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From Mid-Life to Later Life: Strategies for Controlling Age Transitions Among Chileans in Metropolitan Santiago

A thesis submitted to Durham University
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By Cynthia Meersohn Schmidt
School of Applied Social Sciences

2015

Abstract

This thesis investigates the ways in which transitions from mid-life to later life are envisioned. Undertaken in Santiago de Chile the study explores the following questions: How do individuals deal with stereotypes and contradictory messages about ageing? What strategies do they develop to control transitions whilst coping with ageing processes? Documentary analysis of Chilean parliamentary debates and newspaper articles, and secondary analysis of focus groups with older people were used to construct social imaginaries of ageing. These were compared and tested in a survey of 226 individuals aged 40-90 to reveal four significant tensions. These related to older people as: i) dependent or having dependants, ii) using information as a means or an end; iii) having passive or active roles, and iv) being vulnerable or resourceful in terms of their own health. These tensions were transformed into pictorial stories and used in visual elicitation interviews with 32 men and women aged 40-90 who generated stories of the ways in which they understood the possibilities and challenges presented by these four areas of tension. Findings showed that solutions to tensions i) currently express an equilibrium in generational interdependency, but they are shifting towards increasing intergenerational individualism; ii) technological literacy is becoming a requirement for social inclusion, but education still holds important value for social interactions; iii) although self and other's ageism still represent barriers for social participation, the existing division between productive and non-productive roles in later life is becoming more flexible and pluralistic projects in later life have entered individuals' imagination; iv) strategies to maintaining health only postpone vulnerability and loss of control over life decisions. The thesis contributes to expanding the frameworks for the study of transitions and to the design of interventions tailored for particular groups of the ageing population.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Table of Contents	ii
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	x
Statement of Copyright	xv
Preface	xvi
The people behind the thesis.....	xvi
Acknowledgments	xx
PART I	1
1 Introduction	2
1.1 Rationale and research questions	2
1.2 What's in this Thesis?	9
1.3 Specific objectives	11
2 Ageing in the Chilean context	13
2.1 Brief overview of 40 years of social history.....	15
2.2 Demography of ageing and the situation of older adults ...	19
2.3 Global ageing policy.....	26
2.4 Chilean policy in the global context.....	32
3 Transitions from mid-life to later life	38
3.1 Representations of ageing	39
3.2 How middle age informs transitions.....	45

3.3	Challenges for steering transitions from mid-life to later life	54
3.4	Summary	57
PART II		60
4	Social imaginaries of ageing	62
4.1	What are social imaginaries?	63
4.2	Social imaginaries as a research perspective	65
4.3	Social imaginaries and constructivism.....	67
4.4	Social imaginaries of older people: a review of academic research	69
4.4.1	Demographic, economic and political challenges	70
4.4.2	Information, education and technology	73
4.4.3	Social representations and social roles	75
4.4.4	Family, community and social environment	77
4.4.5	Physical environment and environmental risks	79
4.4.6	Body, health, well-being and quality of life	80
5	A “tense” study of transitions	84
5.1	How to produce social imaginaries? A mixed methodology	86
5.2	Studying social imaginaries.....	87
5.3	Sampling	90
5.4	The three-stage analysis.....	94
5.4.1	Defining observable units.....	94
5.4.2	The language of ageing in Chile.....	97
5.4.3	Creating and analysing categories in social imaginaries	102
5.5	From opacities to tensions.....	105

5.6	Words and images: measuring and visualising tensions	107
5.7	Making sense of tensions as analytical constructs.....	108
5.7.1	Measuring tensions	109
5.7.2	Conducting the Survey.....	111
5.7.3	Analysis of the Survey data.....	112
5.8	Weaving strategies of control	116
5.8.1	Narratives and their representation.....	117
5.8.2	Deconstructing and reassembling narratives: Visual elicitation interviews	119
5.8.3	Strategy for analysing interview data	127
5.9	Summary	134
6	Social imaginaries of ageing in Chile.....	137
6.1	Political domain.....	139
6.1.1	Control as empowerment and capacity building.....	140
6.1.2	External control as non-participative policy design....	144
6.2	Mass media domain.....	158
6.2.1	Control as striving for inclusion and as generativity...	159
6.2.2	External barriers to inclusion, biomedical constructions of ageing, and surveillance of individuals	166
6.3	Older people's domain.....	178
6.3.1	Control as harmonious and independent development	180
6.3.2	External disruption of personal preferences	197
6.4	Tensions.....	207
6.4.1	Being economically dependent vs having dependants	208

6.4.2	Information as an intrinsic value vs information as a means to an end.....	210
6.4.3	Passive versus active social roles	212
6.4.4	Sociability in family networks vs wider social networks.....	214
6.4.5	Abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency	216
6.4.6	Preference for collective vs private spaces.....	219
6.4.7	Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment.....	222
6.4.8	Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness.....	224
6.5	Summary	227
PART III.....		230
7	Resource networks and control of ageing identities	231
7.1	Transitions as navigating social imaginaries through the lifecourse	233
7.2	Identity	238
7.2.1	The emergence of identity	238
7.2.2	Types of identity and normalisation of control.....	240
7.3	Bridging ontologies: the co-construction of structure and function	244
7.4	The interconnection of identity and resources networks.....	246
7.5	Resources networks in practice and discourse	249
7.6	Summary	251
8	Representing and resolving tensions of ageing: discourses and strategies	253
8.1	Representing the tensions in ageing	254

8.1.1	Correlations	255
8.1.2	Principal Component Analysis	256
8.1.3	Factorial ANOVA.....	258
8.2	Resolving the tensions.....	261
8.2.1	Being dependent vs having dependants	263
8.2.2	Information as value vs information as means	283
8.2.3	Passive roles vs active roles	299
8.2.4	Health vulnerability vs health resourcefulness	318
8.3	Summary	337
9	Conclusions	341
9.1	Summary of findings	341
9.1.1	Social imaginaries of ageing in Chile.....	341
9.1.2	Tensions of ageing	345
9.1.3	Resolving tensions, controlling transitions	346
9.1.4	Understanding lifecourse transitions.....	348
9.2	Policy implications.....	351
9.2.1	Addressing contradictions to achieve equilibrium between self-reliance and intergenerational reciprocity	352
9.2.2	Promoting social interaction through learning and challenging stereotypes of cognitive decline in later life	352
9.2.3	Active citizenship	353
9.2.4	Addressing social transformations in healthcare	354
9.3	Original contributions to knowledge	355
9.3.1	Theoretical contributions.....	355
9.3.2	Methodological contributions.....	356

9.3.3	Empirical contributions.....	358
9.4	Limitations of the study	361
9.5	Recommendations for research	362
Appendices	363
Appendix 1	Construction of themes from the literature review	363
Appendix 2	Dictionary of search terms associated with age and ageing	366
Appendix 3	Reliability of coding.....	367
Appendix 4	Cluster analysis of documents.....	368
Appendix 5	Stop words for word clouds	377
Appendix 6	Questionnaire	381
Appendix 7	Normalised scales	386
Appendix 8	Ethical aspects of visual elicitation interviews .	387
Appendix 9	Set of drawings for visual elicitation interviews	389
Appendix 10	Interview form.....	393
Appendix 11	Coding situational networks.....	394
Appendix 12	Correlations between sides of a tension.....	396
Appendix 13	Statistical details Principal Component Analysis	398
Appendix 14	Factorial ANOVA models.....	400
References	410

List of Tables

Table 2.1 Recommendations for policy frameworks	31
Table 2.2 Comparison of Chilean and global ageing policy	34
Table 5.1 Sampling newspaper articles	93
Table 5.2 Focus group distribution	94
Table 5.3 Codebook	95
Table 5.4 Tensions of ageing in each theme	106
Table 5.5 Tensions of ageing	109
Table 5.6 Questionnaire: methods and stages of analysis	112
Table 5.7 Construction of ratio variables	114
Table 5.8 Pilot sample	124
Table 5.9 Distribution of participants	125
Table 8.1 Correlations between items in sides of a each tension	255
Table 8.2 Retained factors and explained variance	257
Table 8.3 Factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha	257
Table 8.4 Summary of Factorial ANOVA models	259
Table A.1 Percentages of agreement and disagreement weighted by source size	367
Table A.2 Correlation Matrix of Retained Variables for PCA	398
Table A.3 Summary of Principal Component Analysis	399

Table A.4 Information as value/means	400
Table A.5 health vulnerability/ resourcefulness	403
Table A.6 Being/ Having Dependents	406
Table A.7 Active/ Passive Roles	408

List of Figures

Figure 2.1 Median age and population over 65 years old in the OECD. Source: The World Factbook (CIA, 2014)	20
Figure 2.2 Chile population structure.....	21
Figure 2.3 Population over 65 years old	21
Figure 2.4 Chile life expectancy at birth 1960-2012 and highest and lowest life expectancy at birth per quinquennium in South America 1960-2010.....	22
Figure 2.5 Chile fertility rate 1960-2012 and highest and lowest fertility rate per quinquennium in South America 1960-2010	23
Figure 2.6 Map of Chile and the Southern Cone	24
Figure 5.1 Production of social imaginaries	89
Figure 5.2 Clustering of key words on Demographic, Economic and Political Challenges within the mass media domain.....	100
Figure 5.3 Categorical matrix of the social imaginaries of ageing in Chile.....	104
Figure 5.4 Construction of items for the being dependent vs having dependants tension	110
Figure 5.5 Box-Cox transformation	114
Figure 5.6 Transformation of ratios to scales	115
Figure 5.7 Sample drawings from the set	122
Figure 5.8 Example of the situational network 'State dependency'	129

Figure 6.1 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'social representations and social roles'	141
Figure 6.2 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'demographic, economic and political challenges'	146
Figure 6.3 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	148
Figure 6.4 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'information, education and technology'	150
Figure 6.5 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'family, community and social environment'	154
Figure 6.6 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'physical environment and environmental risks'	157
Figure 6.7 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'social representations and social roles'	162
Figure 6.8 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'family, community and social environment'	165
Figure 6.9 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	168
Figure 6.10 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'demographic, economic and political challenges'	170
Figure 6.11 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'information, education and technology'	172
Figure 6.12 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'physical environment and environmental risks'	176
Figure 6.13 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'family, community and social environment'	184

Figure 6.14 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'information, education and technology'	188
Figure 6.15 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	192
Figure 6.16 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'social representations and social roles'	198
Figure 6.17 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'demographic, economic and political challenges'	203
Figure 6.18 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'physical environment and environmental risks'	206
Figure 8.1 Financial status in later life related to State policies	266
Figure 8.2 Resource network when having dependants	278
Figure 8.3 Resource network in situations of studying and learning	287
Figure 8.4 Resource network of contributions in later life	302
Figure 8.5 Resource network of care homes	332
Figure A.1 Political domain 'demographic change, economic and political challenges'	368
Figure A.2 Political domain 'information, education and technology'	368
Figure A.3 Political domain 'social representations and social roles'	369
Figure A.4 Political domain 'family, community and social environment'	369
Figure A.5 Political domain 'physical environment and environmental risks'	370

Figure A.6 political domain 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	370
Figure A.7 Mass media domain 'demographic change, economic and political challenges'	371
Figure A.8 Mass media domain 'information, education and technology'	371
Figure A.9 Mass media domain 'social representations and social roles'	372
Figure A.10 Mass media domain 'family, community and social environment'	372
Figure A.11 Mass media domain 'physical environment and environmental risks'	373
Figure A.12 Mass media domain 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	373
Figure A.13 Older people domain 'demographic change, economic and political challenges'	374
Figure A.14 Older people domain 'information, education and technology'	374
Figure A.15 Older people domain 'social representations and social roles'	375
Figure A.16 Older people domain 'family, community and social environment'	375
Figure A.17 Older people domain 'physical environment and environmental risks'	376
Figure A.18 Older people domain 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'	376

Figure A.19 Distribution of the ratio variables after Box-Cox transformation.....	386
Figure A.20 Quotations interlock tensions and temporalities.....	394
Figure A.21 Illustration of the coding process leading to the emergence of strategies of control.....	395
Figure A.22 Models 1.a and 1.b.....	400
Figure A.23 Models 1.c, 1.d and 1.e.....	401
Figure A.24 Models 2.a and 2.b.....	403
Figure A.25 Models 1.a and 1.b.....	404
Figure A.26 Models 2.a, 2.b (i-ii; iii) and 2.c.....	405
Figure A.27 Models 1, 2 & 3.....	407
Figure A.28 Models 1.a and 1.b.....	409

Statement of Copyright

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Preface

The people behind the thesis

This thesis would have looked very different if other people had been involved in its imagining, shaping and critique. I have shared this journey with my supervisors, Keming Yang and Helen Charnley, and I would like to take this opportunity to offer you, the reader, a glimpse of the backstage of the production of my thesis.

About ageing

Keming: This thesis is about the transition from the middle-aged life to that of what we call 'later life' or 'older age'. I am in such transition, but strangely I never made any connection between this thesis and my own life. Perhaps it is because her empirical focus is those in Santiago, perhaps the idea of separating academic research from personal life is part of my unconsciousness, or perhaps I failed to realize an important aspect of my life. To me, identity is highly elusive - it only comes out when it is forced to. In addition, some identities tend to dominate people's consciousness, pushing others to the blurred background. There is also another possibility: personally I ACCEPT that ageing is an undesirable but natural part of life; many parts of life are not ideal or undesirable, but that does not mean we have to be sad, we have to struggle to get rid of it, we have to constantly moan about it. One reason that ageing becomes a social rather than a purely biological problem is because there are always some people who do not

mind judging others negatively. Fortunately, ageing is a process that most people would experience, making it easier to develop empathy among human beings.

Helen: As a woman approaching 60, with an entitlement to an occupational pension barely months away, but no longer haunted by the possibility of 'forced retirement' thanks to recent equalities legislation, I experienced the start of your project in 2011 as an exciting opportunity to learn from you and to reinforce my desire to control my own transition into later life. 'It doesn't have to be like this' has been a motto of mine for decades. In truth I have commented to many friends in the last couple of years: 'no-one talks about retirement at work anymore'. Yet there are also pressures to conform to the expectations of others. 'Why don't you retire?' 'You don't have to work'. But these suggestions seem to me to fall into the 'why don't you behave like me – why don't you BE like me?' category. I have definitely joined the club of swapping tales of physical decline with family and friends (knees and eyes for me so far but cancer, diabetes, mental illness and dental challenges for some close friends). Adventures have been postponed, but not cancelled (yet, anyway). I have just returned from cycling the Rallarvegen in Norway with a 70 year old friend I persuaded to join me. I smiled as I read her email saying it had boosted her confidence and sense of daring.

Cynthia: I was introduced to gerontology in 2009 whilst working in a project about quality of life in older age in Santiago. The topics older people spoke about then barely resonated with my life experiences and perceptions. A few years later, and perhaps due to having devoted four years to understanding age transitions, some of the expectations and fears voiced by the participants of my research have become closer to

my own. I think it is quite amazing to being able, from time to time, to take a step back and look at my own ageing process. I hope that throughout the decades I can develop this ability to play the roles of insider and outsider harmoniously, and that whatever lessons I learn from life, will open my eyes to appreciating the wonders of old and ways of looking at ageing.

Commitment

Keming: It would be ridiculous to quantify my effort and care put into the whole process, of course. It is the quantitative researchers, not the qualitative ones, who best know the limitations of quantification. As her primary supervisor, I am expected to do so, but still, we all know the difference between what we have to do and what we want to do. As any reader of this thesis may soon discover, this is a very ambitious project because I demanded that she do whatever she SHOULD do for the sake of maximizing the quality of her work rather than simply to produce a 'standard' thesis. I am very happy that we both have a strong desire of refusing mediocrity. Is the thesis over-ambitious? I don't think so, because I don't think I ever asked her to do anything she simply couldn't do given her training and the time. That said, I would agree that she has done much more than a 'typical' PhD student would normally do - there are quite a number of findings and discussions that she couldn't show in this thesis.

