The Trilogy of Distance, Speed and Time

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1. Introduction

1. Growth in mobility
2. Transport geography
3. Dominance of time and speed

Outline of lecture

1. Lessons from history
2. Distance: land use planning and development and technology
3. Speed and time: as a social construct
4. Conclusions
2. Lessons from History

Distance travelled in France during the last two centuries (Km/person/day –excluding walking and cycling)

Conventional views from Geographers

1. Transport as an enabling technology that facilitates mass production and globalisation – Knowles (2006)


3. New economic geography with increasing returns to scale and competitive advantage – Krugman (1994)
Where does this lead – to an air based nomadic existence?
Lessons from History - London

David Green’s unique study of commuting to the Bespoke Tailors Henry Poole & Co – 32 Savile Row in the 1850s and the 1890s

Skilled artisans – the new middle classes – average trip length increased from 2.2km to 4.5km over the 40 years
1857-1877 max distance 7kms and 95% less than 5km to work

1890-1899 max distance 10kms and <half less than 5km to work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance (metres)</th>
<th>1857-1877</th>
<th>1890-1899</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-999</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-1999</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-4999</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;5000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Green (1988) and Henry Poole’s employee address books 1857 and 1893.
London – 1801 1.1m
1901 6.5m
2001 7.2m

Changing Density over Time

Density – Population per sq mile

- Inner
- Outer
- Total
### Trips per Day in London (2007-8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trips within Inner London (19% of area)</th>
<th>Trips within Outer London (81% of area)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6,470,000 Trips (35% of total)</td>
<td>8,449,000 Trips (46% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk and Cycle</td>
<td>Walk and Cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transport</td>
<td>Public Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trips between the Inner and Outer London</th>
<th>Trips between London and the rest of Britain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,450,000 Trips (13% of total)</td>
<td>1,046,000 Trips (6% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk and Cycle</td>
<td>Walk and Cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transport</td>
<td>Public Transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TfL (2009), Based on Table 3.1
3. Distance

Space and place seen as distance with a physical measure of travel – planning has an instrumental role in reducing trip lengths – the Sustainable Mobility Paradigm (Banister, 2008).

- **TRIPS**
  - Substitute or not make them

- **DISTANCE**
  - Shorten trip lengths Land use planning

- **MODE**
  - Use of public transport, walk and cycle

- **EFFICIENCY**
  - Load factors
  - Fuels
  - Efficiency
  - Design

New technologies for transport in cities – distance seen as a limitation as range of vehicles is constrained
Vision of the city in its desired form – viability, vibrancy and vitality – and the role of transport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use and Development</th>
<th>Scale and Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Settlement size</td>
<td>Structural issues relating to urban form, mainly carried out at the regional and city levels – Physical distance, speed and proximity operate – longer distances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Strategic development location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Strategic transport network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Density</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Jobs-housing balance</td>
<td>More local development issues, carried out at the city and local levels – Accessibility by public transport – medium distances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Accessibility of key facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Development site location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mix of uses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Neighbourhood design + street layout</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Traffic demand management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Parking and servicing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on CfIT (2009)
# Policy Analysis of Urban Transport

## Impact on Quality of Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Area</th>
<th>Desired Policy Outcome</th>
<th>Economic Prosperity</th>
<th>Health Outcomes</th>
<th>Enjoyment of Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roads and Streets</td>
<td>An optimal balance between movement and place functions of roads and streets</td>
<td>Congestion reduction and increased reliability</td>
<td>Increased walking and cycling and less emissions</td>
<td>Easier to navigate and more enjoyable streets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal Shift</td>
<td>Enable a wider choice of mode of travel than just the car – active travel and benefit to health and environment</td>
<td>Congestion reduction through increased bus use</td>
<td>Increased walking and cycling and less emissions</td>
<td>Appreciation of local community and environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial Planning</td>
<td>Encourage the use of spatial planning to develop well connected mixed use urban areas</td>
<td>Reduce need to travel Agglomeration effects</td>
<td>High quality street designs encourages walking and cycling and less emissions</td>
<td>Mixed use areas with less traffic and roads are more pleasant to be in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on Cabinet Office (2009a), p41
Comment

