



The meaning of housing from the social mobility perspective: reflection on research methods

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Approach to the housing from the sociobiographical perspective

- Current housing **studies traces the interactions between house and other aspects of society, providing context to debate housing through issues of space, social, welfare and the environment** (Clapham, Clark, Gibb, 2012)
- **Housing pathways approach – framework between action** (subjective meanings, housing practices) **and structure** (public policy, institutions, opportunities of households)(Clapham 2002; Clapham 2005)
- The dwelling as phenomena **interinfluenced the social position of individuals**. The house / dwelling based on **Bourdieu theory** is an indicator structuring the social space (Bourdieu, 1984)

Data set of biographical interviews (2015-2016, Russia)

44 in-depth biographical interviews focused on the life course with residents of Moscow, Yekaterinburg and Nizhny Tagil
½ blue-collar workers and ½ white-collar workers
Below are info about 6 interviews conducted in Yekaterinburg:

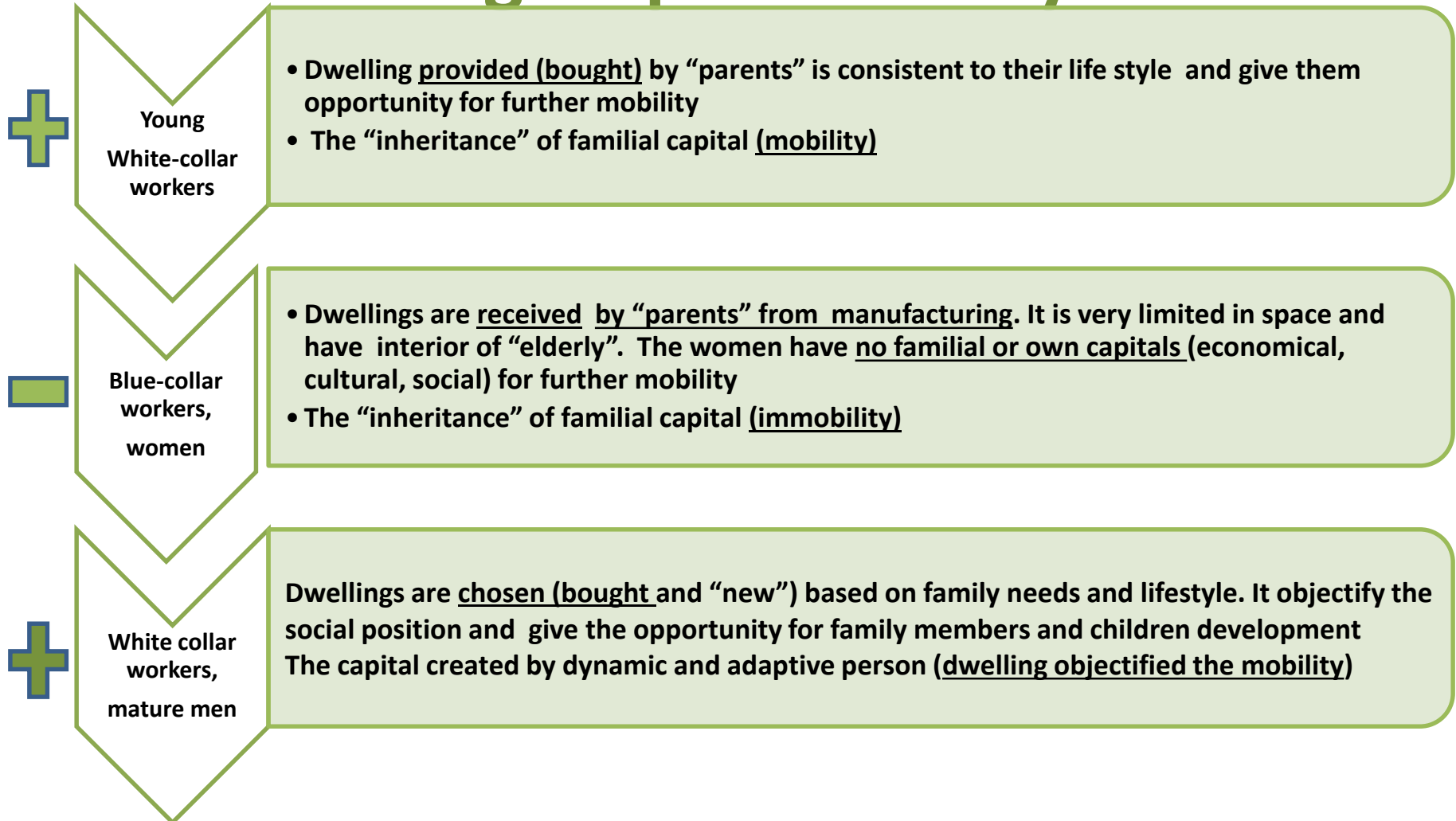
Age	Gender	Professional status	Income	Education
25	M	Chief of department in insurance company	Middle	Higher
28	M	Chief of department in governmental organization	Middle	Higher
26	F	General manager in chain of restaurants	Middle	Higher
45	F	Factory worker	Low income	General secondary education (school)
45	M	Owner of small business	Middle+	Higher
45	M	Deputy head in industrial organization	Middle+	Higher

Research questions

**What is the meaning of dwelling
from a social mobility perspective?**

**How to developed our instrument in order to be more
precisely in the housing paths investigations?**

1 stage of analysis (based on 6 interviews) 3 groups of life-styles



Young white collar workers, men: life-style and social position

- **Cultural capital** development: specialized school and educational programs
- Young **parents and friendly relationship**, parents as life providers
- Upgrading professional **mobility and stable income**
- Live in **“own” dwelling in city center and use it’s advantages**
- Have **hobby** as yoga, travel, car

Dwelling provided by “parents” is consistent to their life-style and give them opportunity for further mobility

Chief of department in insurance company, higher education, 25 y. o., has a girlfriend



It is very comfortable that I live here, so I have a lot of friends , everything is on the way and all meet here. Well , I'm the "darling" of the center and "darling" of the fortune. Grateful to my parents this apartment is in the center.