Helen: I have learned an enormous amount from you, theoretically and methodologically, in stimulating discussions and as result of demands (not too harsh I hope) that you make your ideas and argument accessible, that you achieve logical coherence. I hoped that I could contribute my experience of supervising PhD projects (yes I did say that PhDs are just as much an emotional as an intellectual journey), and

perhaps something from my familiarity with gerontological research and teaching. I suspect I have been able to make small contributions in those senses but have been eternally grateful that Keming has been here to give you feedback on your statistical analyses and box-cox transformations. Your enthusiasm for your project, your sheer hard work and commitment and your consummate skills of planning and organisation have allowed you to undertake what, in all honesty, I believe to be more than one PhD. In the early days you expressed an explicit interest in producing a creative thesis in a creative way. You have certainly done that and created an extremely ambitious study. My anxiety, as a supervisor, has been whether you could hold together, to control if you like, all the elements of your thesis in a clear narrative accessible to the wide audience it deserves. This has led to ‘unforgiving editing’, as you refer to it, but also to demands for clearer explanations. Thank you for your patience in humouring me in this way.

Cynthia: To me, doing this thesis was always much more than getting a degree. I knew it was a unique opportunity to spend several years working on a project of my own, without many distractions besides the ones I chose. This was the genesis of what Keming and Helen called an ambitious thesis. My aim though, has never been to produce an ambitious thesis, but being thorough in completing the stages the project demanded. It has been arduous work. Sometimes, I found myself in a tight spot defending my ideas to Keming and Helen playing devil’s advocates. Other times, the magnitude of the tasks they have set for me, or the ones I have set for myself have been daunting. And other times, the voices of doubt have threatened my determination. I am grateful to my supervisors for matching my efforts with continuous commitment to seeing this project through from its inception until, quite literally, the conclusion.

Acknowledgments

Helen kept repeating from the start ‘dissertations are as much an emotional journey’ as an intellectual endeavour. She was right, and I have so many people to thank for helping me all the way to the finish line.

To my family. For their unconditional support over the years. To my parents, Ana María and Santiago, to my sisters and brother in law, Karen, Natalia and Manouk. For your faith and for supporting me in every possible way. Thanks to the cheering section in the family’s WhatsApp group, and very special thanks to my aunts Chichí, Pupe, Vero and Violena for your encouragement. To the Pacheco Miranda family for their love over the years, and to Aryel for the dreams we have shared.

To my supervisors. Thank you for backing me up in pursuing this project. I know you have been half excited and half scared through it, but you have been relentless in your support. Thank you Helen for the coffees, and for your thorough and unforgiving editing comments. Thank you Keming for all the long afternoons discussing little twists and turns in my research and life.

To the artists Karen and Eduardo. Karen Meersohn is responsible for the images used in the visual elicitation interviews. Eduardo Elgueta created the photoshop effects in the word clouds.

To my friends in different corners of the world. Lee, Pauline, Anne Pauline, Peter, Mehrin, Jo, Chris, Yeuxian, Tomás, Gina, Dan, Claudia M., Claudia A., Paulina, Pepi, Pamela, Anahí, María Sol, Mirza, Adriana, Dirk, Edo, Raminder, Matt. We have shared so much; you are in my heart forever. You have contributed to my thesis in multiple ways, you have

cheered me up, given me your insights about my work, driven me around, helped me with those pesky images, advertised my survey, and so much more.

Thank you Paulina for introducing me to gerontology, and for giving me the opportunity to start my research in your team, and thank you Pepi, for the recommendation (and for being my best friend too).

I had the most amazing officemates. Special thanks to Josie and Elham for your warmth and reassuring comments (and the treats!). To Colm for keeping up the friendly competition.

To the staff at SASS. Thank you for helping me navigate bureaucracy. Thanks to the staff at Ustinov for making my life easier so many times.

To Paulina and Marcelo at University of Chile for the reference letters. To Mark from Study Across the Pond for his outstanding help.

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Thanks to the British Society of Gerontology, Wolfson Research Institute and Santander for the financial support. I made the most of the conferences, I promise. Thanks to Becas Chile for funding my studies in the best place I could have chosen. Thank you Durham!

PART I

The first part of this thesis sets the stage for the study of control of transitions from mid-life to later life. It comprises three chapters: i) chapter 1 presents my research questions, aims, and objectives, and an outline of the document; ii) chapter 2 presents a brief account of Chile's social history, its demographic situation, social condition of older people, and policy developments; and iii) chapter 3 provides a critical review of the literature ageing, mid-life and life transitions.

1 Introduction

*"Imagination! lifting up itself
Before the eye and progress of my Song
Like and unfather'd vapour; here that Power
In all the might of its endowments, came
Athwart me; I was lost as in a cloud,
Halted without a struggle to break through,
And now recovering to my Soul I say
I recognize thy glory; in such strength
Of usurpation, in such visitings
Of awful promise, when the light of sense
Goes out in flashes that have shewn to us
The invisible world, doth Greatness make abode
There harbours whether we be young or old.
Our destiny, our nature, and our home
Is with infinitude, and only there;
With hope it is, hope that can never die,
Effort, and expectation, and desire,
And something evermore about to be" (Wordsworth 1800)*

1.1 Rationale and research questions

This thesis explores how individuals from mid-life to later life imagine their own ageing process and how this is influenced by multiple external voices competing for their understandings of ageing. How do individuals deal with stereotypes and contradictory messages about ageing? What strategies do they develop to control transitions whilst coping with ageing processes? Which external messages do they accept, which do they reject and how?

With broad recognition of the opportunities and challenges associated with increasing longevity for individuals, families and states, gerontology represents a rich and diverse field of research across many disciplines. With earlier experience of collaborating in an interdisciplinary research project exploring the quality of life of older people in Santiago, Chile (Bunout et al. 2012) I became intrigued by the ways in which individuals negotiate their way through the lifecourse in contexts of changing social structures, changing community environments and changing personal expectations.

During the last decade, the gerontological literature has increasingly stressed connections between objective and subjective quality of life in older age with long term processes beginning in earlier stages of the lifecourse (Gallegos et al. 2003; Blane et al. 2004; Higgs et al. 2005; Ferraro 2013). To me, it followed that understanding ageing as a process called for an exploration of the transitions interlaced at micro and macro social levels.

For analytical purposes the ageing process has been presented in the literature in terms of milestones related to states of health and in/dependence. However, the lifecourse as a process is more than all its stages put together and each stage is more than a simple summation of its subjective and objective elements. What binds these elements together is an 'interpretive process that occurs throughout the period of one's life that ultimately forms the context for lived experience' (Grenier, 2012:21).

Despite recent attempts to describe ageing as a result of long term processes, development of understandings of how individuals experience transitions through the life course have focussed predominantly on the borders between age 'stages' (Lachman 2004;

Perrig-Chiello and Perren 2005; Green 2010). While this is important work it does not illuminate the contribution of continuity, or what we bring from the past, in constructing expectations and experiences of future stages. The overall aim of this thesis is, therefore, to contribute to knowledge and understanding of how middle age and later life are connected.

How do those in their mid-life see themselves in the future? How do their perceptions of themselves in later life shape their identity? How do they navigate the transition to optimize quality of later life?

Mid-life—defined as starting from mid to late 30's through to the mid to late 60's (Featherstone and Hepworth 1993; Lachman 2004; Green 2010) —has attracted less attention from social scientists than later life (Perrig-Chiello and Perren 2005), and studies of mid-life have not extended to consider the transition from mid-life to later life. Stages in the lifecourse have been mostly researched separately, with little research focussing on transitions from one stage to another (for some exceptions see Grenier, 2012; Wohlmann, 2012), or they tend to assimilate transition with status changes or milestones, such as retirement (Patrickson and Ranzijn 2004; Calvo et al. 2009; Han and Moen 2009; Kubicek et al. 2010).

The idea of milestones seems to suggest that a comprehensive change of status configurations, including social roles, citizenship rights and responsibilities, and lifestyles, occurs within a very narrow time range or even at a specific time point. However, Baars (2010) and Ferraro (2013) urge caution in developing argument that links age-related events with age-related causes. I do not deny that some life events tend to be marked by chronological timetables. Nor do I argue that when we study transitions from mid-life to later life, we should

regard transitions as linear processes caused by age. My purpose is to understand how individuals in mid-life and later life go through multiple, long term transitional processes, and how these transitions are coped with by groups that have, in the past, been studied separately. This 'merging' of age-based stages is vital to understand both present and future processes of ageing in a society: 'it is dangerous to assume that attitudes towards elderly people and images of old age which currently exist enjoyed the same currency in the past or necessarily will do so in the future' (Featherstone & Hepworth, 1993:332).

Glaser and Strauss (1971) argued that the ageing process is linked to questions of changing status and status passages which are in themselves shrouded by aspirations of order and control over change. However, as people grow older they are at greater risk of losing control over the resources that can allow them to maintain desired levels of quality of life and life satisfaction (Brandtstädter, 2009; Baltes & Baltes, 1990 cited in Lachman, 2004). The process of growing older is identified with changes in participation in social networks associated with membership of age groups. This thesis explores precisely how people 'become older' by exploring how, from early middle age, they negotiate their own identity in relation to existing definitions of older age, how they attempt to control the resources at their disposal and how they develop effective strategies for coping with transition processes, where transitions constitute the ongoing and continuous realignment of experiences, in relation to multiple representations and imaginaries of ageing.

In this thesis I adopt an interactive, dynamic and continuous approach to studying the ageing process. The ageing process is ongoing, starting well before people reach chronological or institutional

milestones, but accelerating in pace when circumstances force rapid changes in status configurations. For instance, accelerated technological development confronts individuals with stereotypes of cognitive decline. Acceptance or resistance of these stereotypes affects choices and opportunities to engage in educational networks. And the resulting level of technological literacy can determine the ease of family relationships, especially with their own children, their inclusion in the labour market, or the success of business entrepreneurship. Transitions take place in multiple domains (Bird and Kruger 2005) as middle-aged people establish themselves in multiple networks. How they attempt to achieve a smooth, controlled, transition by employing a variety of capitals (Atchley 1989; Diehl et al. 2014) in different domains is fundamental to my enquiry. On the one hand, people in middle age are commonly seen as possessors of valuable resources in the life course while on the other they start to recognize signs, represented through age-related discourses, symbols and institutions, of being dispossessed of their statuses as they approach later life (Pearlin et al. 2007). The mismatch between personal identity and attributed identity based on age has become a common experience in the process of growing older (Bond and Corner 2004). During the prolonged transition to later life the middle-aged adjust their own views in the light of attributed identities, embracing some and resisting others, empowering themselves or being disempowered in the search to define their own identity during old age.

To explore the question of how individuals imagine their transitions to later life I develop a conceptual and theoretical framework for the transition from middle age to old age by drawing on relevant theories from a variety of social science disciplines I build my argument on three main theoretical pillars i) lifecourse theory, ii) social imaginaries

and iii) identity and control in social networks to help me explain how people find their way through ageing transitions in a world in which external identities present them with both frightening and seductive possibilities of their future later life.

In a world where views of ageing are multiple, tensions arise over definitions about what ageing is or should be. Diverse social domains such as the mass media and government policy use their resources to persuade their respective audiences to accept the validity of their views about what older age is and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and risks associated with this demographic phenomenon (Pintos 2005). Different social imaginaries emerge from such contentious processes, and those that prevail become widely accepted 'truths' about older age, in turn influencing representations, aesthetics, attitudes and policies oriented toward older people. Social imaginaries emerge as a theoretical-methodological approach that illuminates not only descriptions of older people, but also how multiple identities produce the lens through which social domains look at ageing. This use of social imaginaries is supported by the work of Taylor (2001, 2002), Castoriadis (1975, 1997a, 1997b), Pintos (2001, 2004a, 2004c, 2007) and Shotter (1997, 2011), and has aided their development as a research perspective. Consistent with the emphasis of social imaginaries on plural understandings of phenomena, cultural differences must be taken into account in comprehending how ageing is defined; social imaginaries are, therefore, useful in the interpretation of definitions of ageing in Chile across multiple social domains. Because the aims and interests within each domain differ, ageing may encounter points of consensus and conflict that contend to gain social visibility. The tensions stemming from conflict or *opacities* among social imaginaries (Pintos 2003) hold a particular interest in my research.

They point to the blurred boundaries between mid-life and later life. They mark the areas in which people are at risk of losing their ability to negotiate the ageing process on their own terms, being influenced by externally attributed criteria defining the accepted tenets for ageing. Concern about the accuracy of representations of ageing in society through public images describing older people's behaviours, attitudes and routines was expressed over twenty years ago by Featherstone & Hepworth (1993). Such public images constitute the social imaginaries of ageing that exert external pressure on individuals as they develop their own ageing identities. What is not clear is how people at different moments of their ageing process respond to externally attributed criteria for ageing.

Harrison White's theory of identity and control in social networks (2008) suits this type of enquiry well. Identity is not an essential attribute of individuals, but transpires in situational networks where ageing identities must find footing—a negotiating position—in relation to other identities in the network. Networks are constituted by both structural and symbolic elements. Ageing identities seek footing by enacting styles, or recognizable patterns of action, that make them discernible from other identities in the same network (Godart and White 2010). In order to enact these styles, people use different resources, human and non-human, to negotiate their positions within situational networks. The resources they use in these networks constitute resource networks themselves. Resource networks are invested with meanings that may change over time, transforming the styles of enacting ageing identities.

In this thesis I explore the tensions that rise from competing understandings of ageing across multiple social domains, tensions that

need to be resolved by individuals in everyday life. The way in which tensions are resolved, the resources drawn upon, and the interplay between those resources are the entry points to this study of the control of transitions from mid-life to later life.

1.2 What's in this Thesis?

This thesis explores the control of identity during ageing transitions by developing an understanding of how people, from early mid-life, negotiate their identity in relation to existing definitions of older age. It develops understanding of how people control the resources at their disposal and develop effective strategies for steering such negotiations in desired directions. The thesis is presented in three parts: Part I provides the background to the project and is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the rationale and main objectives of the research and the research questions. Chapter 2 situates the study in Chile's socio-historical and demographic context. Chapter 3 draws on theories of the lifecourse to provide a critical review of the literature on transitions between middle age and later life.

Part II focuses on the study of social imaginaries and is presented in three chapters. Chapter 4 outlines the concept of the social imaginary and its roots in constructivism, before discussing the use of social imaginaries to address ageing as a focus of ongoing tensions. Social imaginaries offer a window into the contentious processes that define ageing across different social domains and in this chapter I draw on Latin American and Spanish sources to examine approaches to social imaginaries and representations in research about ageing. In chapter 5 I move on to construct social imaginaries of older age in three domains of Chilean society: parliamentary politics; the mass media, and older

people's own domain. Through analyses of parliamentary debates, selected newspaper articles and secondary analysis of data from older people's focus groups I identify areas of consensus and conflict that create tensions where ageing identities are disputed. I then test the statistical significance of the identified tensions through a survey of 266 people. A reduced set of (statistically significant) tensions is then transformed into visual representations that are used as the basis of visual elicitation interviews with 32 women and men aged forty to ninety. Interview transcripts are used to produce two sorts of narratives of ageing: i) public stories that refer to 'ideal' solutions to problems of ageing in a general sense and ii) ontological stories that reflect the personal experiences of interview participants. This is followed by a mapping of available resources and strategies of control employed by individuals to resolve the tensions and negotiate their ageing identities. Chapter 6 presents and discusses the resulting social imaginaries which are compared across the three domains in order to identify specific tensions. These, in turn, are discussed as latent age typifications.

Part III outlines the use of tensions identified in chapter 6 to develop a more nuanced understanding of transitions and control of transitions. Chapter 7 takes as its starting point the tensions identified in chapter 6 and constructs a theoretical framework for understanding transitions from mid-life to later life and strategies for controlling those transitions, drawing on theories of identity and networks. Chapter 9 concludes this thesis. It provides a synthesis of the key findings, their implications for policy and for academic research. Its intention is to inform the connections between the findings and the ongoing policy debates, including discussions with policy makers in Chile. Particular attention is given to the need of planning ahead, by looking at the future

older people in order to avoid structural and cultural lag in social policy. It discusses the theoretical and methodological contributions of this study to the social sciences and social gerontology, as well as its limitations, unresolved questions and possibilities for future research.

1.3 Specific objectives

First, constructing social imaginaries of older age in Santiago Chile in three domains: the political domain -represented by transcriptions of parliamentary debates-; the mass media domain-represented by newspaper articles- and the older people domain as older people themselves- through analysing transcriptions of focus groups. Once all three social imaginaries are constructed through a documentary analysis, it will be possible to identify the conflicting descriptions, representing tensions or disputes about ageing in Chile.

