



**Oliver Ibert**

**Relational Distance: Socio-Cultural and Time-Spatial Tensions in Innovation Practices**



# CONTENT

1. Introduction
2. What is relational distance?
3. Divergent practices and their geographies
4. Implications

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## “Relational distance”

An operational definition

(1) Multidimensionality → notion as a heuristic device

(2) Social effect → dynamic spatiality

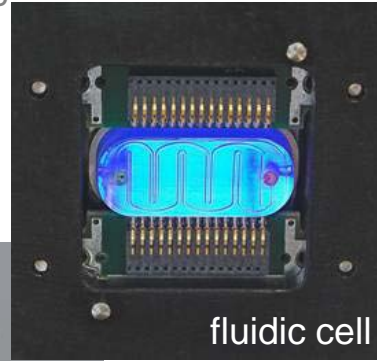
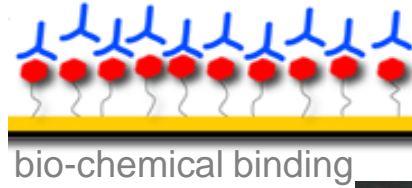
(3) Enacted in practice → time-spatial conflicts

# Two role models: the 'scientist' vs. the 'developer'

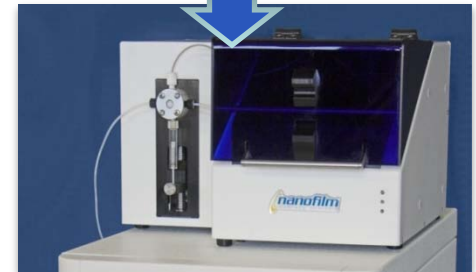
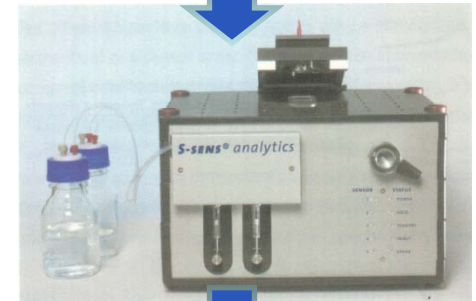
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### Unfolding



### Maturation



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The 'scientist'

Knowledge practices

Test measurements

Nesting of experimental work

Interaction patterns

Researcher-researcher interaction

→ Negotiating technical interdependencies

→ Resource allocation

The 'developer'



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The 'scientist'

The 'developer'

Spatiality

Local practices

Trans-local preconditions

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### The 'scientist'

#### Knowledge practices

Test measurements

Nesting of experimental work

#### Interaction patterns

Researcher-researcher interaction

- Negotiating technical interdependencies
- Resource allocation

### The 'developer'

Application measurements

De-bugging

Researcher-user interaction

- Transient contacts
- Focused interaction
- Presentation
- Application
- Transaction
- Customer complaints

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### The 'scientist'

#### Spatiality

Local practices

Trans-local preconditions

### The 'developer'

Multi-local practices

→ Face-to-face interaction

→ Interaction in context

→ Creation of local contexts for interaction

→ Blended interaction



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## Time-spatial conflicts

Dislocation - 'being close but feeling far' (Wilson et al. 2008)

Knowledge allocation

Opportunity costs (Schwanen 2007)

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## Implications for intellectual capital debates

In innovation practices intellectual capital is usually not only distributed among actors but also **distributed in space**

**Mobility** (of people and artifacts) is essential for localizing, mobilizing and exploiting knowledge

The **role of places** is essential for the localization of knowledge



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Thank you very much!

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