Attractiveness

A slightly more abstract, but also common, reason for mobility is to create an attractive city. Karlstad formulate this, almost bluntly: "An attractive public transport is part of an attractive city" (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 14). A similar account can be found in the agreement by Malmö, where it states that, "In the development of Malmö as an attractive and sustainable city, public transport play a crucial role" (Malmö City, 2016, p.

4). Attractiveness as a term seems to be a proxy for something else, for example, population growth. However, in this context it appears to have a value in itself. The creation of the attractive city is an end, not simply a mean.

Additionally, a living/lively city [levande in Swedish] is often included as a reason, for example in Landskrona's agreement: "Developed public transport is one of the enabling factors to make the whole municipality more attractive and lively" (Landskrona Municipality, 2016, p. 1). Together with other used terms, such *modern* or *integrated*, liveliness portrays the city in a specific way, consistent with ideas of urbanity and modernity.

Perhaps questionable, I have chosen to include gender equality into this theme. When gender equality is discussed, it is not, as otherwise common, described as a *problem* in need of solutions. Rather, the impression is more neutral, and more like it is yet another benefit of improved sustainable transport. I will try to argue for this interpretation with the help of what Linköping writes in its agreement:

> To reduce car-dependency through, for example, prioritization of walking, cycling and public transport in the physical city and infrastructure planning contribute to increased gender equality for both women and men.

Neither in this quote, nor in any other parts of the material, is gender equality is a developed concept understood in terms of power, but seen as a positive outcome. The inclusion of *men* in the quote neutralizes it even further and makes it into more of a slogan or a brand. This, in my interpretation, ties into the idea of the attractive city.

7.1.5 Housing

The construction of housing, in combination with urban densification, represents an important pattern in the material. As with sustainability, the reason have a strong connection to the requirements by the policy, as housing was one of the primary aspects pressed on in the early stages of the policy process (e.g. Johansson & Kaplan, 2014a, 2014b). Housing construction is also strongly interrelated to the above discussed goal of population growth. Public transport is described as a way to tackle the increased mobility demand that comes with more housing, for example, Kungälv, who writes, "Here we construct close to 1.000 new residences […] which forces us to make sure that as many trips as possible are made by public transport (Kungälv Municipality, 2016, pp. 2-3). However, it is also seen as a way to increase housing construction, partly in connection to urban densification, as in the agreement by Karlstad:

> An effective flow of electricity-driven public transport removes emissions and noise from the inner city, which creates increased opportunities for environmental-friendly development and densification of housing, work places and services. (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 4)

In sum, different forms of housing construction and densification constitute an important reason for mobility within the material.

7.2 Norms of Mobility

Within the material, there are several norms of mobility, answering the questions of what kind of mobility that is desirable and what mobility ought to look like.

7.2.1 What kind of mobility?

The kinds of mobility that are favoured in the material are primarily public transport, bicycle and walking. There are numerous examples where these three are equated with sustainability, as in the agreement by Malmö:

> The city of Malmö is, since long, working actively to improve the urban environment and to prioritize the sustainable modes of transport, walking, cycling and public transport in city planning. (Malmö City, 2016, p. 2)

The purpose of describing something as *sustainable* is to let the normative desirability of this abstract notion spill over to attach certain values to the object in question. There is, however, another effect, also exemplified in the quote above. By using definite article and a list of specifications, the meaning of the term sustainability is confined to the modes of transport mentioned.

Although walking and cycling is often included, public transport definitely represents the most important of the three. This is perhaps not that surprising when the formulation of the policy is taken into account, but nonetheless it has important effects on the patterns of desirable mobility.

Tension: automobility[17]

A conflicting pattern concerns car-use. It is stated that a goal is to enhance the flexibility of cars, increase attractiveness through car parking, and to make car-use sustainable. Furthermore, a number of agreements discuss how to get cars ‘ in balance’ with the surrounding and with public transport.

7.2.2 Mobility how?

The way the agreements describe what characteristics mobility ought to have can be divided into two categories, qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative attributes

A number of qualitative attributes are used in order to describe desirable mobility. First of all, it is described in terms of sustainability. It is less clear exactly what is meant by sustainability, but in general it refers to low-emission means of transport, as discussed above. Furthermore, when it comes to public transport, electricity is framed as the most important aspect, exemplified by Karlstad, who writes “The new electrified public transport will be so attractive that it will attract many more to go by public transport and

[17] With a different methodological approach, this would be described as *counter-discourses*. Here, however, they are best understood as conflicting patterns.

to use their own car less" (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 23). The norm of electricity is evident in the way it is connected to attractiveness in the quote.