Second, to determine whether the identified tensions could be reproduced as such in a sample of the population. In other words, did the conceptual constructions derived from the documentary analysis make sense to the group of interest? In order to do this, the tensions were constructed as binary concepts that were then tested with a questionnaire that measured the distance between the attitudes towards each conceptual binomial.

Third, to find out how people aged 40 to 90 years old resolved the tensions about ageing in Chile that were presented to them. During visual elicitation interviews, images (drawings) inspired in the social imaginaries of ageing in Chile were presented to the participants. The suggested stories represented different aspects of the tensions of ageing. By talking about their attitudes towards the images and the ways to achieve or avoid these situations, participants could

inadvertently make the conflicts their own and narrate their own stories about them.

Fourth, to identify and explain the main strategies that diverse groups use to accept or resist external ageing identities, and the resource networks that shape the situational identities engaging in these control efforts. A combination of situational analysis and network representations permitted the unveiling of the main discourses used in resolving each tension about ageing, and the resource networks that serve as scaffolding to each of these strategies.

2 Ageing in the Chilean context

When Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez received the Nobel Prize of literature in 1982, his speech on ‘The Solitude of Latin America’ (García Márquez 1982) glided into public light in the midst of the political turmoil that shook the region¹ during the latter part of the 20th century. Then, he spoke of a continent of

‘Poets and beggars, musicians and prophets, warriors and scoundrels, all creatures of that unbridled reality, we have had to ask but little of imagination, for our crucial problem has been a lack of conventional means to render our lives believable. This, my friends, is the crux of our solitude’.

The aim of this chapter is to present a brief characterisation of the social history and demography of Chile, and to provide an image of the country’s situation within the region. While the overall objective of this thesis is to study the transition from mid-life to later life, the empirical investigations were carried out in the capital city of Chile, Santiago. It is imperative to provide an empirical background to contextualise my research. As García Márquez reminds us, it is necessary to understand

¹ In this chapter I use the concepts South America and Latin America. South America refers to the American countries South of Panama. The definition of Latin America is more problematic and incomplete. It constitutes an imagined community rooted in history (European colonization), geography (south of the United States), language (romance languages), and religion (Catholicism). These components however, fail to include expats, ethnic and religious minorities. The idea of a homogeneous Latin America also disregards the cultural differences between and within the countries that would constitute this imagined community, as well as the effects of cultural dynamism (Rouquié 1989; Bohoslavsky 2009).

cultural and social changes not only from the perspective of the general problems that concern us all, but also from the particularities that each scenario merits. To continue the quotation from his work:

‘And if these difficulties, whose essence we share, hinder us, it is understandable that the rational talents on this side of the world, exalted in the contemplation of their own cultures, should have found themselves without valid means to interpret us. It is only natural that they insist on measuring us with the yardstick that they use for themselves, forgetting that the ravages of life are not the same for all, and that the quest for our own identity is just as arduous and bloody for us as it was for them. The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own, serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less free, ever more solitary’.

Taking the challenges of ageing as a special dimension of modernization, I show how Chile has been attempting in recent decades to steer the quest for its own modern identity. With the recently acquired status of a ‘developed country’ (OECD, n.d.), Chile walks the lines between neoliberalism and social demands, and between transition into democracy and the claim for civil sovereignty. In sum, Chile has been striving to reconcile the State’s macro political and economic projects with multiple emerging voices from increasingly differentiated groups of citizens.

Towards the end of his speech, García Márquez finds hope in the youth of the region. Decades of upheaval have not smothered the promise of a brighter tomorrow; he declared

‘In spite of this, to oppression, plundering and abandonment, we respond with life. Neither floods nor plagues, famines nor cataclysms, nor even the eternal wars of century upon century,

have been able to subdue the persistent advantage of life over death. An advantage that grows and quickens: every year, there are seventy-four million more births than deaths², a sufficient number of new lives to multiply, each year, the population of New York sevenfold’.

This Marquezian view of fertility no longer reflects the rapid changes in Chile’s demography. It has taken us merely 40 years to catch up with the benefits and perils of high life expectancy and plummeting fertility rates that regions such as East Asia and Europe have gradually experienced over a century. Chile’s institutions have only recently rolled out of their bewilderment with the rapidly changing reality and have started to work towards responding to the needs of an ageing population. There is little time and much to do if ‘the races condemned to one hundred years of solitude will have, at last and forever, a second opportunity on earth’ (García Márquez 1982).

2.1 Brief overview of 40 years of social history

Accelerated ageing processes in both Chile and the Latin American region are occurring just as they are healing from the traumas of the dictatorships that dominated the political landscape during the second half of the 20th century. According to Joey Edwardh (Torres 1992), authoritarian regimes blocked the possibility of social organisation, including the organisation of older people to fight for their rights. And until the early 1990’s ageing was a neglected issue in Latin-America, because there was a generalised perception that it was a young region.

² García Márquez refers to Latin America in the early 1980s, not to Chile alone.

Chile's dictatorship led by Pinochet lasted from 1973 to 1990. These years had a profound effect on the country's economic policies, on its social structure, and on the capacity of citizens to see themselves as relevant actors in the political field to envision their rights, and to steer their journeys as ageing individuals and generations. Much of the country's political capital has been diverted to seeking consensus and restoring democratic institutions. It has only been during the last decade that demographic pressures from the rapidly ageing population have prompted debate on the structural lag Chile had been experiencing in ageing matters and on 'senior citizens' as subjects of rights.

After these turbulent times, Latin-America has been seeking new ways of situating itself from within and without. At the beginning of the 21st century, it strives for new forms of representation, able to articulate the interests of the State and its citizens. General aims for rethinking the region have been synthesised by Garretón (2001) as the needs to increase political participation to fight social exclusion of citizens, to reform of the model of economic development by reinserting local economies in the global model, and to redefine modernity in the Latin-American context. Consistent with these changes, the political climate is shifting from focusing on historical-political projects to those centred on the instrumental effects of organisations and institutions on people's social and cultural environments (Garretón 2001).

In Chile, the search for its own modernity in the terms described by Garretón has proven particularly arduous, due to the ferocity with which the neoliberal system was adopted. It responded in part to the global trend favouring financial capital over productive-industrial

forms of development (Salazar, 2012:97), and also as an ideological statement to counter the earlier socialist government replaced in 1973 by a dictatorship. During the neoliberalisation of Chile's economy in the 1980s, all civic and political organisations connected to Chile's industrial history were dismantled (Salazar 2012). Their interest in voicing citizenry's concerns, opposing government interests, was silenced. The reorientation of Chile's economy was soon followed by the privatisation of social security systems, such as pensions and health care. As Salazar (2012) explains, the dissolution of traditional organisations saw resistance to dictatorship move mainly to youth movements. These movements were borne from popular working class areas and universities, whose members were considered irrelevant to Chile's productive structure. Through acts of revolt and cultural expression (i.e. arts, music, drama), these movements were able to organise distinct aesthetics of discontent, persistent enough to convey the message that the regime was not supported by the citizenry. As a result foreign investors were reluctant to invest in a country showing signs of political instability. It was this frailty of the internal economy that ultimately led Pinochet to negotiate his way out through a popular referendum.

The end of the dictatorship however did not entail the restoration of earlier political and civil organisations. The price paid for a peaceful transition back to democracy was that citizens comply with the political pacts being forged. During the early 1990's, the reconstruction of democracy found the social movements that had fought to bring down the dictatorship tired and worn. The new transitional government and its political parties adhered to the neoliberal model for the sake of political and economic stability, severing the political development of civic empowerment (Pinto & Salazar, 1999). As a result, civic and

political movements progressively sank into apathy by the end of the decade and it would take over ten years to jolt their revival.

Social stratification by the end of the 20th century found Chile with profound inequalities. Obstacles to social mobility were reinforced by concentration of income and of educational opportunities, hindering the chances of building social relations based on solidarity (León and Martínez 2001). The increasingly rigid occupational structure in Chile during the first decade of the 21st century was an obstacle to the social mobility of a struggling middle class. Combined with a weak social protection network, this stagnation created a diverse and frail social structure, with a tendency towards an increasing polarisation of social classes (Espinoza et al. 2013).

Despite Chile joining the OECD in 2010, making it the newcomer to the group of developed countries (OECD, n.d.), the proportion of households under the poverty line in 2009 was 15.1%, and 14.4% in 2011 (Ministerio de Desarrollo Social 2012). Culturally rooted sexual divisions of labour and separation of production areas have fostered the lower material capacities of women (Guzmán et al. 2012). The aim of governments during the past two decades has been poverty reduction through increasing incomes, and specific programmes aimed at the most impoverished groups of society. Such programmes have been financed through copper exports, the main source of revenue for Chile's economy. However, the priority given to macroeconomic stability has prevented policy development to address the high levels of inequality (GINI=0.51) (Espinoza et al. 2013).

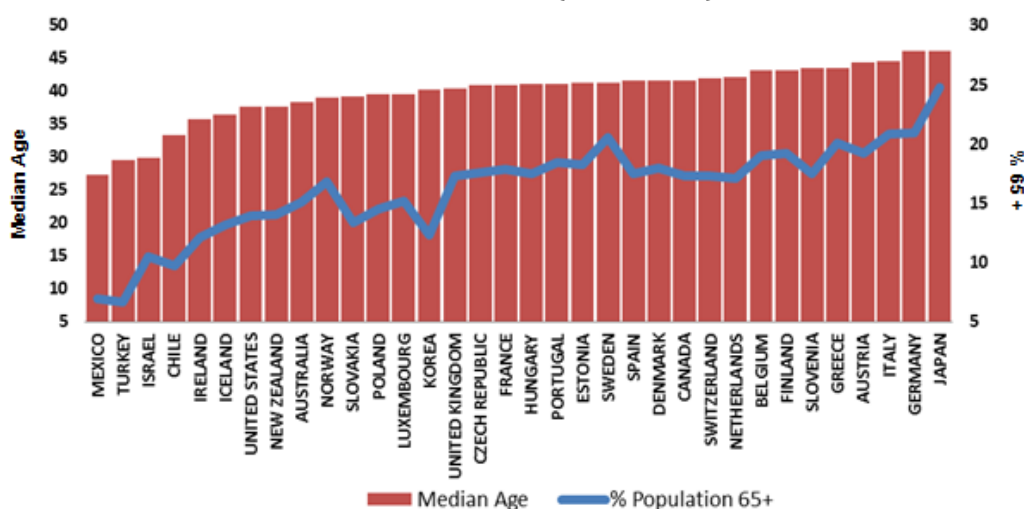
More recently social pressure stemming from inequality have revitalised political activity. The student movement, ignited by demands to increase equality of access to secondary and university

education, has awoken civic interest in the reform of the social security network, and redistributive policies, including those concerning older people as a special group attracting civil rights. As Barozet (2011) states, the student movement, may be seen as the end of a political cycle linked to a generation unacquainted with the traumas of dictatorship, and identifying the obsolescence of the political pacts that 'sealed practices and political spaces in the past twenty years'(Barozet, 2011:130).

2.2 Demography of ageing and the situation of older adults

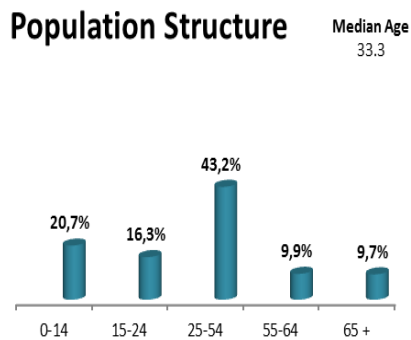
Within the OECD, Chile is amongst those with a younger population (Figure 2.1). The estimated median age of the population for the year 2014 is 33.3 years old, with 9.7% people in the age group 65 years old and older. In contrast, Germany and Japan have the oldest populations, with a median age of 46.1 years and 20.9% and 24.8% respectively of people over 65. Mexico and Turkey are the countries with the youngest populations, with median ages below 30 years old and less than 7% of their population being over 65 years old (CIA, 2014).

Figure 2.1 Median age and population over 65 years old in the OECD. Source: The World Factbook (CIA, 2014)



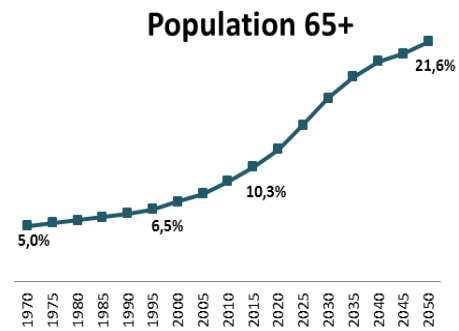
Nonetheless, Chile's pace of ageing is continuously accelerating (Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3). The proportion of younger people is decreasing, while that of those aged 60+ is increasing. The demographic projections estimate that the population over 60 makes up approximately 15% of the total and by the year 2050 will reach 28.2% (Boreal and SENAMA 2011), while those over 65 will be 21.6% (INE) of the population and the oldest group (over 80) will constitute 6.9% of the population. Following the trend of most countries, ageing also changes the proportion between men and women. Women's average life expectancy is two years longer than men's. In 2011, the proportion of men and women under 60 was 49% and 51%, respectively. However, above the age of 60, women accounted for 56% and men 44% (Boreal and SENAMA 2011).

Figure 2.2 Chile population structure



Source: The World Factbook (CIA, 2014)

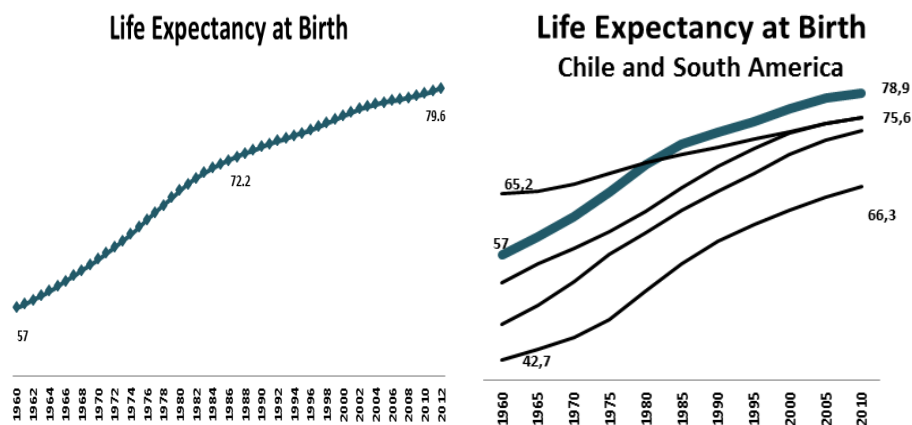
Figure 2.3 Population over 65 years old



Source: Projections and estimations of the population from the 2002 Census. Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE)

Data from The World Bank allow us to look into the historical trend of ageing in Chile and how it relates to its neighbouring countries in South America. In the past 50 years, Chile's life expectancy has increased by more than 22 years, with a rapid rise in the first half of the period and then a slower, but sustained increase in the second half, reaching 79.6 years by 2012. If we compare Chile with other South American countries in 1960 and 2010, in terms of the highest and lowest life expectancies, the country started within the middle of the group and now has the highest life expectancy in the region (Figure 2.4).

