

# What is going on here?

Exploring Interaction of Cyclists and Car drivers in Vienna with regard to perceived change and stagnation of cycling policies

Elisabeth Füssl

# Research questions

- 1) What are the social functions of interactions in road traffic?
- 2) How do the processes of change and stagnation with regard to the altering conditions for cyclists influence these interactions?

# Methods

- Interviews (15 in-depth interviews, 2 focus group discussions)
- Field observation at 5 different crossings in Vienna (~7 h)
- Additional use of infrastructure & crash data

# What are functions of interacting?



- Inform / coordinate
- Feedback
- Attract attention / warning
- Negotiate
- Express cultur
- Reproduce or challenge social order
- ...



# What has changed?

- Number of cyclists increased
- Car drivers in general are experienced as more considerate
- More cycling infrastructure
- Public attention increased
- Representative for cycling matters installed



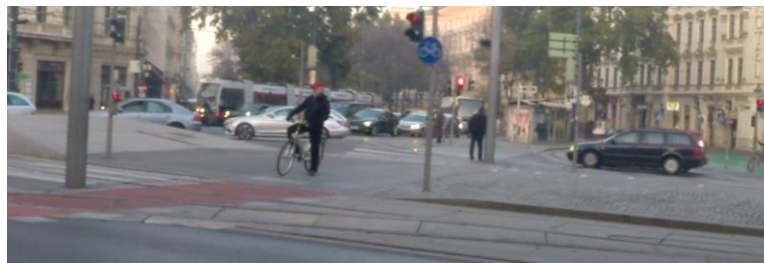
Quelle: MA 46

Stand: 12/2015



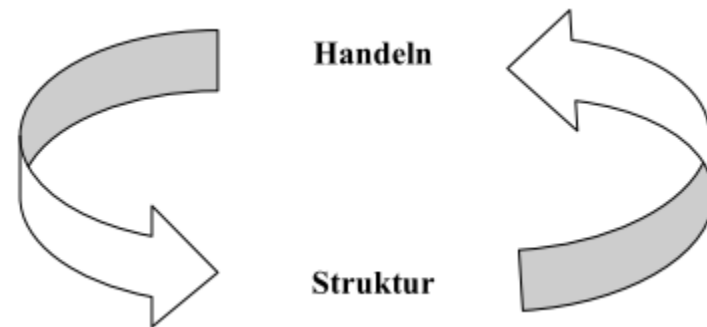
# What still needs to be changed... compensation of shortcomings

- Using pedestrians infrastructure to cross
- Right of way violations of cars
- Avoiding encounters with turning cars
- „Hopping“ at intersections



# How can this context of change & stagnation influence interactions?

Duality of acting and structure (Giddens 1988)

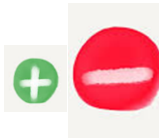


- Interpretate
- Exercise power
- Legitimate

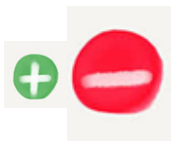
# What has changed?



Interpretation: becoming more and more everyday mode of transport



Exercise of power: almost no additional space, adaptation of traffic organisation



Legitimation: impractical laws for cyclists

**Bahnbrechendes Urteil:** 

"Seitenabstand von 1,2 - 1,8 Metern ist vertretbare Entfernung, will sich der Radfahrer nicht Gefahr aussetzen, durch geöffnete Fahrzeurtüre verletzt zu werden."

**ABSTAND macht sicher**



radlobby.at/abstand

VERWALTUNGSGERICHT  
WIEN  
Wien, 14.9.2019, im Rahmen der Verhandlung



# Resulting Interaction strategies

## **Coping with fear**

- Self-checking
- Transforming
- Mistrusting

## **Self-portrayal**

- Being a representative
- Specializing
- Sermonize

## **Demonstrating power**

- Asserting
- Being present as everyday road user
- Opposing norms as compensation & pro-cycling protest

# Policy fields

## Interpretation:

- Promote cycling as part of the city („it is just a normal thing to do“)
- Kindergartens and schools as strategic partners

## Power:

- Gap closure of cycle paths on the high frequented routes and in sensitive areas
- (Further) reduction of parking space in public space
- Improve traffic flow for cyclists and pedestrians (green lights)
- Reduction of vehicle speed (before intersections)
- Implementation of recommended technical guidelines for cycling traffic

## Legitimation:

...discussion of +/- of more liberal traffic-law

- Legal permission to cycle next to each other
- Legal solution & permission to use skateboards, micro scooters etc.
- Suspension of compulsory use of cycle path
- Right-of-way for cyclists at end of cycling path
- Simplification of traffic rules

# Thank you for your attention!



[elisabeth.fuessl@factum.at](mailto:elisabeth.fuessl@factum.at)