IN5500 oblig 2

Bjørn-Andreas Lamo

February 2020

1 The Concept of 'Work' in CSCW

In the previous paper by Schmidt, he extensively elaborated on the term 'co-operative' in CSCW and necessarily why that specific term was correct in this context. This time it is the term 'work' (innocently enough) that threaten to derail the whole field of CSCW.

It has recently been argued that the term 'work' is too limiting for CSCW. But, Schmidt argues, that that only applies if you consider work in the ordinary sense. Many things we call work, is rightfully work. To support this argument he's citing Wittgenstein's 'family resemblance' concept (a terms property isn't transitive) and Ryle's 'polymorphous concepts' (classification depends on the context).

'Family resemblance' — think of the term 'game' many things are games, but there is no **one** property that is shared with types of games. *x games* may share some properties with *y games*, and *y games* may share some properties with *z games*, but that doesn't mean *x games* and *z games* share any properties.

'Polymorphous concepts' — one action may be considered work under different circumstances. A person may doodle their name when bored, but if that was a contract they signed then it's considered work.

2 The integration of computing and routine work

This paper is an empirical study of real businesses, conducted through employee interviews.

Task chain — sequential task necessary for work to be done (including articular work).

Production lattice — different task chains that intercept.

Resource misalignment — slack (oversupply), slip (undersupply), or qualitatively misalignment.

Mitigating misalignment:

1. Fitting — structural task chain changes
    - Making changes to computing arrangements — ad hoc program changes
    - Adjusting work schedules and commitments — change personnel schedule and priority
2. Augmenting — making up for misfits by adding tasks to the task chain
    - Verifying and revising data — making sure the data is right
    - Assessing causes and effects of anomalies or misfit — finding errors
    - Consolidating data sources — using multiple independent sources

- Training — personnel training
- Archiving programs — VCS (version control system)

3. Working around — using a system in not the intended manner
    - Data adjustment — fake data to make the program do what you need
    - Procedural adjustment — bypass the designed process completely
    - Backup systems — go around a problem by stepping back