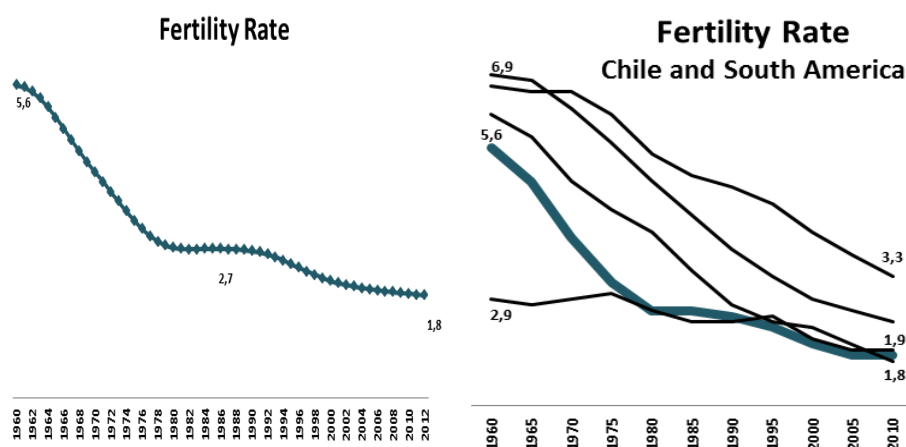
Figure 2.4 Chile life expectancy at birth 1960-2012 and highest and lowest life expectancy at birth per quinquennium in South America 1960-2010



Source: World Development Indicators. The World Bank

A similar trend can be observed in the fertility rate, which has dropped from 5.6 to 1.8 children in last 50 years. By the mid 1980's fertility had dropped from 5.6 in 1960 to 2.7 children per woman, and by the early 2000's it came below 2. Within South America, it also started in the middle of the group and today shares the lowest fertility rates with Uruguay and Brazil. Both the life expectancy and fertility rates account for the accelerated pace of ageing in Chile (Figure 2.5). They also show that despite the evident ageing process amongst all South American countries, there are large disparities in income, public health, education and age and gender oriented policies amongst others.

Figure 2.5 Chile fertility rate 1960-2012 and highest and lowest fertility rate per quinquennium in South America 1960-2010



Source: World Development Indicators. The World Bank

Chile has 16 administrative Regions, but it is the Metropolitan Region, where Santiago is located that gives this research its empirical context (Figure 2.6). The proportion of people over 60 in the Metropolitan Region is 14.7%. Of these, 5.6% live under the poverty line, 17.6% have a permanent disability, and 81.8% are affiliated to the State healthcare system (SENAMA 2013). A brief overview of the situation of people in later life will provide some background to inform discussions in subsequent chapters.

Figure 2.6 Map of Chile and the Southern Cone



See the Metropolitan Region coloured in red

Access to employment, pension receipts, and alternative sources of income have a direct impact on financial dependency in later life. Income among older people in Chile varies according to their participation in the work force and is supplemented with other sources such as pensions, investments and State subsidies. Although participation in the work force drops to below 10% amongst those over 80, people in younger age bands have shown a trend of continued working. With State retirement age for women at 60 years and 65 for men, it is significant that by the year 2009, 29.3% of women and 74.5% of men between 60 and 64 remained in employment (Boreal and SENAMA 2011). In March 2014, in the city of Santiago, 29.2% of those over 60 were still working (Centro de Microdatos del Departamento de Economía de la Universidad de Chile 2014).

Even with increased participation in the workforce, the average income of retirees is 58% of the average income of the economically active population. Moreover, the average pension in May 2014 reached

only 85% of the minimum wage (Superintendencia de Valores y Seguros 2014). The gap between women and men is even wider because as women grow older their participation in the workforce decreases more than men. The severity of the situation has led to pension reforms that since 2008 have aimed to improve older people's pensions, but as the data show, income in later life demonstrates significant inequalities. Impoverishment in later life affects the strategies used by older people today to cope with stereotypes associated with financial dependency. But the same structural inequalities that are observed today are already having an effect on ageing policies that will affect future generations, and by looking at the current realities, inequalities also affect financial planning and the trust that individuals in middle age have in welfare institutions.

In relation to health, the National Study of Dependency in Older People (SENAMA, 2009) states that 13.8% of people 60+ years old reported having limitations in performing basic daily tasks (e.g. bathing) and 33.1% reported difficulties with instrumental tasks (e.g. cooking). In total, 24.1% had some degree of dependency with half showing severe dependency. However, dependency only reaches 50% or more in those over 80. On average, 13.9% of people in their sixties and 24.2% of people in their seventies presented some degree of dependency. Therefore, the majority of major health vulnerabilities do not appear until after the age of 80. In combination with increased life expectancy, the gap between the age of state retirement and the appearance of signs of dependency, and expected death, has increased abruptly. Whether this time is employed in alternative life projects from those existing today or experienced as a period of slow decline depends on the opportunities and resources individuals can use to imagine and shape the future of ageing.

Support networks are mainly constructed upon family relations. When people find themselves in need or in an emergency, they prefer to ask family members for help. This is consistent with living arrangements. 76.8% of older adults live in a house that belongs to a member of the household, and in over half of households, the owner is the older person that shares their home with younger relatives. Older people also participate more in social and community organisations than other age groups. They favour church groups, older adults' clubs, neighbourhood councils and, amongst men, sports clubs. Participation decreases with age, and the main cause for non-participation is lack of interest in these activities (Boreal and SENAMA 2011)

Policy makers in Chile have started responding to the needs of the ageing population, and during first decade of the 20th century they worked towards the development of Chile's first integral policy for ageing. Such developments need however be understood within the context of global ageing as well as local conditions. I ask the reader will allow me to briefly stray from the focus on Chile, to show how the development of global ageing policy has affected the Chilean one.

2.3 Global ageing policy

"We approach life as a series of new experiences, gaining wisdom, friendship, possessions, love, yet older age too often reverses the direction and inflicts loss after loss on us, of health, material well-being, meaningful activity, loved ones. And the worst of all is arguably loss of meaning and value to others"
(Cann, 2009:166)

Since population ageing began raising awareness of the upcoming challenges of a population structure in which the proportion of older and younger people become increasingly similar, the politics of ageing confronts views of intergeneration conflict with those of

intergenerational cooperation (MacManus et al. 2013). The former view sees population ageing as a problem that burdens national and global economies, and the latter vision aims to restructuring services so they respond to the specific needs of different age groups, at the same time it expresses discontent to images of passivity of older people, and demands more active participation in older age (MacManus et al. 2013; Walker 2014).

These conflicting political perspectives, in addition to the increasing difficulties to define what is old, pose challenges for policy makers (MacManus et al. 2013), resulting in disconnection between negative assessments of growing older and 'the present and projected roles of older people as producers and contributors to the social and economic wealth of nations' (Olshansky et al., 2011:98).

The problems global ageing policies face today have been present in gerontological discussion for at least the past three decades (Townsend 1986; Phillipson and Walker 1986; Foster and Walker 2014). The attempts to restructure policies for a new demographic structure have sometimes increased the risks they are trying to prevent due to ageist notions of older people's capabilities. Townsend (1986) explains that pensions under average earnings, segregation of the infirm, exclusion from the work force, insufficient services for the elderly and limited opportunities for active participation within older people's communities create a state of artificial dependency. The limited scope and efficacy of the measures implemented to palliate the worst effects of dependency creates a paradox. Because these measures cannot produce conditions of equality for older people, they reinforce existing images of vulnerability and produce further dependency (Townsend 1986).

Although developed and developing countries have started preparing for the demographic shift, structural lags in policy still need to be addressed (Olshansky et al. 2011). Social inclusion of older people depends on eliminating cumulative disadvantages, and for societies to accept age related innovation. The aim is to enable individuals to control shifts in priorities associated with age related transitions, whilst maintaining equilibrium between physical, psychological, cognitive and social aspects of ageing. Social inclusion requires addressing ageism in decision making through the education of political leaders and the citizenry about population ageing, as well as ageism in design, institutional discrimination, and images in the media. It also requires lifelong perspectives in healthcare for ageing well; mediation in intergenerational conflict; and battling views of ageing as decline (Olshansky et al., 2011:100).

The major social and cultural transformations needed to create an inclusive society for older people have an impact in all stages of life (Kalache 2014). Rethinking older people's contributions in the public and private arenas requires lifelong approaches supported by policy agendas that endure changes in partisan politics (Cann 2009; Olshansky et al. 2011). Development of research on ageing about and beyond its biological aspects leading to policies providing equal opportunities for ageing well in friendly social and physical environments (Kalache 2014; Cox et al. 2014) cannot depend on short term agendas of each passing government. Nor can the development of a culture of care involving supportive relationships with family, friends and practitioners, that are crucial in overcoming uncertainty about care arrangements, as well as coping with psychological barriers during long term illness in later life (Kalache 2014; Arber et al. 2014).

Engaging older people in the design and implementation of their own welfare (Phillipson and Walker 1986), and thus adopting a participative approach to the design of policies for ageing can ameliorate the risks of increasing artificial dependency posed by top-down design and implementation. It also opens avenues for imagining creative opportunities for financial security, finding occupation, contributions to their communities, controlling their physical environments (Townsend 1986), stemming from the insights and experiences of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds. Although the participation of older people in policy affairs has increased, organisation and leadership (Cann 2009) to ensure continuity in political representation have yet to be achieved. Cann (2009) expresses the need of older citizenry to organise and tell their stories persuasively, and to align their causes with other groups suffering from exclusion. However, Phillipson & Walker (1986) discussed obstacles to participation thirty years ago, and these have been difficult to counteract. Despite the existence of organised groups taking action in promoting older people's rights, only a minority of older people actually participate in these movements. This is explained by social divisions amongst the elderly due to differences in retirement conditions, by the resistance of many individuals to participate in organisations of older adults to avoid stereotypes, and by feelings of futility of engaging in political causes that may not bear fruit before death (Phillipson and Walker 1986). In order to engage older people in citizenry action, they first need to tackle internalised narratives of decline. The arts have proven to be a powerful tool for older people to produce alternative narratives of capability and imagine worthy lives for themselves and others (Murray et al. 2014).

Integrating the views of older people also brings forth the heterogeneity of the older population, and presents challenges to conciliating social change with personal planning (Olshansky et al. 2011). We need leadership in policy to advocate for stronger participation, to ban ageist regulations 'such as insurance age limits, discriminatory rules on civic duties and enforced retirement, or inhibited by limited social care options and unimaginative marketplaces' (Cann, 2009:170) in order to provide continuity and stability across the adult life course (Olshansky et al. 2011).

The current global policy framework has developed the concept of active ageing as an answer to the need for policies that integrate macro and micro aspects of ageing, considering the participation of older people as well as the cultural, economic and demographic differences across nations. The concept of active ageing developed by the WHO combines the idea that older people should participate in areas other than leisure with conceptions of activity beyond employment. Active ageing also emphasises maintenance of health, as well as improving quality of life and independence in later life, which requires a life course approach to prevention and treatment (Walker 2014).

Notwithstanding the positive contributions of the WHO to broadening the understanding of active ageing, revised frameworks for global ageing policy are emerging. Their aim is maximising integral well-being and emphasising life course approaches at individual, organisational and societal levels, which include besides health, access to knowledge, financial conditions, and support of primary networks (Kalache 2014; Foster and Walker 2014; Walker 2014). I summarise the key recommendations for shaping future policy frameworks in the table below.

Table 2.1 Recommendations for policy frameworks

	Knowledge to ban ageist policies and regulations	Inclusive education, services and design through the life course	Participation of all older people	Understanding the diversity of ageing
Aims of the Council of the Ageing Society (Olshansky et al. 2011)	Dissemination of knowledge to tear down ageist assumptions among decision makers.	Preventive care, social integration, design of cities and lifelong learning to delay difficulties in later life.	Creation of meaningful roles for older people in public and private agencies by harnessing older people's experience and wisdom.	Development of new metrics for ageing societies considering both the costs and benefits.
Policy recommendations (Cann 2009)	Ensuring that knowledge and research about ageing reaches policy and decision makers Creation and effective enforcement of anti-ageist regulations.	Good information and advice services that help people in making decisions about pensions, housing, health, social care services. Integrated services assisting individuals from midlife onwards to assess their health and wealth well-being, and their skills and employability. Assistive technologies in any care package.	Agencies need to tackle isolation as a by-product of loss by focusing on contribution and interdependence.	
Key principles for active ageing (Walker 2014)		Preventative measures including all age groups at across the whole life course. Rights to social protection, and lifelong education and training, as well as obligations to make the most of these opportunities.	Activity comprises all meaningful pursuits, not only employment. Inclusion of all older people, including the 'old old'; and gender sensitivity. Intergenerational solidarity (fairness between generations) and transgenerational activities. Include policies that motivate participation, as well as opportunities for citizens to take action.	Consider inequality and heterogeneity, as well as national and cultural diversity.

After this brief review of the state of global policy development, in the next section I introduce Chilean ageing policy, and its overall position within the global scenario.

2.4 Chilean policy in the global context

The design of policies coherent with Chilean ageing processes happens in a context of accelerated ageing. In all Latin America ageing is happening rapidly and in less prosperous conditions than European ageing (Kalache 2014). Although Chile is a member of the OECD, and its gross income classifies it as a high income country, high inequality entails that many individuals are growing older with low levels of satisfaction, significantly less education than younger generations, and financial frailty. Today Chile has over 2.6 million people³ over 60 years old, and a growing population with a life expectancy over 80 years old. The projection for the year 2025 is that the proportion of old (60+) and young people (0-14) will be the same. In the current scenario, 90% of older adults do not use the internet, 80% have not completed secondary education, 50% declare difficulties for moving in the city due to inadequate infrastructure, 30% report being subject of some form of mistreatment, and less than 30% declare high life satisfaction (SENAMA 2012).

Chile is also a nation that has only recently begun addressing the challenges of ageing. It was only in 2002 that the National Service of Older Adults was created. In 2012 it released the Integral Policy for

³ Over a population of nearly 17 million

Positive Ageing (SENAMA 2012). As explained by Olshansky et al. (2011), the development of Chilean policy for ageing has been conducted to address the specific needs of Chile's ageing population, but it has also ascribed to the international policy frameworks, sharing its own perspectives, and coordinating with global experiences of common problems and solutions.

During an interview with Carmen Luz Belloni,⁴ general coordinator of ageing policy of the National Service of Older Adults in 2013, her view was that despite the Service being a relatively new and small unit in the State apparatus, during the last decade there has been increasing awareness of the importance of paying attention to the needs of an ageing population. The Service budget has increased, although they remain small in terms of human resources, and ageing is not yet a major priority in the political agenda. Despite the existing deficiencies, there have been many advances in ageing policy. Some of the landmarks of the decade have been the creation of the Service, the importance given to dependency by the National Service of Older Adults, the pension's reform which secures a minimum income-although not an optimum one- to all individuals over 60 years old, the AUGE program that includes many pathologies directly associated with old age, and the bill of domestic violence as a force that gives visibility to abuse towards older adults and define older adults as a subject of rights (C.L. Belloni, personal communication, July 19, 2013).

In order to further illustrate how Chilean policy fits the global scenario, I next compare the objectives of the WHO policy framework

⁴ In 2013 I conducted interviews with the general coordinator of ageing policy, and the chief of studies of the National Service of Older Adults.

for active ageing (World Health Organization 2002) with the Chilean integral policy for positive ageing (SENAMA 2012). According to Belloni, to reconcile the needs of the current older population with an outlook of ageing as process, Chilean policy on ageing has adopted a multisector approach including, work, health, and social participation. The aim is to promote autonomy, to provide opportunities to work for those who are able to work, to take care of those who become disabled, and most of all, ageing in place. Belloni explains that the current policy is designed for a timeframe, until the year 2025. Beyond that, there is still uncertainty of what will be the most pressing needs of the ageing population, but observations lead to thinking about increasing empowerment and for a wider participation of older individuals in public dialogues, especially in decisions about policy making. Increased participation in public dialogue would provide first hand insight to their needs, at the same time that it would give them an active role in their own ageing process (C.L. Belloni, personal communication, July 19, 2013).