Several other attributes are also, to varying degree, frequent in the material, such as *modern*, *high-capacity* and silent. Luleå's agreement states that "Above all, we hope it is car users that choose the modern buss instead of the car" (Luleå Municipality, 2015, p. 2), while Karlstad writes that "A modern high-capacity public transport system can be seen as the backbone of sustainable mobility" (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 13). Both of these examples show how attributes are attached to, in these cases, public transport, thereby creating a view of good mobility in qualitative terms.

A final norm relates to increased speed. Travel time reduction (discussed in the part on *truths of mobility*) is connected to speed. That is, the causal assumption about the effect of travel time reduction implicitly contains a normative assumption about the desirability of increased speed.

Quantitative

The most dominant normative idea within the material is the desirability of increased travel. Norrköping Municipality writes that "Thus, the capacity for increased travel with public transport in a growing city is secured" (Norrköping Municipality, 2016, p. 6), while Västerås states that:

> It was a success! Both customer satisfaction and travel with public transport increase continuously. The effect-target to increase travel by 40% was fulfilled one year earlier than estimated. (Västerås Municipality, 2016, p. 3)

Both the use of value words (secured, success, earlier than estimated) and the framing in terms of objectives (effect-target, etc.) clearly signal the desirable nature of an increase in travel.

For a number of agreements this is taken a step further as they confine to the, so called, *doubling goal* (fördubblingsmålet) for public transport. This is an industry target that for a long time has been present at local and regional public transport planning, which promote a doubling of the amount of trips made by public transport.

Tension: Low-transport society

Within the material there is a conflicting pattern that revolves around the term *transportsnålt samhälle*, which is tricky to translate, but shares similarities with the English concepts *low-transport society* and *transport-efficient society*[18].

This concept can be traced back to the FFF-report, where it was frequently used as a label for a proposed change in the direction of Swedish transport planning. The report states that:

[1818] As used by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (2019). Google Translate, quite surprisingly, translates it *transport-friendly society.*

> The development of traffic in the prognosis is not consistent with the climate objectives. To reach the climate objectives, a move towards a more low-transport society is necessary. (SOU, 2013:84, p. 371)

Although the following sentence paradoxically defines the concept in terms of doubling the amount of travel by public transport, cycle and foot (SOU, 2013:84, p. 371), the use in other places seems to points towards something different. Thus, the picture is blurred, but a tension with the simplified norm of travel increase can nonetheless be observed.

7.3 Subjects of Mobility

This section will explore the subject-positions expressed in the material. Notably, approximately 40% (13 of 31) of the agreements did not explicitly mention any subjects of mobility. Nevertheless, in the majority of the documents certain patterns were discernible.

7.3.1 General patterns

In terms of general patterns, a number of subject positions are commonly highlighted.

First, *women* are mentioned several times, as in the agreement by Östersund:

> Statistics show that more women than men travel by public transport, by foot or by cycle today. To stimulate public transport alternatives […] also means that gender equality increases. (Östersund Municipality, 2015, p. 2)

The underlying idea is that improved public transport will increase the mobility of women and thus lead to better gender equality as the degree of individual mobility is an important determinant of one's empowerment.

Second, *people with norm-breaking functionality* (called *people with disability* in the texts) are portrayed as important subjects when planning transport is concerned. Like in the agreement by Hörby they claim that, "Consistently, the project aims to also improve the accessibility for disabled people" (Hörby Municipality, 2016, p. 3). People with norm-breaking functionality is generally perceived as being discriminated by the current transport system and to focus on them is a way to combat this problem. *Older people* was at times included in this subject position as well.

Third, *children* and *youth* are targeted groups for many of the measures, for example in the agreement by Malmö, describing the aim of improving "the mobility of young people in the city" (Malmö City, 2016, p. 2). This should be seen as a response to the trend of decreasing autonomous mobility by children and youth (ref).

Finally, a fourth frequently occurring group was *everyone*, which calls for closer examination as the term was used in diametrically different ways.

Everyone as not only those with high mobility

A couple of the uses of *everyone* seem to signify *all people* but with a special attention to those with low mobility. For example, in the agreement by Karlstad it is said that: "Attractive public transport increases the possibilities for everyone to take part in societal activities within leisure, culture and service without having to go by car" (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 15). The interesting aspect of this statement is that it is made in relation to the idea of mobility equity. Thus, it is an attempt to correct the inequality of car users being able to take part of more services and activities than non-car users. 'Everyone' in this interpretation singles out those with low degree of mobility.

