



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO
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"This could be the turning point": rethinking times and spaces of academic work as a result of Covid-19

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Outline

- / Academic work during the pandemic
- / Temporal and spatial materialities
- / Data & methods
- / Preliminary results
- / Discussion and conclusion





WORLD

THE WORLD IS
TEMPORARILY CLOSED

Academic work during the pandemic

A lot of important and interesting “pop-up” research since 2020 on ...

- / Academic work
- / Research collaborations
- / International education
- / Digitalisation
- / Family and caregiving

- / => crisis perspective, global and local inequities





Temporal and spatial materialities

- Alternate look: materialities of academic work through the lens of disruptions of times and spaces
- Our times and spaces as an assemblage of human and non-human agency (Bennett 2010; Coole & Frost 2010; Fox & Aldridge 2018)
- Times and places as existing physical structures and the meanings attached to them
- => a sociomaterial approach (Fenwick 2015): material conditions not as separate or distinct from humans but looks at the interrelationships between material world and social processes
- In our case: places, objects, times



Data and methods

3
groups

Europe &
North America

1. Early-career group
2. Senior researcher / administrator group
3. "Mixed" group

4-8
meetings per group

13
planning meetings

All meetings transcribed

Qualitative content analysis
Discourse analysis



Preliminary results

Temporal dimensions

- Meaning of work time changing
- Meaning of home time changing
- Time and emotions

Spatial dimensions

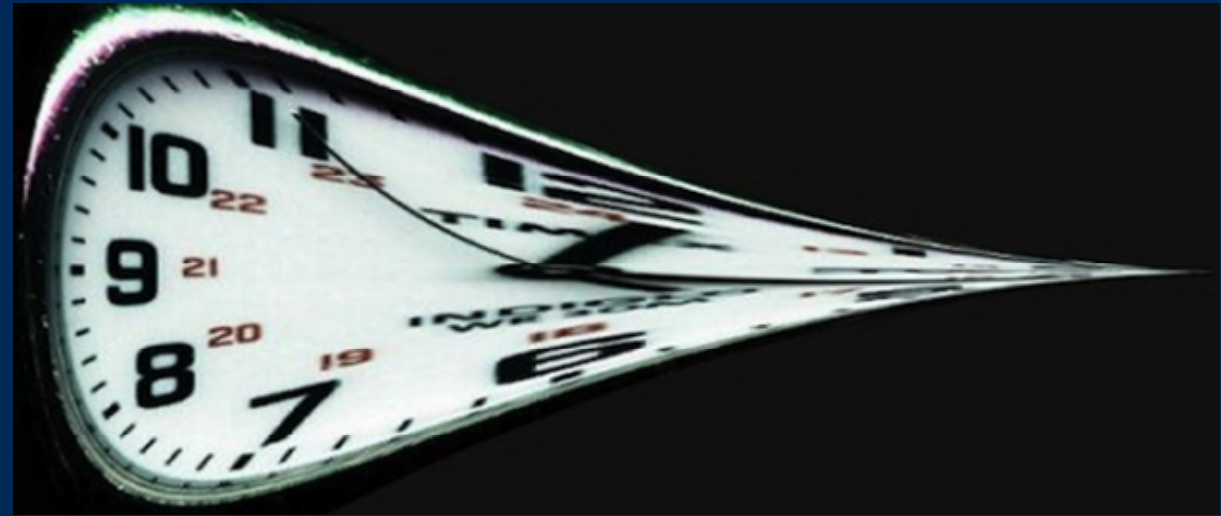
- Matter as everyday vs extraordinary
- Artefacts as objects vs actors
- Private vs public spaces
- Space having agency
- Matter and emotions



Examples 1

Times

- Office available at certain times
=> "secret meetings"
- Time constraining and condensing action
- Materiality of time zones ("When are we?")
- "I want to be disturbed"





Examples 2

Spaces

- Space defined by people in it
- Claiming space vs giving up space
- Familiar spaces becoming unfamiliar, unfamiliar spaces becoming familiar
- Space and place changing function





Examples 3

Artefacts

- Tables signaling different activities at different times
 - Table in the middle of living room signalling not only home work but lack of guests
- Artefacts and emotions
 - Printer signaling office time and company
 - Kitchen table signalling lack of valued colleague sitting opposite





In fact...

Times

Spaces

Artefacts





Discussion

- / Times, places, and artefacts of academic work as an assemblage of material and human
- / Matter as having agency: desks, printers, phones, cameras...
- / Makes visible the material conditions and the importance of those in our work
- / ...





Questions for future

Lockdowns as exception vs normal

- / What does this tell us about academics in "crisis"?
- / What does this tell us about academics in "normal"?



References

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Thank you!
Questions, comments?