Table 2.2 Comparison of Chilean and global ageing policy

Integral Policy for Chilean positive ageing 2012-2025 (SENAMA 2012)		Policy framework for active ageing (WHO, 2002)
<i>General Aims</i>	<i>Specific Aims</i>	<i>Specific Aims</i>
To protect the functional health of older people. To foster their independence, whilst acknowledging the importance of supporting those who develop dependency.	<p>Improve the available offer, quality and efficiency of care, protection, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation health services for older people (integral care model, dementia care, prevention-rehabilitation dependency, preventive checks, residential care infrastructure and subsidise, at home care, day care centres)</p> <p>Increase the prevalence of protecting factors of older people's health (healthy lifestyle program, supplementary nutrition, sports workshops and events, preferential access to sports centres)</p> <p>Increase the number of professionals and technical staff with specific knowledge about older people (specialised university modules,</p>	<p>Prevent and reduce the burden of excess disabilities, chronic disease and premature mortality (goals and targets, economic influences on health, prevention and effective treatment, age-friendly safe environments, hearing and vision, barrier-free living, quality of life, social support, HIV/AIDS, mental health, clean environments)</p> <p>Reduce risk factors associated with major diseases and increase factors that protect health throughout the life course. (tobacco, physical activity, nutrition, healthy eating, oral health, psychological factors, drugs and alcohol, medication, adherence)</p> <p>Develop a continuum of affordable, accessible, high quality and age friendly health and social services that address the needs and rights of women and men as they age (a continuum of care throughout the life course, affordable equitable access, mental</p>

	scholarships geriatricians, secondary education care degrees)	health services, coordinated ethical systems of care, iatrogenesis, ageing at home and in the community, partnerships and quality care) Provide training and education to caregivers (informal caregivers, formal caregivers)
To improve older people's integration and participation in social, economic, cultural and space areas, to construct a society for all age groups.	Increase older people's opportunities for participation in social, recreational and productive activities (tourism, project funding, leadership schools, senior advisors, job centres, volunteering, incentives to employers) Improve the educational level and training of older people (school completion, work skills training with emphasis on women, digital literacy) Protect older people's financial security (exemption-reduction health contributions) Adequate housing, cities and transportation for older adults (monitored housing, family subsidise, transport isolated areas)	Provide education and learning opportunities throughout the life course (basic education and healthy literacy, lifelong learning) Recognize and enable the active participation of people in economic development activities, formal and informal work and voluntary activities as they age, according to their individual needs, preferences and capacities (poverty reduction and income generation, formal work, informal work, voluntary activities) Encourage people to participate fully in family community life, as they grow older (transportation, leadership, a society for all ages, a positive image of ageing, reduce inequalities in participation by women, support organisations representing older people)
To improve older people's subjective well-being, so they can assess their quality of life in a positive light.	Decrease the prevalence of active and passive violence against older adults (self-protection workshops, studies on elderly abuse, prevention-attention-protection program, abandonment and neglect considered violence by law, protocols for reports on violence) Increase older people's access to justice as subjects of rights (specialised attention judicial services, specialised training at law schools, preferential older consumer protection, extended legal faculties SENAMA) Improve coverage and quality of states services for queries and dissemination of information about older people (dissemination State and other benefits) Foster a positive cultural and social identity of older people (positive images in school textbooks) Increase the amount of research in topics related to ageing and older age (budget increases, departmental reports) Periodically assess and optimise the contributions of this Policy to the subjective well-being of older people	Ensure the protection, safety and dignity of older people by addressing the social, financial and physical security rights and needs of people as they age (social security, HIV/AIDS, consumer protection, social justice, shelter, crises, elder abuse) Reduce inequities in the security rights and needs of older women.

The Chilean policies of ageing align with the framework for active ageing particularly in terms of promoting healthy lifestyles, caring for

dependent older adults, preventing abuse and protecting the victims, financial security, education, and inclusion in work and volunteering. The emphasis in Chilean policy is, however, less oriented to epidemic illness and substance abuse than the WHO framework, and is more oriented to preventing and improving conditions of functional dependency. At the same time, although there are gender sensitive components, the WHO includes gender in more of its framework specific aims, whereas Chilean policy gives more relevance to creating positive images for older people in general. Finally, although both frameworks include families and communities as essential components for participation, inclusion and care of older people, the community component is emphasised more on the active ageing framework, whilst the actions of Chilean policy are preferably oriented to strengthening the role of families and the State to ensure conditions for positive ageing.

Having presented the empirical background of my study, in the next chapter I present the theoretical background, based on the literature on gerontology, and its contributions to understanding middle age, older age, and the transitions between them. After looking at some aspects of Chile's ageing process, I shift my attention to global concerns.

The accelerated ageing of the global population due to dwindling birth rates following the baby boomer generation (Charness 2008) has beckoned studies of the economic, political and cultural consequences for the changing structure of the population. Alongside the concerns stemming from pressure on major systems, studies of ageing have extended beyond demography, functionality and biomedical decline. The study of representations and stereotypes of older age (Hepworth

2000; Featherstone and Hepworth 2005; North and Fiske 2012; North and Fiske 2013) as well as the historical background and values of ageing individuals (Howe and Strauss 1992; Salt 2007; Phillipson et al. 2008), have gained increasing significance due to their implications for today's social images of old age and new patterns of social inclusion and exclusion.

3 Transitions from mid-life to later life

The first gerontological theories emerged alongside interest in human development across the social sciences in the middle of the 20th century. Disengagement, Activity and Continuity theories were concerned with the intensity of participation of older people in society (Bowling 2005). Modernization and stratification theories in the 1970s focused on intergenerational relations, generational positioning and the marginalisation of age group minorities. Contemporary theoretical frameworks include: Lifecourse, Critical Gerontology, Social Exchange, Political Economy, Feminist, and Constructionist perspectives (Putney et al. 2005; Boreal and SENAMA 2011). Most of these perspectives, while exploring the challenges faced by older people, have paid little attention to the preceding stages when these challenges gradually become apparent. In this chapter, I review and discuss the literature of salient perspectives about older age, middle age, and the bridges between the two.

While age categories have been constructed, these have been built upon perceptions of being older or younger. In practice, they assimilate individual practices with systems of time measurement, and power relations between age groups (Ríos Segovia 2008). Few studies have been concerned with long term age transitions, beyond consideration of the milestones of ageing, although recent studies reflect the emerging interest in addressing these neglected problems. An example is Grenier's (2012) study of biographical trajectories of older people in

Canada, and how these fit with social policy discourses.. There is also McKee, Kostela, & Dahlberg's (2014) exploration of older people's future expected quality of life and its influence over future health outcomes. Finally, Kluge, Zagheni, Loichinger, & Vogt (2014) conducted an assessment of the positive and negative economic and behavioural consequences of population ageing in Germany in the latter part of the 21st century, after the expected crisis of the welfare system-associated with the ageing of baby boomers- is over. The spirit guiding these pioneer studies, which attempt to understand the problem of ageing as a process from diverse perspectives, has informed this thesis. Nonetheless, I start by briefly revisiting the ways in which age and later life have shaped the academic interest of generations of gerontologists.

3.1 Representations of ageing

During the 20th century, the lifecourse became a central area of study in the social sciences. Van Gennep's (1909) study of rites of passage linked to age stages, Erikson's (1950, 1959, 1982) descriptions of developmental stages in the life cycle, and Glaser & Strauss (1971) explorations of status passages have been landmarks in these explorations. Anthropological approaches to age begin from the premise that neither the stages of the life cycle nor their attributes are universal (Feixa 1996). As Katz explained: 'age is everywhere, but the world's cultures have taught us that age has no fixed locus' (Katz, 1996:1 cited in Hepworth, 2000:4). In addition to the cultural particularities that shape lifecourses, ageing itself is far from being a linear trajectory, but a dynamic, highly variable process, involving

simultaneously collective and individual processes of control (Hepworth 2000).

As Hepworth explains, ageing is an individual process as a 'symbolic construct which is interactively produced as individuals attempt to make sense of the later part of life' (Hepworth, 2000:2). Ageing is also a collective enterprise in the sense that older age is a fate shared by most humans, giving all of us 'a stake in the representation of old age' (Woodward 1991:156 cited in Hepworth, 2000:2). Perceiving age and ageing as culturally rooted and co-constructed aspects of the lifecourse requires that we question past assumptions, but does little to provide a basis for the construction of new knowledge. Hepworth (2000:3) argues that we should strive to discover how our ideas about ageing are 'shaped by our culture and therefore open to the possibility of change'. And this has opened up a rich seam of research into cultural representations of old age.

First and foremost, it is our bodies that are scrutinised for signs of ageing, because people want to know to which age group one belongs (Ríos Segovia 2008). However, the relationship between biology and embodiment⁵, which is also mediated by social structures, produces many possible variations of biological ageing among individuals. Biological ageing is unavoidable, for reasons that go from ordinary wear and tear to cumulative failure in cellular reproduction (Green 2010:179). Consequently prevalence of chronic illness is higher in older people than in younger age groups. Although prevalence does not equate to the presence of a condition, it has led to assuming necessary

⁵ The role of the body in shaping psychological processes and social relationships.

connections between age and illness and to further ageist practices including underdiagnoses, over medicalization and overall fragilisation (Green 2010; Gilleard and Higgs 2011) of the image of older people. These views disregard the more positive effects of social networks and subjective perceptions of health and health oriented behaviour (Bond and Corner 2004; Sarkisian et al. 2006). They also deploy a narrative of homogenisation of older people, when in fact, they exhibit more intra-individual variability (Hultsch, MacDonald and Dixon 2002 in Charness 2008) than any other age group. Representations of the ageing body as an ill body exerts negative impacts on older peoples' prospects of autonomy and quality of life.

Besides medicalised perspectives of the body, the relationship between embodiment and the performance of age is subject to culturally attributed meanings (Featherstone and Wernick 1995; Laz 2003). This relationship may prove either constructive or constraining. On the one hand, knowledge and mastery over our corporeal resources (i.e. clothes, exercise, bodily posture, and inflections of the voice, among others) affect how individuals shape their ageing bodies (Laz 2003), allowing a freer performance of age. On the other hand, the performance of age may be quite scripted, and therefore pressurising. For instance, models of successful ageing create a top-down constructed script for age embodiment, such as its mandatory association with health and physical activity (Bowling and Iliffe 2006; Bowling 2006). When comparison with peers crops up, active ageing may be a mode of inclusion into the accepted tenets of old age. Conversely the way in which body ailments, appearance and energy levels affect older people (Laz 2003) may risk their exclusion by being classified as frail. Likewise, alternative performances for the ageing body may be rendered inadequate and also entail exclusion.

As a counter balance to body centred representations of ageing, research on subjective quality of life supports the notion that despite the undeniable effects of biological ageing, older peoples' life conditions may be improved if they are engaged in controlling their life satisfaction (Diener & Suh 1997). There is indeed evidence that levels of subjective well-being are related to perceived standards of living, although dramatic and sustained deficit can break through the subjective quality of life equilibrium (Cummins 2000; Cummins 2005). In maintaining a balance, the starting conditions are more important than age (Zaninotto et al. 2009); therefore early musing about expectations for old age should encourage independence from externally defined models of positive ageing. In addition, the degree of control over distinct dimensions of quality of life, and thus life satisfaction, varies according to the particular expressions of each dimension at the micro, meso and macro social levels (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013).

Meso social environments bridging the individual and the macro structures of society are gaining relevance as contributors to integration and resourcefulness in later life. Models and policies looking beyond individuals and focusing on social networks, communities and neighbourhoods are argued to be more likely to succeed than models targeting individual needs and supporting utilitarian⁶ approaches to ageing. The emphasis is not on peoples' capacities and individual health and financial conditions, but models that consider the meso

⁶ Utilitarian philosophy founded by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, proposes the maximization of happiness through the availability of positive experiences desired by individuals (Phillips 2006)

environment question the alternatives provided for older people to pursue roles befitting their capacities and considering attributes that are more likely to be found among older people (Ranzijn and Grbich 2001). However, at the same time, sustainable intergenerational integration is being challenged by the dissolution of the traditional community. The effect of globalization on the configuration of neighbourhoods along with the effects of individualisation on personal relationships and forms of communication, has resulted in increasingly instrumental relationships and in the physical dispersion and isolation of older people (Phillipson 2007; Machielse and Hortulanus 2013). The upcoming challenge appears to be intergenerational inclusion in broader social settings. Such forms of intergenerational inclusion entail maintaining a good balance between the freedom that characterises modern life with long lasting, meaningful social relationships that can carry community members within supportive environments all the way through the challenges of growing older (Machielse & Hortulanus, 2013:134-135).

At the macro social level, representations of consumerism and work in later life are prominent concerns due to their connection with the wider economic system, particularly with the logic underpinning capitalist models of production and reproduction. As a demographic phenomenon, an increasingly ageing population defies the logic of capitalist production and consumerism (Phillipson and Biggs 1998). So far, as Biggs (1999) reflects, individuals have found limited responses in their quest for a place in society within contemporary economic structures. They seem to be caught in the following conundrum: either to conform to restrictive spaces constructed for them as lifestyles for the aged, or to engage in schemes attempting to erase age particularities by creating the illusion of agelessness. In such scenarios,

where one is forced either into rigid schemes reserved for the old or into denying age, the severing of the threads of the lifecourse is a constant threat. Such commoditised images of older age (King 2003) have created vast material and symbolic exclusion (Biggs 2008). Discounts and concessions in their attempt at homogenising all consumers, have had an opposite effect to that expected (Featherstone and Wernick 1995). In disguising age more than embracing the differences between age groups, ageism has spread through the veins of society.

Work, the other pillar of productive systems, has also been a matter of concern. An ageing population has affected the organisation of health care and pension systems, the very core of social security. Ageing has thus kindled discussions over the inclusion of older workers in productive structures. Despite the tendency of employers to replace older workers with younger ones (Ranzijn et al. 2006), evidence pointing to the lack of cognitive or learning barriers to prolonging work in later life (Ranzijn 2002; Charness 2008) keeps growing. It can be argued that flexible timetables of entry and exit from work necessarily lead to a more inclusive labour force. While this may be true to a certain extent, being able to continue in employment for more years may only provide choices for people in more rewarding positions (e.g. better income, non-physical labour, specialised skills). The flipside is that it may create expectations of productivity that may further inequality for those in more precarious positions (Biggs 2008) in power, income and working conditions. Moreover the consequences of accumulated inequalities may differ vastly between countries with a strong welfare State and those with a more individual rationality in their policies. In the first case, failure to maintain financial independence can mean loss of citizenship rights through institutional ageism, surveillance by

younger adults, and living in relative poverty, excluded from consumerist trends (Townsend 1986; Hockey and James 2003; King 2003; Green 2010) and the promise of an inclusive lifestyle. In countries with a weaker welfare State however, older people who fall through the weaker social security systems and lack the support of family networks, live in absolute poverty.

Eroded intergenerational relationships have become a hindrance for representations about health, body, social and physical environment in later life, as well as representations concerning capabilities, roles and societal positions of older people. Dominant representations of older adults are usually constructed by age groups that exhibit greater institutional and symbolic power (Green 2010). As a result, many older people tend to withdraw from societal participation, limiting intergenerational contact, reinforcing stereotypes and thus encouraging unrealistic images of ageing (Ranzijn 2002). The pressure exerted by widely spread stereotypes can lead to their internalisation, to conformism and even to acceptance of a disempowered position. Positive transformation in representations of age and ageing requires encouragement for intergenerational solidarity (Biggs 2008) backed up by dialogues with policy makers and practitioners (Kaye et al. 2003). Empowerment must be believed in as a possible horizon. Not a matter of blind faith, but early steering away from constants taken for granted, imagining a different future, and 'searching the unexplored paths of possibility' (Langer 2009) in the transitions from mid-life to later life.

3.2 How middle age informs transitions

Rejecting both narratives of agelessness and narratives of conformism to stereotypes of old age suggests the existence of paths of

transition from mid-life to later life that have barely been explored. Against the usual narratives of resilience that suggest that people can stay young by staying healthy, or those insisting that one is only as old as one feels, Lyne Segal advocates for owning the process of ageing. She is 'concerned with the possibilities for and impediments to staying alive to life itself, whatever our age' (Segal, 2013:4). The main challenge in her view is to break free from the paradox of ageing Simone de Beauvoir poses in her work on *la vieillesse*: to reconcile embracing our future older identities with our aversion to ageing itself. Drawing from her experience of growing older, Segal depicts the paradox above:

'Despite a rather paradoxical official eagerness nowadays to present an encouraging view of 'successful' ageing, I know that there are competing voices, seemingly coming from within and without, conflicting with any sense of satisfaction that I might have in later life. For however we may feel in the inside, this has little impact on the abiding fears of ageing that usually begin assaulting from mid-life, seemingly from the outside' (Segal, 2013:6).

This confronts us with an ever greater paradox of social ageing. People in middle age are commonly seen as possessors of valuable resources in the lifecourse; indeed, one is unlikely to be more resourceful in other life stages. However, while approaching old age, they start to recognize signs of potentially being dispossessed of their existing status. These signs include age-related discourses, symbols and institutions; the voices from without. These public or institutional representations of ageing portray an image of life in older age that is not entirely consistent with the image desired by those in their middle years, and these inconsistencies create certain tensions, depending on a variety of factors I will identify in Chapter 7. In this period of transition

the middle-aged adjust their outlook about popular views of ageing and older age, embracing some and resisting others.