Chief of department in governmental organization, higher education, 28 y. o., has a girlfriend

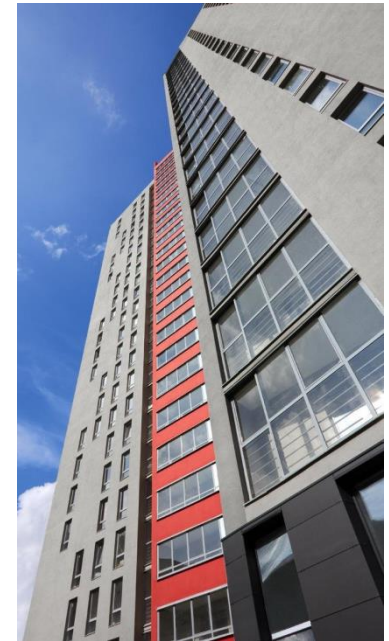
The grandmother helped to buy dwelling in center. 2 rooms, lives alone



In our country, to buy an apartment on their own financial ... is unreal. It is necessary to kill someone or something to steal .

In my case 2/3 of money grandmother gave me and 1/3 I saved myself.

Grandmother presented me an apartment , which she inherited from her parents. I sold it and it helps me to buy this dwelling



Blue-collar workers, women: life-style and social position

- Involved in **manual labour** and **feel income limited**
- Parents /grandmother from manual labour and **dwellings are provided by manufactory in Soviet time**
- Live in **limited dwelling space**: together with the elderly (couple), feel at home like a “guest”, have negative experience of living with boyfriend (back home)
- **Don't have a plan of life** and live “passively” (don't involved in city-center practices, but live in center, not traveling)
- **Close to criminal groups** (parents, boyfriend)

Dwellings are received by “parents” from the manufacturing. It is very limited in space and have interior of “elderly”. The women have no familial or own capitals (economical, cultural, social) for further mobility

Manager/ “unskilled labors” in chain of restaurants, 26 y. o., higher education, single



*I lived in the one
grandparents ,
then the other, then I lived
with my dad, when mom
left for another town...*



The grandfather “received”
dwelling from the manufactory.
2 rooms, lives with the elderly
in the city center

Factory worker, 45 y. o. “school’s” education (don’t have higher education), single



I don't have a plan of my life.... I became a victim of the numerous economical crisis : in 1998 , 2008 and 2012 .

How I can plan if I have nothing for planning?



The parents “received” dwelling from the manufactory. 2 rooms, lives with the elderly parents in the city center

Mature white –collar workers men: life-style and social position

- **Moving** to Yekaterinburg from small city (Berezovskiy, Orsk) **for the education**
- Upgrading **professional mobility**, stable high income
- The time of career development **is the nineties, successful adaptation to new market economy**
- **Classical own family** (wife and children)
- Rich housing experience and **new “purchased” dwelling** which is **suits for family**
- Regular **travel for work and vacations**

Dwellings are chosen (bought and “new”) based on family needs and life-style. It give the opportunity for family members and children development

Owner of small business, higher education, 45 y. o., wife and child



Well, of course we want also another house – suburban home , because my wife wants to go outside the city and to be able to breathe fresh air, have own walls etc



He bought this dwelling for money from own salary. 2 rooms, lives in the city center

Deputy head in industrial organization, 45 y.o., higher education, wife and 2 children

*We live in a new dwelling complex "Sunny Island"
new residential quarter , not far from the city center.
Close to our home is the new school with
French specialization,
where is going my youngest daughter*



He bought this dwelling for money from own salary + money from wife's inheritance. 3 rooms, lives in the city center



2 stage of analysis (44 interviews)

Housing pathways

of blue VS white collar workers*

	The parental capital	Multigenerational housing	Involvement in the housing market	Drivers of housing mobility	Gender patterns	Level requirements for housing
Blue-collar workers	Parental housing	Popular, no way to move	Low	Geographical mobility (from village to city)	Women moved to husband in the early age	Low: “happily have it?”
White collar workers	Financial support, buying an apartment	Not popular, orientation for separate living	High	Significant step in life course	Women are more supported by buying an apartment	Rather high and want to have spacious, comfortable , and even luxury housing

*Analysis was extended till 44 interviews and all data was loaded in INVIVO 10.

The analysis was made with the help of Nina Chukina

Pre-conclusion

- This empirical data confirms P. **Bourdieu theory** (Bourdieu, 1984) about interactions between social and physical spaces: physical space is projection of social space
- **Habitat** (place of living) **and habitus** (social experience) **are** interfering and influenced to each other
- Dwelling is an indicator of **social space**, it objectified the social position
- **Individuals with capitals** / have effort for it creation positively shift positions (**mobility inside class**) and who are originally **limited in capitals reproduced** life-style and practices of low class (**immobility inside class**)

Interviews experiences: methodological considerations

Requirements for further research

- More **housing oriented design**:
 - Housing **theme require great rapport relationship with informants** (closer, more time, several contacts)
 - **As local as possible** (one or several local objects, ethnographic case -studies)
 - **The interviews should be enriched with field diaries** from researcher

Limitations

- **Secondary data** (transcripts, photos) has problems with interpretation: selection of the facts, trajectories and meanings (repeated in several interviews)
- **Context** is data about distinction (housing status, visualization of the housing scale etc)