Everyone as privileged people

An opposite use of *everyone* can be found as well. Namely, everyone as referring to not only unprivileged people. In the agreements by Luleå, it is stated that:

> Well-developed public transport contributes to all three parts of sustainability and an important goal is to create a more attractive public transport system that is perceived as modern and innovative and that is for everyone. (Luleå Municipality, 2015, p. 1)

This statement is possible to interpret in at least two ways. The first one is to interpret the different desirable attributes of the public transport system (attractiveness, modern and innovative) as separated from the statement that "it ought to be for everyone". This would decouple them and thus make for a more traditional interpretation of the phrase "for everyone", that is, that it emphasize people which ordinarily are excluded, for example elderly people or people with norm-breaking function. However, a second interpretation that I find more plausible is that the expression "for everyone" is connected to "attractiveness", "modern" and "innovative". This suggests that "everyone" are the people that have a choice, in contrast to those who are structurally depended on public transport. This group of, in some ways, privileged people is thus thought to value the attractive, modern and innovative.

Everyone as not only people with norm-compliant functionality

A final interpretation of *everyone* is that it means people usually excluded in transport (compare with the discussion about "men"). This can be exemplified by Östersund's agreement: "accessibility adapted buss-stops enables everyone to take buss" (Östersund Municipality, 2015, p. 3). The use of "accessibility" seems to imply, at this moment, everyone cannot take the bus due to its inaccessible design, thus pointing out people with norm-breaking functionality as subjects.

7.3.2 Specific patterns

There are several subject positions that are mentioned only a few times, which consequently cannot be seen as general patterns. One of them, however, is fascinating in it specificity.

Especially interesting is the use of *men* in the application by Umeå Municipality, where it states that:

> As a traveller to and from Vasaplan [the central public transport hub of the city] one should, in the future, feel prioritized, modern and safe. This is also a way to attract new groups that presently do not travel by public transport to the same extent, for example men. (Umeå Municipality, 2016, p. 8)

The most straightforward interpretation is that men need to feel prioritized, modern and safe in order to use public transport more frequently. This construction of gender differences is quite problematic and might also be seen as skewed in the light of mobility equity as it focus on adapting to the norms of, and catering for, a societal group (in this case men) that is already privileged.

7.4 Truths of Mobility

The material contains a long range of assumptions about mobility. This part mainly focuses on causal assumptions, leaving the normative to be discussed under the category of *norms of mobility*.

The assumptions in The Urban Environment Agreement take the form of a tree: multiple statements leading, as roots, to a single tree trunk, just to shoot out in different directions again, creating a diverse crown.

Simplified, the assumptions can be viewed as part of one causal chain. Different measures lead to more attractive public transport, which lead to more public transport travels, which leads to a number of positive effects but most of all less car travels, which in turn have several additional positive effects.

Measures x, z, y... → increased PT attractiveness → more PT travel → positive effects x, z, y … and less car use → additional positive effects

7.4.1 From measures to increased PT attractiveness

There are three major factors that are assumed to increase the attractiveness of public transport. The most important is travel time reduction, which hardly is surprising as this is at the heart of transport planning in general, and in the widely used cost-benefit analyses in particular (Næss, 2006). At times, travel time reduction is described independently of other modes of transport, while other times it is directly connected to the ratio between the different modes, as in the agreement by Landskrona: ”Improved travel time ratio, which increases the attractiveness of public transport, and thus leads to increased travel” (Landskrona Municipality, 2016, p. 5).

Another dominant idea is the increased attractiveness achieved by switching to electrical vehicles. This is expressed well in Karlstad’s agreement, where it is stated that “The new

electrified public transport will become so attractive that it will tempt many more to travel collectively and to use the private car less" (Karlstad Municipality, 2015, p. 23). The logic of the assumption is not developed within the material, but it probably relates to the view that electricity is perceived as modern and desirable, but might also be connected to the increased comfort it is supposed to provide (less noise, pollution etc.).

A final reoccurring assumption is the influence of bus stop design on public transport attractiveness. For example, Umeå writes that:

> A roof solution, complemented by a nice architectural and artistic design creates an interesting and exciting place, which should be able to attract groups that, at this moment, use public transport to a lesser extent. (Umeå Municipality, 2016, p. 2)

This is similar to the previous idea where psychological factors, compared to more material ones such as travel time, comfort etc. is thought to be important to enhance public transport attractiveness.