Mid-life has attracted relatively less attention from social scientists (Perrig-Chiello and Perren 2005), and more importantly, studies of mid-life have tended to focus discretely on this particular stage rather than its relationship to older age. It was the psychologist Erikson (1959, 1982) who developed a model of the life cycle, in which each of the life stages from infancy to older age was defined by one core strength and its correlative crisis. Erikson characterized mid-life as a period of assessment of what has been accomplished and what is still left to be done (Lachman 2004). For Erikson (1959), some conflicts are salient in a life stage, but they may be revived and resolved further ahead in the life of individuals (Bateson, 2013:30). The idea of age transitions contains a certain naturalisation of normative changes in people's lives that happen alongside changes in age stages, or as Grenier articulates, 'definitions of transition contain an inherent tension between fixed stages and fluid processes... Change is depicted as both movement through fixed stages or conditions, and a fluid, more temporal reference to the process involved' (Grenier, 2012:5).

Current understanding of age transitions includes four approaches: (1) transition as transit through institutions; (2) transition as institutionalised trajectories; (3) transitions as interrelations between agency, institutions and historical context, and (4) life as continuous transition (Colley, 2007). Rather than adopting one or other form of transition, I believe we should understand them as different levels of transition, each focusing on a major aspect of the process.

The first two approaches have been subject to controversy, due to their focus on transition as sequential processes of institutionalisation

or institutionally facilitated life trajectories respectively. In both types of transition, deviation from the expected path would result in some form of social punishment (e.g. denial of benefits). Also, life events would be necessarily associated with specific ages and stages (Grenier 2012) so that age transitions are accompanied by changes in status. The main critique of these conceptions of transition comes from perspectives proposing the lifecourse as increasingly individualised and de-standardised (Heinz 2002; Macmillan 2005; Beck and Grande 2010). However, recent evidence (Brückner and Mayer 2005; Nico 2013) has shown that individualisation and de-standardisation of the lifecourse are less pronounced than suggested in the literature. They confirm some increase of non-institutionalised transitions and argue that women's lifecourse is becoming less standardised, resembling more de-standardisation of men's lives. Young people's lives also appear more institutionalised than those of middle aged and older adults (Settersten 2002; Settersten 2009). Studies of institutionalised trajectories of retirement age have shown an increasing dispersion of the age range of these institutionalised transitions (Ranzijn et al. 2006; Han and Moen 2009). Therefore, even if de-standardisation is mild, it loosens the connection between the exit and entry points of individuals to institutions associated with age-stages.

Lifecourse approaches highlight choices and their role in long-term interrelations between individuals, institutions and historical time (Colley 2007). As the main proponent of the lifecourse theories approach, Elder defines transitions as events that significantly affect the trajectory from one event to the next. Those events are frequently but not exclusively attached to acquisition of roles (Elder 1998). Specific forms of transition depend greatly on previous transitions; therefore earlier life shapes future events. Age transitions are a combination of

the influence of institutions that 'shape the ideas about what is appropriate across the lifecourse' (Grenier, 2012:30) and the choices that are individually made and develop into future scenarios. Transitions, from a lifecourse approach, are neither completely determined by institutions nor completely individualised. According to Baars (2010) chronology still encompasses the patterns of de-standardisation and re-standardisation of the lifecourse. Personal relationships and their attributed meanings may have become less linear, but at the same time lives are still bound to institutional chronological control of timing, duration or both. In this scheme, successful life trajectories, defined as 'long term patterns of stability and change that can be reliably differentiated from other patterns' (Geroge, 1996:50 in Grenier, 2012) maintain a certain consistency in the decisions between events. Trajectories thus adopt an identity, a recognizable way of dealing with change and controlling the risk (Roer 2009) of undesired transitions. The main critique of the lifecourse approach is its inadequate treatment of structural constraints, leading to overemphasis on choice in individual trajectories (Grenier & Phillipson, 2013:65).

A final approach sits on the boundaries of institution-based, decision-based and chronology-based transitions. Chronological timetables are less relevant than in any the above levels and instead emphasise the lifecourse as a continuum, comprising explicit but also tacit transitions that entail slow adjustments to certain contexts or cultures over long periods of time (Colley 2007). The ongoing nature of transitions is contrasted with transformations. Transitions imply 'neither abrupt disjunctures between a uniform set of stages nor an assumption of steady progress and decline. 'Transformation' in contrast, is more commonly used for large-scale, radical, and dramatic

changes (be they local, national, or global) that affect people's daily lives' (Danely & Lynch, 2013:4). The *life as transition* perspective does not deny time as a frame for life trajectories, but it acknowledges that trajectories contain processes of becoming and un-becoming and that transitions are frequently accompanied by iterations and contradictions (Ecclestone, Biesta, & Hughes, 2010:8) during decisions and actions. At this level, one must be careful not to confound the social and psychological aspects of transitions that, up to this point, have not been sufficiently differentiated.

Transitions from mid-life to later life could benefit from the intersection of all four levels. Wohlmann (2012) explains how young adults are acutely aware of the finitude of time, becoming active entrepreneurs in the project of their future selves. And Toothman and Barret (2011) showed how perceived timetables for mid-life are affected by how compressed or elongated people see their roles in life.

Laceulle (2013:101) proposes that as a result of increased longevity and the tendency towards identifying people as older at younger ages the population of those growing into older age has increased. In this transformed cultural scenario Erikson's stage of generativity versus stagnation (Lachman 2004) has adopted a new shape: power versus decline. Younger adults are urged to achieve as much power and resources as they can, because once they reach their peak in middle age they will necessarily enter the phase of decline (Morganroth Gullette 2004). From that moment on, measuring to cultural ideals of self-realisation becomes harder (Laceulle, 2013:101) as all losses are irrecoverable; and their magnitude accounts for turmoil and crisis of later life.

Gullette (2004) developed the notion of the body serving as an entry point for the narrative of decline. Middle aged people are scrutinized for signs of ageing, where ageing means loss. The logical thread of thought is that if the body is declining then the person must be declining. The body is especially susceptible to sit within the binary categories of agelessness or conformism. Praise of those who preserve their youthful beauty may challenge assumptions of decline, but they risk becoming a benchmark for all, irrespective of personal trajectories and circumstances (Krainitzki 2014). Therefore, descriptions of middle aged people can slowly strip them of their identity and place them in a more vulnerable position in society.

Combined with the individualization of the lifecourse, manifested by increasing short term arrangements in social relationships (Heinz 2002), the notion of declining power has weakened age hierarchies (Morganroth Gullette 2004). Modern ageing 'consists of a pluralistic collection of individuals searching for their own, meaningful ways of shaping their later life phase, facing the challenges of ageing... with limited external help' (Laceulle, 2013:101). Fear of ever earlier ageism, loss of physical attractiveness and technological obsolescence (Green, 2010) makes people project later life as a stage of even worse decline and filled with uncertainty.

Conceiving elastic timetables is consistent with the experiences of contemporary mid-life. Cohorts born in the late 1950s and early 1960s identified as the second cohort of the baby boom and baby bust generations (Lachman, 2004; Green, 2010) fulfil multiple roles. They are family oriented and that translates into answering to demands from younger and older cohorts. As people approach later mid-life they find themselves on the one hand in traditional roles such as planning for

retirement, engaging in passing on values and adopting grandparenting. On the other hand, the increased longevity of the population, along with the transformations in the work place binds them to financial and care responsibilities toward their parents and children (Lachman 2004). The variability in the timetables for middle age is even greater for women. Females of this generation have juggled more caring and occupational jobs, along with increasing involvement in the labour market (Widmer & Ritschard 2009; Green, 2010:167). Consequently, their life trajectories have been more de-standardized than that of men.

Despite the evidence supporting the elasticity of timetables in middle age, and their potential contribution to overcoming the binary views of progress and decline, Krainitzki (2014) argues that cultural times become more rigid as we grow older, resisting proposals of increased fluidity as society seems to desire to always identify those who are growing older. Constant comparison of our life timetables with others' counteracts most attempts to live fluid, anachronic lives, making typification inescapable.

An additional viewpoint frequently overlooked by studies of mid-life is how inequalities during this stage can make the experience different. Depictions of mid-life often refer to middle class white people, ignoring less privileged groups (Morganroth Gullette 2004). An exception is the study by Newman (1998), which introduced a perspective by middle aged people from Harlem in the United States. Struggles across the lifecourse, associated with class and ethnicity had not only individual, but collective aspects so that the experience of mid-life in this social group was less marked by individualism. Any assessment of their life trajectories made by middle aged people in this setting was intertwined with the story of the community, its achievements and setbacks. In the

same fashion, alternative standpoints of mid-life should be considered in order to see how they conform to or vary from the common narratives of middle age.

Longitudinal appraisals of mid-life can present insights into similarities and differences in the experiences of middle age across cohorts. Caroline Bailey (1982) describes multiple aspects in the life of middle age women in the late 70's and early 80's by looking into the biographies of a group of women from the mid nineteen-thirties to late fifties in the United States. Then, they constituted an emerging age group in between youth and older age. These middle aged women centred their discourses around the topic of coming into themselves, although for many middle age marked a return to paid work after years of child rearing, reassuming developmental processes that had been frozen shortly after adolescence to fulfil societal expectations or revitalising postponed projects. Many were reconverting the skills they had amassed during their years devoted to traditional family roles to accomplish their new endeavours. Their main conundrum was finding the freedom that society finally allowed them at a time in life where they also realised that they had lost the sense of uniqueness they possessed during adolescence and they became aware that they were socially dispensable. The generation described by Bailey is that of women who today are aged between their sixties and eighties, so many of them have experienced the full transition from mid-life to older age. Andres & Wyn (2010) presented their findings on Canadian cohorts born in the 70's-identified as generation X- that entered adulthood in the 1990's and are now in the early years of middle age. Although this generation is better educated than any other before, they have also grown into adulthood and now into middle age battling against a sense of inadequacy as their life trajectories as traditional markers of

development (e.g. economic independence, marriage) appeared later than in their parents' generation or they are missing altogether. Institutions, unable to anticipate these transformations, have inherited a structural lag, augmenting the feeling of inadequacy of this generation.

Despite differences in the degree of standardisation of the lifecourse across multiple cohorts over forty years, there is consensus in the literature on two main features: middle age is characterised by being a period of assessment of life achievements and social ageing hits generation after generation with the narrative of decline.

3.3 Challenges for steering transitions from mid-life to later life

Bird and Krüger (2005) explain that people participate in multiple and diverse social domains. Their levels of participation respond to different profiles, woven into a status configuration, more than a collection of independent statuses. Traditionally, some statuses in the weave are more salient during specific life stages. Changes in societal programmes governing each domain or contingency, leading to turning points in the life trajectory, instigate transitions. Transition means steering the whole status configuration in the way of the most salient processes currently experienced during a life stage. Specific status changes may have a major effect on the configuration, prompting accelerated transitions.

Transitions are challenging within the contemporary lifecourse. Whereas institutional control over the possible paths offers a limited range of choice, it provides guidelines for status passages (Heinz 2009).

The more individualized our lives become, the freer we are to negotiate timings and types of status passage (Marshall 2000). However, managing our own trajectories entails the risk of losing control over the outcome of a status change, the risk of undesired transitions. In order to control risk and maintain a certain consistency in conducting transitions (Roer 2009), individuals associate themselves with identities (see Chapter 8), organisations or networks (White et al. 2007), which facilitate the structure of opportunities and awareness of the context (Heinz 2009). These strategies are expected to foster overall stability in individuals' lives, and to prevent conflicts between roles and statuses.

When people experience a lack of mastery during changes in the salient statuses, they may perceive themselves as stereotyped into unwanted categories (Pearlin et al. 2007). Future transitions will thus be met as a threat. Transitions coupled with age can become a particularly threatening experience. Stereotypes of growing older may overpower an individual's identity, making it impossible to steer change into desired directions. Featherstone and Hepworth (in Bond & Corner 2004:63) described the mask of ageing as a mismatch between internally and externally constructed identities based on age typifications.

There are two contemporary phenomena that contribute to the sense of loss of control over age transitions and hence over identity. First, de-standardization of the lifecourse means that the broader age span and flexibility in the sequence of status passages (Brückner and Mayer 2005) has altered the boundaries between age stages. In striving for control over the meaning attributed to a stage, people deploy personal styles of performing age (see Chapter 8). Second, structural or

personal lag refers to the difference in the speed of change between ageing individuals and institutional, organisational and cultural structures (Riley, Kahn, and Foner 1994; Lawton 1998). Consequently, actors will have a different set of resources and choices than they expect when planning a pathway. In older age such lag can lead to exclusion from relevant networks.

Institutions require constant monitoring so they continue to fulfil the needs they were created for. However, coordination of functional structures is increasingly difficult due to the embeddedness of individuals' lives in multiple organisations, each responding to their own interests. Transitions are thus increasingly governed by fragmented institutions, and by rapid changes in organisations, giving birth to new forms of social engagement. Minimising exclusion from organisations and other networks in the transitions from mid-life to later life depends on controlling those contingent limitations that are not inherent to any stage of human life, but the product of age representations and forms of interactions in institutional contexts. In contrast, there are existential limitations that are most likely to appear while people live longer. When contingent and existential limitations are amalgamated, then age becomes an attribute that subsumes all other attributes. As a result, every problem in later life will be treated as an inherent result of ageing (Baars and Phillipson 2013).

How do people cope with the transition from mid-life to old age? Are their reflections and strategies institutionally structured, highly individualized, or somewhere in between? I will argue that this is a highly interactive process. The construction and reconstruction of identities and related strategies involves competition among different narratives formulated in different domains of life. Policy makers,

employers, the media among others, construct narratives of age as they mobilize the identities that are attached to their own fields of meaning. They speak of older people in ways that serve their own aims. Dualisms in the construction of later life such as activity versus dependency, a popular way of representing ageing in social policies, should be avoided. Older people should be able to contribute to the debate by sharing both their experiences and how they construct themselves both culturally and in terms of political economy (Warren and Clarke 2009). At the same time, people in mid-life must be aware of such constructions and have their own stance if they intend to establish their own ways, their own priorities, instead of others' (Biggs 2008), during older age.

3.4 Summary

Acknowledgement of the inexistence of a fixed locus for age has allowed the emergence of research about cultural and social representations of age. Within this seam of research, the relationship between biological ageing and embodiment of age has been a prominent area of debate. It covers topics from ageism in health institutions to the construction of accepted tenets of ageing upon prescriptive forms of performing age.

The study of subjective quality of life and life satisfaction has opened discussions about older people's inclusion in multiple domains of action. For instance, older people's contributions to their communities and the support they receive in return, calls for innovative ways of constructing friendly environments, and for the promotion of intergenerational solidarity to create sustainable communities carrying individuals through the lifecourse. In the area of consumerism and

work, the main concern of researchers has been exclusion of older people due to structural inequalities shaping narrow definitions of activity and productivity. These result in various forms of financial dependency and reinforce negative stereotypes of ageing.

During middle age, attempts to embrace the ageing process are confronted with external voices gradually dispossessing individuals from their statuses, even at a time when they are most likely to hold valuable resources. Mid-life has been characterised by conflicts between generativity versus stagnation, but with the introduction of intergenerational tensions this conflict has been transformed to power versus decline.

The study of transitions from mid-life to later life could benefit from mixed perspectives combining institutionalised trajectories, lifecourse, and life as transition approaches. These perspectives contribute to understanding transitions in contexts where individuals are acutely aware of the finitude of time, and where life timetables are continuously tensioned by contradicting desires, responsibilities and external pressures. These tensions can create additional anxiety during processes of self-assessment characteristic of mid-life years. Also, differences between cohorts and between groups experiencing transitions under unequal structural conditions can perpetuate a sense of inadequacy when assessments are conducted while individuals compare themselves with benchmarks only attainable by those in privileged historical and social positions.

After walking through the empirical and theoretical background informing this thesis, the next chapter will complete the *mise en place* I have been developing by outlining the design of this the study of control of transitions from mid-life to later life.