1. Opportunity for flexible use of space
2. Shorter journeys means greater choice of mode of transport
3. Sociable modes – higher value on people and community (Gehl, 2004)
Technology

Much debate about the role of EVs in cities

1. Most trips are short distance – London 60% < 5kms
2. Greenest transport = walk and cycle
3. Potential for greater use of public transport
4. New technology – niche, transition costs, incentives

Access for cars to cities limited to EVs and most efficient ICEs

5. Consumers are low risk takers and want no change?
1. Trip lengths and accessibility
2. Motorbility – role of car in city
3. Ownership – sharing and rentals
4. Reallocation of space
Comments on Distance

Urban Form Matters

1. Clear separation of space and different types of use - proximity

2. The role of car in the city – and the role of technology to complement reductions in trip distances – slow more local travel

3. Co-benefits of reductions in travel distances – through shorter trips (and times), through safer travel, through better air quality, through reductions in GHG, through quieter spaces and through greater physical activity
4. Speed and Time

Speed and time central to transport analysis – and travel as a derived demand with the aim to minimise the generalised costs of travel – the expectation is that distances should be short.

The Changes in Travel Distance in Great Britain (1972/1973 – 2009)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of trips per person per year</th>
<th>All trips</th>
<th>Trips of 1 mile or more</th>
<th>Distance travelled (miles)</th>
<th>Time taken (hours)</th>
<th>Average trip length (miles)</th>
<th>Average trip time (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972/73</td>
<td></td>
<td>956</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>4,476</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>7,135</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>973</td>
<td>774</td>
<td>6,775</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DfT (2010), Table 2.1.
Comment on Speed

1. Economic notions of more choice through greater speed – individual benefits higher than societal welfare

2. Social costs as not all people have access to the car – some 30% of the total population are not able to drive

3. Environmental costs are also high – need to ‘decarbonise’ transport as higher speeds use more energy

Giacomo Balla 1913
Abstract Speed - the car has passed
1. Travel time central to transport – desire to ‘save’ time – as travel time is viewed as ‘wasteful’ (Bruce Hamilton, 1989) and travel time should be minimised.

2. Transport appraisal almost totally (80%) dependent on user benefits resulting from time savings – hence the overwhelming desire to speed up travel.

3. Travel time budgets – in the UK about 62 minutes a day – and these have remained constant over time (NTS).

4. Different figures from the UK time use survey suggest a higher figure of about 72 minutes a day.

5. Ignores international travel – increasingly important and the huge variability between people.
Comment on Time

1. Can time be viewed in a more creative way as it varies between individuals and over time

2. Rather than concentrating on time reduction, the means by which travel distances can be reduced should become part of the debate

3. Can travel time be seen as having a value and can be used productively

Giacomo Balla 1913
Speed of a motorcycle frozen in time
5. Time as a Social Construct

Travel time as a social construct – not new – but the means by which the quality of it can be maximised and highly valued.

Understanding how people use and experience travel time:

1. Embodied and relational time
2. Cultural constructs of time
3. Social differences

Need to balance economic values of time and speed with a deeper understanding of values and preferences.
6. Conclusions

1. Travel can no longer be seen only as a derived demand with no positive value in the activity of travel – it has more than instrumental value.

2. It has value in terms of experience, reliability and quality – meaning that issues of travel distance need to be firmly embedded in an understanding of behaviour and culture.

3. Commodification of time results in the dominance of one aspect of time – travel time – but the reality is more complex – on links between technology, flexibility in the use of time, compression of time, and reorganisation of networks.
4. Distance increases have been the consequence of higher speeds and stable time budgets.

5. The sustainable mobility paradigm argues for shorter distances, slower travel and more attention being given to the quality of the experience.

6. Travel in the city is seen as a multitude of shorter journeys using combinations of walk, cycle and public transport.

7. The role of the car is limited – rented or shared – and the dominance of the city car culture is challenged.

8. Such a vision addresses the economic, social and environmental concerns that are central to the transport debate.
This painting of the "Dynamism of a Cyclist" 1913 by Umberto Boccioni demonstrates the Futurist interest in film. Borrowing from Cubism, the Futurists were interested in the dynamics of speed and the simultaneity of the image in motion. Boccioni also created sculptures, which attempted to free the object from its traditional status, creating instead, a fluid medium infused by technology and raw energy.