In addition to the three above-mentioned causal assumptions, a great number of other factors are assumed to lead to more public transport travels: Station service, ability to combine modes of travel, modern trams, accessibility, comfort, security, functional centrum stops, reliability, safeness, frequency, simplicity, signal priority, availability. However, these are only mentioned one or two times each, but added together they provide an image of the wide variety of causal presumptions occurring in the material.

7.4.2 Attractiveness and increased travel

A frequent causal statement within the agreements is that attractive public transport leads to more travels. Stockholm county council, for example, states that, "This contributes to a more attractive public transport and thus increased public transport travel" (Stockholm county council, 2016, p. 2).

7.4.3 From more travel to beneficial outcomes

Increasing the number of travels made by public transport is assumed to have a large number of positive consequences. Here, two of the most crucial, and perhaps most problematic, assumptions can be found.

When public transport travel goes up, emission levels are expected to go down, exemplified by, Örebro's agreement: "Lower emission of greenhouse gases is a direct effect of increased public transport travel" (Örebro Municipality, 2016, p. 7).

This causality could be expected to implicitly be founded on the second major assumption within the material, namely that increased public transport travel leads to decreased care usage. Karlskrona municipality writes:

> Blekinge region estimates that the suggested measures will generate 500 000 new trips [by public transport] until 2018. The car travelling will go down correspondingly, and thus the negative effects on the environment. (Karlskrona Municipality, 2016, p. 5)

From this quote, it is clear that a straightforward causality is presupposed: for every additional trip with public transport, there will be one trip less made by car.

Even though many of the agreements include slight disimprovements for cars, the general assumption that improved public transport will lead to reduced car use is decoupled from these measures. Public transport is expected to win car users over simply by its own upgrading.

Lastly, a number of other benefits were also identified, such as increased resource efficiency, economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, social sustainability, equality, no increase in road infrastructure, urban densification and more walking.

7.4.4 From less cars to beneficial outcomes

The purpose of car reduction is related to a number of positive effects that are supposed to follow. These are: Social integration, gender equality, less congestion, increased accessibility, less emissions. No single outcome of the abovementioned can be described as a general pattern within the material.

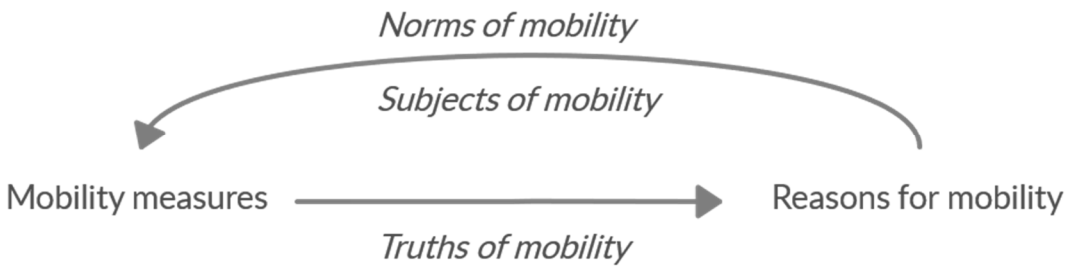
Silence

Assumption: Public transport, cycling and walking are not competing with each other.

7.5 Clusters of Patterns

The patterns that have been discovered in the material is not isolated in relation to each other. Rather, they tend to cluster and the patterns within the clusters are connected by their relationship to an overarching theme.

The figure below is a tentative picture of how I perceive the relationship between the different thematic categories.



Starting with the truths of mobility, they are primarily about the causal relationship between the measures and the reasons for mobility. More precisely, they are about how the measures lead to certain goals (the reasons for mobility). It could be argued that the arrow should go both ways, but in the agreements the measures come first. The measure is on the main stage, however, they are still effected by the reasons for mobility, but through the norms and the subjects of mobility. These two categories act as a foundation of the measure by promoting certain norms and subjects. Taken together, a cluster consists of a set of logically related patterns, which have origins and effects different from other clusters.

[*Again, this is highly tentative and I am not sure if I even agree with this short description myself. Nevertheless, I think it is important to begin mapping out the relationship between the thematic categories, even though it no doubt opens up to a lot of questions and criticism*]

8 Continuation of Thesis

Continuing my work on the thesis I will primarily focus on three different clusters which I have found in the material: *mobility as necessity, mobility as progression,* and *mobility as solution*. Following that, a synthesizing chapter will aim to critically discuss something which I call *the sustainable mobility norm.*

In addition, I will also continue expanding the previous parts, mainly the theoretical chapter, but also the first empirical one. The latter will partly be done by including more material.

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