PART II

Part II of the thesis presents the theoretical, methodological and empirical aspects of the first out of two empirical stages of my investigations. It comprises three chapters: i) chapter 4 explains the concept of social imaginaries and its usefulness for understanding ageing. It also includes a literature review of social imaginaries and representations of ageing in Chile, with the purpose of identifying the most salient themes in Chilean research on ageing; ii) chapter 5 explains the methodological approach in producing and comparing social imaginaries in political, mass media and older people's domains in Chile and explains the articulation of multiple research methods with the objective of observing how individuals resolve tensions stemming from the comparison of social imaginaries; iii) chapter 6 presents the resulting social imaginaries. I characterise these imaginaries of ageing across the three selected social domains, discuss the findings in the context of the literature on social imaginaries and representations of ageing, and present analytical categories constructed from the divergences or 'tensions' between the social imaginaries of ageing in the three domains. These analytical categories are the foundation of the second empirical stage of the study, in which I will describe in part III.

4 Social imaginaries of ageing

Rapid changes in ways of life, technologies and ideologies in contemporary societies have resulted in increased heterogeneity of later life (Pintos 2007). This heterogeneity poses challenges to its study. It firstly challenges our conception of older age as a fixed stage of life, thus its study has evolved to the more elastic field of later life or ageing (Gilleard and Higgs 2013). Secondly, it provokes a need to rethink the references underlying existing definitions of ageing and later life. In Pintos' (2007) view, our main difficulty in addressing this challenge is the lack of experiential fit between today's lives and the images of older age that have been fixed in the past.

The concept of social imaginaries can be useful in envisioning the future of ageing under changing conditions that have not yet revealed themselves, and creating tremendous uncertainty. At the micro level, social imaginaries refer to individuals imagining what they 'want to become and where they have come from' (Danelly & Lynch, 2013:4).

Social imaginaries have the capacity to embed multiple meanings of ageing within different social domains. Here social domains refer to the contexts (e.g. politics, education, business) that influence individual or organisational actions at a practical or discursive level (Ford 1996; Mische and White 1998). Social imaginaries in different social domains create contentions that challenge or reaffirm existing beliefs about ageing. This chapter presents the premises underpinning the concept of social imaginaries, its relevance to the study of ageing, and provides an

overview of the social imaginaries of ageing that have dominated the Chilean context. I begin by explaining social imaginaries, their use as a research perspective, and their connections to constructivist ontologies. I then present a literature review of social imaginaries and representations of ageing. Most⁷ of these studies refer to ageing in Chile, providing relevant contextual knowledge to inform my investigations.

4.1 What are social imaginaries?

The notion of the social imaginary was developed by Lacan during the 1960's and 70's to provide a psychoanalytical explanation of the images of the 'I' that we see reflected in other people (Jameson 1977). Castoriadis (1975) and Anderson (1991) soon adopted the term as a device to explain the delimitation of the social boundaries of sense, or how far specific meanings stretch within social groupings.

Anderson provides the most concrete example of an imaginary by defining a nation as an 'imagined political community-and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (Anderson, 1991:6). Replacing religious and dynastic hierarchies which previously defined social space and time with the idea of horizontal communities framed by political references refers directly to an imaginary stretching the reach of the nation. Newspapers were fundamental to the emergence of these imagined communities; they were able to communicate in a single page events that happened in different times and places. Appadurai (see

⁷ There is one Spanish study that has been included due to its relevance for Spanish speaking countries.

Gaonkar, 2002) expanded the relationship between nation and imagined communities to include the construction of imagined worlds by migrants who create their imagined communities beyond any geopolitical frontiers. Taylor concurs with Anderson that the definitive turn for social imaginaries was the shift from hierarchical religious societies to individualised secular societies. However, for Taylor, the main reference was not the nation, but the gathering of individual citizens associated for mutual benefit. Taylor (2002) explains that the mutual exchange of benefits between individuals implies that the modern imaginary is guided by the economic metaphor, because the exchange of benefits can be seen as an exchange of services which are discussed in the public sphere (Gaonkar, 2002). This means that primary criterion to assess the value of individuals and organisations are an appraisal of the value (at a particular time and place) of their potential contributions and liabilities to society.

Economic imaginaries of the world have been studied by Jessop (Jessop and Oosterlynck 2008), who was interested in the selection and stabilisation of the logic of *accumulation* as the most widely accepted economic imaginary. Both national and economic imaginaries imply values demarcating the reach of social imaginaries, their breadth delimited in practice by domains of action. Indeed, for Taylor the social imaginary:

‘occupies a fluid middle ground between embodied practices and explicit doctrines... A social imaginary carries within it an image of moral order, which imbues embodied practices and the accompanying cultural forms with meaning and legitimacy’ (Gaonkar, 2002:11).

Most theorists of social imaginaries have agreed that the transition from religious to secular societies has allowed the emergence of multiple parallel solutions to the characteristic problems of each domain of action. Notwithstanding the multiplicity of references within and without social domains, there are dominant imaginaries with a broader reach than others. By using politics and economics as meta-social imaginaries that articulate all other social imaginaries, Anderson and Taylor have argued the hierarchical organisation of values in society.

Adopting a Marxist perspective, Castoriadis also uses economics to speak about contemporary social imaginaries. He identifies three main conditions for the production of those imaginaries including i) the frameworks of significance that structure the representations of the world, ii) the norms defining what needs to be done or not, and iii) the affect (emotional ties) to particular institutions that belong to a particular time (Castoriadis 1997b).

4.2 Social imaginaries as a research perspective

Imaginaries begin with the human capacity to imagine what is possible and what is not (Strauss 2006; Patalano 2007). This ability to see beyond existing significations at one place and time and imagine new attributes is referred to by Castoriadis (1997a) as the ‘radical imaginary’. In order to create new social meanings, radical imaginaries must escape the boundaries of the psychological, to be shared and institutionalised to constitute new frameworks of interaction. The radical imaginary provides possibilities to move the references by

which we signify social elements, allowing new values and hierarchies to emerge, and altering the ways in which we interact.

What allows the radical imaginary to connect with the lived experiences of social groups is a contingency oriented morality. According to Taylor (2001), even though there is a certain moral order to the world that allows collective understandings, the specific meanings that are attributed to social elements are purely contingent, in other words, there are no essential meanings or values. Contingency however, does not entail absolute relativism, only that the significations of today, which are very real to us, have no essential value beyond our own current practices.

Contingency provides social imaginaries with dual properties. By providing a reference to experience they produce a sense of stability in the world (Pintos 2004a) that allows the fluidity of social interactions. But because social imaginaries are a product of contingency they can be modified if the references that sustain them change. And by facilitating interaction they create the conditions for their own modifications.

Taylor (2002) suggests that imaginaries are similar to a script that is polished and rewritten over and over again. In the process it becomes more widely spread and more refined, securing its position as a general background for action. The process of defining and re-defining social imaginaries is a consequence of multiple contentions between diverse perspectives that exist in society. This is why we should speak not about the social imaginary, but about social imaginaries, because any description of the frames of reference is diverse, and so it is the definition of what is, indeed, possible or not. The validation and valuation of categorical attributes are contested as realities are

constructed and re-constructed in dialogical events in which different perspectives compete to gain the confidence of audiences over their definitions of realities (Pintos 2001). As such social imaginaries allow us to observe the world not through the criteria of ontological truth or falsehood, but through what is relevant and what remains hidden to the parts that are involved in a social field (Pintos 2004a). For instance, and as I explain in detail in chapter 6, social imaginaries of ageing are construed using a crossover between desirability and control. Using this lens I am constrained as a researcher by that lens and the scope of my observations is limited. But my field of vision can broaden if I construct new social imaginaries of ageing by changing my references of desirability and control and defining new research questions.

The pace at which new social imaginaries are institutionalised and replace old world views varies. When an institution is set in place, it nourishes the radical imaginary, anxious to see beyond what the present holds (Patalano 2007). Time in social imaginaries is not defined by sequences, but it is a relationship between the actual and the latent (Pintos 2004a), what has entered the domain of experience and what exists only as a possibility. Daily experiences are penetrated by the social imaginaries providing information to construct anticipatory paths which are never definitive and can change if expectations do (Luhmann 1991). This means that expectations function as institutions, as references of what is a realisable social imaginary.

4.3 Social imaginaries and constructivism

It transpires from the conceptualisation of social imaginaries that they are situated in constructivist social approaches. Drawing upon Bloor’s (1991) description of the images that conflict in contemporary

society, I see social imaginaries sitting between two traditions. From within, and at an operational level, social imaginaries align with the tradition of Enlightenment thinking and Popper’s logical criticism where social principles are held as permanent and universal goals for action. Social imaginaries make sense of the decisions and operations of domains, organisations and social actors. From without, at an analytical level, social imaginaries turn towards Romantic thinking and Kuhn’s notion of paradigms where morality and justice are not equally distributed, but change and adapt according to particular ‘spirits, traditions, styles and national characteristics’ (Bloor, 1991:63-64). When understood as paradigms, social imaginaries enter a dialogue as stakeholders in the design of social landscapes. These stakeholders participate in the dialogue within a hierarchy, but nonetheless with distinct perspectives and interests. On the one hand social imaginaries align with Romantic ideologies in the sense that social domains are conceived as units that construct their own worlds and realities. On the other hand, they acknowledge that in practice each domain abides by its truth as if this particular truth was the moral standard of society.

I argue that social imaginaries from this perspective help to address one of the main criticisms of constructivist sociology: that it endorses cultural relativism whilst maintaining its own position undiscussed (Schmidt 2001). Schmidt (2001) also argues that early constructivist currents based on idealism highlighted the impossibility of attributing objectivity to the multiple perspectives that can be adopted in relation to any social phenomenon. By focusing on the multiplicity of possible perspectives, they failed to address how perspectives are selected. This early criticism of constructivist approaches led radical constructivism (Maturana and Varela 1984; Von Glasersfeld 1984) to focus not only on the diversity of perspectives but also on the conditions for their

production. Reality is not constructed simply by intersubjective consensus; but by the subsequent recreation and confirmation of processes by which the world becomes comprehensible (Arnold Cathalifaud 2003). The knowledge upon which interpretations of reality are made cannot attribute its success to matching reality, but to fitting the requirements to attain particular goals. Knowledge, therefore, does not inform us about a univocal or even an elusive truth, but simply about its adequacy to interpret and organise the world (Von Glasersfeld 1984). ‘At best those constructions prove to be viable – at least for some short period of time’ (Rusch, 2007:126).

4.4 Social imaginaries of older people: a review of academic research

Exploration of the institutionalised meanings of ageing in Chilean society demands a review of research on the representations and social imaginaries of ageing. The sources in the following review include studies conducted in Chile and wider international literature to illustrate cultural constants and contrasts. Some studies are analyses of social imaginaries of ageing in specific social domains like Pintos’ (2007) analysis of websites in the Spanish language; Torrejón’s (2007) study of Chilean imaginaries in newspapers and Jorquera’s (2010) study of Chilean school textbooks. Other sources include Chilean studies on the general situation of older people in Chile (SENAMA 2009b; SENAMA 2009c)⁸, surveys of inclusion and exclusion of older people

⁸ Many of the studies included in this literature review have been commissioned, sponsored or published by SENAMA, the National Service of Older Adults.

(SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014), quality of life in later life (SENAMA et al. 2010; SENAMA et al. 2013), images of older age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002; Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008), quality of life and ageing in Santiago (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Bunout et al. 2012; Osorio Parraguez and Meersohn 2012), and elderly abuse (Abusleme and Guajardo 2013; Abusleme and Caballero 2014). Together, these sources allow me to trace the main social concerns about ageing and set the foundation for identifying consensus and conflict in later life across social domains. I have organised these salient discussions of the selected studies in six themes, which I present in the following sections. These themes emerged from a broad thematic analysis of the global literature on ageing (chapter 3) and the sources with studies about social imaginaries. Once I created core initial themes from these documents, I included all other sources to the analysis, and modified the categories accordingly.

4.4.1 Demographic, economic and political challenges

A study of social imaginaries of older age in Spanish language websites revealed that economic and political social imaginaries related to ageing were dominated by concerns about money—mainly pensions—, care needs, care provision, and the availability of services to satisfy those needs (Pintos 2007).

The Chilean press portrays productivity in later life as possible but limited (Torrejón 2007). Older people’s capability of remaining productive is presented as a potential enabler of government initiatives to encourage work in later life. Dominant social imaginaries in the press thus disregard self-management and social networks as productive capital that older people may possess and utilise. Private industry

displays no age discrimination in terms of potential investors, but the notion of technological obsolescence is pervasive and promotes the exclusion of older workers from the workforce, with the exception of high management positions (Torrejón 2007). The education domain reinforces the imaginary of older people as an economically passive population, excluded from the labour market and economically vulnerable (Jorquera 2010). Although the proportion of older workers is increasing in Chile, public perceptions are that older people cannot be truly independent and require economic support and specialised care beyond the family network (SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014).

Despite this widespread imaginary of older people as economically passive between 2011 and 2013, the proportion of individuals engaging in paid work after retirement increased from 25% to 28% (SENAMA et al. 2010; SENAMA et al. 2013). Although 75% of older workers continued working due to financial necessity, 66% said they would engage in work even if they did not need to. Most of this group had enjoyed higher education while 53% of retired people had been forced by their health or by others to leave their jobs

Demographic ageing has been identified in the imaginaries of Chilean school textbooks as problematic for the country's economy. These ‘problematic’ imaginaries relate to impoverishment experienced by older people as result of the gap between wages and pensions, and to older people's perceived conservatism constituting an obstacle to implementing desired changes to economic programmes (Jorquera 2010).

The effect of gender and social class on life trajectories influences the material, social and cultural resources people can count on in later

life (SENAMA et al. 2010; Abusleme et al. 2014). According to Abusleme et al. (2014), the Chilean population is pessimistic about the country's ability to face its rapid demographic ageing. Individuals seem ill prepared to anticipate older age, particularly among those of lower socioeconomic status. In general, the Chilean population is increasingly placing responsibility for the well-being of older people on the political system, whilst the responsibilities attributed to individuals and their families are decreasing (SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014).

Financial markets create ambivalent circumstances for older adults as consumers. On the one hand, specially designed products aim to attract older people as a demographic group associated with specific lifestyles. On the other hand financial markets exclude the growing contingent of economically vulnerable older people whilst maintaining an image of openness through discounts and concessions for senior citizens (King 2003; Hockey and James 2003; Biggs 2008; Green 2010). Chilean studies present corresponding images of the position of consumers in later life. From the perspective of policy makers older people have been unduly excluded from financial markets - with the exception of concessions and discounts - despite their potential for economic development: they have personal income and they contribute to their household and families' economies (SENAMA 2009b). However, the national survey of quality of life in older age showed that 25% of Chilean older adults felt their income was 'just about' what they need to live on; only 12,3% received pensions over the minimum wage⁹, and

⁹ \$250,000 Chilean pesos

even among those who supplement their pension with other income 78% remain below minimum wage (SENAMA et al. 2013). Also of note is that although the level of consumer debt has decreased, 28% of older people’s consumption was based on debt over the last decade (SENAMA et al. 2010; SENAMA et al. 2013).

Income becomes a permanent concern as people grow older, which is largely justified considering that in Chile 84% older people are only just over or below the level of income required to cover their needs (SENAMA et al. 2010). Family networks, particularly intergenerational networks, play a pivotal role in financial resources flows between generations. The availability of money not only facilitates or hinders the satisfaction of wants and needs, but can also affect older people’s and their families’ perceptions of autonomy and self-efficacy, with implications for the degree of control older people have over their resources (SENAMA et al. 2010; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013).

4.4.2 Information, education and technology

The social imaginaries of ageing in Spanish language websites may be categorised as knowledge about ageing and information designed for the elderly. Both are expanded through a cycle in which specialised professionals in diverse disciplines increase the field of knowledge by producing information, and then reaching audiences through continuous education as well as dissemination events and materials (Pintos 2007).

In Chile, with information technologies developing into a basic medium for daily activities, that older people keep up with new technologies is rapidly becoming a social expectation (Torrejón 2007).

However, the imaginaries of ageing in school textbooks portray older people as technologically challenged, and they associate the technological gap with existing barriers to older people’s full inclusion in daily social activities. Intergenerational relationships have become essential to older people’s learning, enabling them to acquire new IT skills in less intimidating environments, but intergenerational relations within the family setting can also create tensions (Jorquera 2010).

Although the media most commonly used by older people are radio and television, the last decade has seen an increase in the use of the internet alongside magazines and newspapers, especially amongst those with higher levels of education (SENAMA et al. 2010). There is nevertheless an inverse relationship between the availability of media and its use for information purposes. Television is the medium most frequently used by older adults, but the least information oriented. Conversely, the internet is the least used but provide greatest access to information (Osorio Parraguez and Meersohn 2012).

Notwithstanding increases in educational opportunities in later life, older people battle ingrained beliefs about inevitable cognitive decline (Torrejón, 2007). Arguments against this logic point to cognitive rigidity as a product of the lack of performance of specific functions (Peñaloza and Rojas 2005 in Torrejón, 2007) or of the effect of cumulative differences in context, historical moments and opportunities (Edwardh 1987) rather than an inescapable deterioration process. Despite stereotypes hindering older people’s opportunities and disposition to engage in learning activities, the National Survey of Images of Older Age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002) showed that over 80% of the Chilean population believe that older people have similar interests in learning to other age groups and that

they are perfectly capable of learning new skills. Indeed, participation of older people in courses and workshops has increased, especially among women, although slowly (SENAMA et al. 2010; SENAMA et al. 2013).

4.4.3 Social representations and social roles

Representations of ageing are loaded with descriptions and prescriptions perpetuated by both older people and other age groups, especially young people (North and Fiske 2013). Although school textbooks in Chile present content arguing against stereotypes, some forms of stereotyped language persist (Jorquera 2010). More concretely, a study on stereotypes of older age in Chile concluded that negative images of ageing were pervasive among young people, regardless of gender. Older people were described as dependent, sickly, frail, sexually inactive, conservative, non-valued, marginalised, passive citizens, untrusting and intolerant (Urquiza Gómez, Arnold Cathalifaud, Thumala Dockendorff, & Ojeda Mayorga, 2008). Similar results, together with infantilising stereotypes, were found in the National Survey of Images of Old Age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002). It seems then that negative stereotypes of ageing, reinforced by the young, lead older people to adjust their attitudes and behaviours to social conventions (Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008). Responsibility for the dissemination of these stereotypes has been largely attributed to the mass media (SENAMA 2009b; SENAMA and MaSS 2011). In response Jorquera (2010) advocates the urgent construction of more diverse and positive images of ageing to avoid the widespread exclusion of its older citizens. Possible paths for reimagining older people include the substitution of polarised images of infantilisation and obsolescence by seeing later life as a journey in which maturity enables older people to

reach a balance between projecting the future and detachment (SENAMA 2009b).

Despite the negative stereotypes described above, other evidence presents a gentler image of older people in Chile. For instance, a National Survey of Images of Old Age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002) also found that 93% of the general population did not consider older people to be a burden to society. This information is consistent with every day experiences reported by older people in a survey of quality of life and ageing (SENAMA et al. 2010). Over 80% of Chilean older people declared not having experienced unfair treatment within their families, neighbourhoods or public service institutions because of their age, with the exception of health care institutions.

In relation to the meanings and values given to everyday life, lifestyles, habits and social integration become increasingly relevant for quality of life of older people in direct proportion with degrees of disability (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011). However, imaginaries of ageing stemming from Spanish language websites and in Chilean newspapers highlight exceptional events instead of habits and lifestyles of older people. Pintos (2007) found death portrayed on the internet as an exceptional event. Studies by Torrejón (2007) and Pintos (2007) both showed that imaginaries of participation in older age were frequently associated with leisure, or with performances considered exotic and exceptional (e.g. rock musicians touring in their sixties and seventies); unrelated with normal routines and habits of older people's daily lives. Torrejón (2007) also found that Chilean newspapers praised other exceptional circumstances, where vitality and vigour are overemphasized (e.g. older people sky diving). Daily experiences in social imaginaries are mostly restricted to the family sphere. For

example, in newspapers grandparenting roles are most common (Torrejón 2007) and in school books older people are portrayed as guardians of tradition, of social norms, experience and knowledge that must be passed on to younger generations, as well as advisers in critical moments (Jorquera 2010).

Older people are rarely represented in positions of power and influence. Their political roles are limited to participation in surveys or as passive recipients of social policies. A few exceptions can be found in higher management, as politicians or members of elders’ councils (Torrejón 2007) or as leaders of ancient tribes and civilizations (Jorquera 2010). A confounding factor is that capacity building is gender biased among Chileans: ‘the result of complex systemic processes concerning the position of women and men...The representations ascribed to men place them in positions of decision making, and those ascribed to women associate them with more social or familial fields’ (Guzmán, Barozet, Candia, Ihnen, & Leiva, 2012). The proliferation of imaginaries of ageing that limit participation to extraordinary individuals or to leisure contexts is detrimental to generating images of active citizenship and societal engagement in later life (Osorio Parraguez, Torrejón, Meersohn, & Anigstein, 2010).

4.4.4 Family, community and social environment

Isolation and loneliness may occur with ageing due to the severance of social networks and interruption of social interactions (Torrejón 2007) associated with ill-health, reduced mobility and financial limitations (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011). In Chile, the more precarious financial circumstances of older women prevents them from

participating in social activities and complying with corresponding social norms (e.g. gifts to a host) (Torrejón 2007).

Bowling’s (2006) study of quality of life and ageing in the UK revealed a distinction between family contacts that maintain social ties and prevent isolation, and friends who provide company and prevent loneliness. This distinction may help to explain evidence that while older people in Chile value friendship and social activities with other people of their age group (Bunout et al. 2012), over 60% of them, especially those with less formal education, prefer to stay at home instead of going out and trying different experiences, such as participating in community groups. As long as they are not isolated, older people in Chile frequently prefer to live independently, purchase additional care or enter a care home rather than living with family (SENAMA et al. 2010).

Despite the preference for living independently almost half of people over 60 years old live with at least one of their children. They also keep regular contact, sustaining some form of communication every day or several times a week with other members of their family, such as children, grandchildren and siblings (SENAMA et al. 2010). Thus, strong networks of support are maintained despite cultural modifications in family and community structures. In this regard del Pozo Sánchez, (2014) explains that in Chile reliance on families as the main network of support has strong cultural roots. This presents a challenge for the development of effective policies to encourage the use of community forms of support that can alleviate families in their caring role.

According to Jorquera (2010), although the position of older members within the family structure is frequently mentioned in school

textbooks, they are not necessarily included in the daily family life of children and grandchildren unless they share a home. Relationships with young grandchildren are reported as being loving and enjoyable, but become tense as children grow into adolescence. Intergenerational tensions also feature in the National Survey of Images of Old Age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002) that shows that 79% of young people in Chile believe that older people have difficulty understanding the way they think. This could partially account for the reported distance between grandparents and teenage grandchildren.

The absence of spouses in Chilean imaginaries is puzzling, particularly when two thirds of people over 60 years old are either married or widowed (SENAMA et al. 2010). However a recent study revealed that widowed women tend to diversify their social contacts, whereas widowed men tend to agglutinate their social networks (Osorio Parraguez and Jorquera 2013).

4.4.5 Physical environment and environmental risks

Despite increasing awareness of the benefits of ageing in place - meaning in their homes and communities -, and advances in technology and design to aid independent living and prevent social isolation (Phillipson 2007; Landorf et al. 2008; Charness 2008), many older adults in Chile live in physical environments deemed to be unsafe (Jorquera 2010). However, a national survey on quality of life in later life revealed that 57% of older adults would not be willing to live in a house designed specifically for them (SENAMA et al. 2010) .

Location also influences perceptions and representations of the environment constructed in later life. A survey on quality of life in later life in Santiago, Chile showed that besides accessibility and mobility

within their homes and neighbourhoods, older people experienced vast differences in the urban environment, depending on their socioeconomic status, gender, age and health condition (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2010a). These characteristics determine distinct appreciations of environmental elements such as the clarity of street signs, the condition of the streets and pavements, the presence of lifts, ramps and other mobility aids in buildings, the cost and accessibility of public or private transportation. Green areas and recreational spaces may also be considered relevant to full enjoyment of the city. Finally, safety in transportation and facilities, as well as fear of crime and harm concerned older people and fostered feelings of vulnerability.

4.4.6 Body, health, well-being and quality of life

Pintos (2007) identified four main topics within the imaginaries of health and ageing: i) illness, particularly related to nutrition and mental health; ii) available treatments for such conditions; iii) expectations of science and genetic treatments for conditions strongly associated with ageing and iv) mitigating the negative effects of the ageing process through physical exercise, physiotherapy and health maintenance in general.

These topics identified by Pintos are also relevant in Chilean studies. General satisfaction with life and keeping an active mind are highly valued attributes for psychological health among Chilean older adults (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Bunout et al. 2012), and there is evidence of rising general satisfaction with life in older age (SENAMA et al. 2010). However, other studies have shown increased levels of depression in later life, associated with the weakening of social networks, the cultural context, chronic illness, the inability to maintain independent living

(Cortés 2001; Mella et al. 2004; De Ridder et al. 2008). And notably there is a higher prevalence of depression and stress among older women (SENAMA et al. 2010)

A pervasive connection between prevention of illness and imaginaries of frailty in later life (Gilleard and Higgs 2011) is reinforced by social imaginaries in school books and the press promoting prevention, as well as surveillance of signs of ailments, through the adoption of healthier lifestyles (Jorquera 2010). Government agencies and private health care companies (ISAPRE) actively promote preventive health practices that could reduce future expenditure (Torrejón 2007). Despite these imaginaries, self-reported lifestyles show most older adults maintain sedentary habits (SENAMA et al. 2010).

The press does not only portray the ageing body from a medical perspective, but also deploys multiple stories of strategies to stall the undesired arrival of markers of ageing. These stories target women predominantly, and associate performances of age with specific lifestyles (Fairhurst 1998 in Green 2010:192; Laz 2003) interweaving topics such as beauty, skincare and fitness (Torrejón 2007).

Chilean newspapers frequently tap the association between poor health and dependency, with a particular interest in the demand for specialised caring skills (Torrejón 2007). Stemming from concerns about health care and associated costs, older people - 85% of whom are registered in the public healthcare system (SENAMA et al. 2010) - set their hopes on the improvement of healthcare systems as a way of ameliorating the deterioration perceived as inevitable during later life (SENAMA 2009b). These concerns become especially acute amongst older people with some level of disability, who are continually aware of

the links between their health and opportunities to enjoy available activities (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011). Older people are also reported to be well informed about the availability and quality of health care services (SENAMA et al. 2010).

Hegemonic discourses associating ageing and illness, once internalised by individuals, produce self-images of dependency. Awareness of the limitations of the body due to ageing can easily be followed by feelings of loneliness and abandonment from social and emotional ties. An initial stage signals the transition between autonomy and dependency. Minor corporeal limitations produce feelings of ambivalence towards life, social detachment and lack of vitality beyond the limits of the body and its appearance (Abusleme et al. 2014). The central element for the assessment of health related quality of life in micro social environments is the ability to take control over the body and its handling. For dependent people, their need of mediators for all their activities leaves them very little room for self-determination of their health (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). However, even among people with a degree of dependency, elements such as a supportive environment at home, access to quality transportation and technological aids can improve perceptions of control. Conversely, poor access to health care is perceived as loss of control over health and produces negative assessments of quality of life (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011).

This review of social imaginaries and representations of ageing, organised as six themes, identifies the main concerns and interests within diverse social domains and by multiple types of social actors. These themes provide a framework that opens possibilities for

conducting cross-comparisons of social imaginaries of ageing among multiple social domains. In the following chapter I turn to the challenge of constructing social imaginaries of ageing in Chile.

5 A “tense” study of transitions

Thus far, I have explained the historical, conceptual and ontological foundations of social imaginaries. I have also reviewed literature about salient social imaginaries of ageing in Chile, and classified them in six main themes. But how can we study social imaginaries? The first part of this chapter is devoted to outlining the key methodological challenges to producing social imaginaries. I then outline the strategy I used to produce the social imaginaries of three social domains: the political, mass media, and older people’s domains. In the following sections I provide details of the methods I used in the three stages of analysis to produce such social imaginaries: i) definition comparable themes in each domain; ii) selection of semantically relevant information; iii) creation of categories. The methodology of the first empirical stage of the thesis concludes with a proposal for accounting for contentions – disagreements – among social imaginaries of the three social domains.

The social imaginaries of ageing are institutional spaces and they are relevant for this research as I propose to examine the strategies individuals develop for accepting or rejecting externally attributed identities. Definitions and attributes given to age and ageing differ and compete among multiple existing social domains (Pintos 2004a). Thus, multiple imaginaries of ageing will spring from various domains, and their practices towards ageing identities will be institutionalised accordingly.

Strategies developed in response to externally attributed ageing identities take the form of narratives of acceptance or resistance. We access narratives through stories that are at once loaded with meaning

and associated with repeated forms of interaction(Godart and White 2010). Stories emerge as the product of a reaction to disruptions to a state of equilibrium (Feldman et al. 2004). Therefore my methodological design rests on ageing identities being jolted into finding footing when presented with unexpected stimulation, stemming from tensions in the definitions of ageing across different social domains. Coping with ageing transitions requires strategies of control: a realignment of experiences and the stories that emerge when confronted with the tensions of ageing in everyday situations.

Following the production of social imaginaries and tensions of ageing, I present the methodological approach I used in the second empirical stage of my research. I explain how participants presented their strategies of control and discuss the use of methodological innovations¹⁰ in representing these strategies. I started this second stage using a quantitative approach, with the goal of validating and making sense of the analytical categories of the tensions of ageing. During the subsequent stages I followed the narratives resolving these tensions through situational analysis. These narratives also revealed resources networks which I represented through tools for network analysis.

¹⁰ I reintroduced conceptualisations built upon discourses in social imaginaries at a macro social level in everyday situations that made sense in a micro social level.

5.1 How to produce social imaginaries? A mixed methodology

Despite the diversity of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities concerned with the conceptualisation of social imaginaries - or perhaps because of this diversity - , progress in the development of methodologies for studying social imaginaries has been slow. Shotter (1997, 2011) has been one of the few theorists showing explicit concern with constructing a methodology for the social imaginaries. He argues that understanding how realities are constructed requires an orientation towards processes themselves and not further conceptualization on how outcomes are achieved. Shotter does not however resolve how such reorientation towards the interaction between practice and language is to be accomplished.

It is Juan Luis Pintos who provides the most complete methodological proposal for the construction of social imaginaries. The emphasis on the constructivist perspective is fundamental to the approach because it: (1) provides guidelines for the analysis of social imaginaries, but those guidelines are flexible, allowing researchers to construct methodological strategies tailored to specific research enquiries; (2) assumes that the analysis of social imaginaries is an active process of constructions of perspectives ‘connected to power, to knowledge and to pretension of dominating the field... foremost a struggle for the pre-eminence of the imaginaries that reunify all realities in one’ (Pintos, 2005:65). In the following section I provide an overview of how the main guidelines proposed by Pintos have helped me construct an original approach to producing and comparing social imaginaries of ageing in Chile from three different social domains. What

I propose is a combination of methodological rigour and creative methodological exploration.

5.2 Studying social imaginaries

Social imaginaries can be observed in different domains. Some domains are situated at higher social levels and show manifestations of their inner workings through organisations or institutional instances (Pintos 2005). Thus, the political domain is represented here by the Chilean Congress as an organisation and more specifically by parliamentary debates as an institutional instance. Similarly, the mass media are represented by the online newspapers in Chile. In a micro social level, social imaginaries are expressed in expectations built upon experience in the interactions between individuals (Pintos 2005). The experiences of growing older are located in this level, expressed in focus group discussions among older people. Because older people are not necessarily connected in a network, they are not strictly speaking in a social domain; they are what Harrison White calls a ‘catnet’ (categorical network). The categorical attributes of a catnet-age are likely to fold in members that consider themselves sharing a categorical identity. In other words, ‘all relations will be regarded as present in a latent way’ (White, 2008:51). This is why I considered older people an operational social domain. The transcriptions of the parliamentary debates, newspaper articles and focus groups constitute the evidence or materials for the observation of each social domain.

Once I had selected the materials for the study of social imaginaries, the next step was fixing a perspective of observation (Pintos 2005; Pintos 2007). This involves framing the analysis of social imaginaries within categories that (1) clearly delimit how social imaginaries are

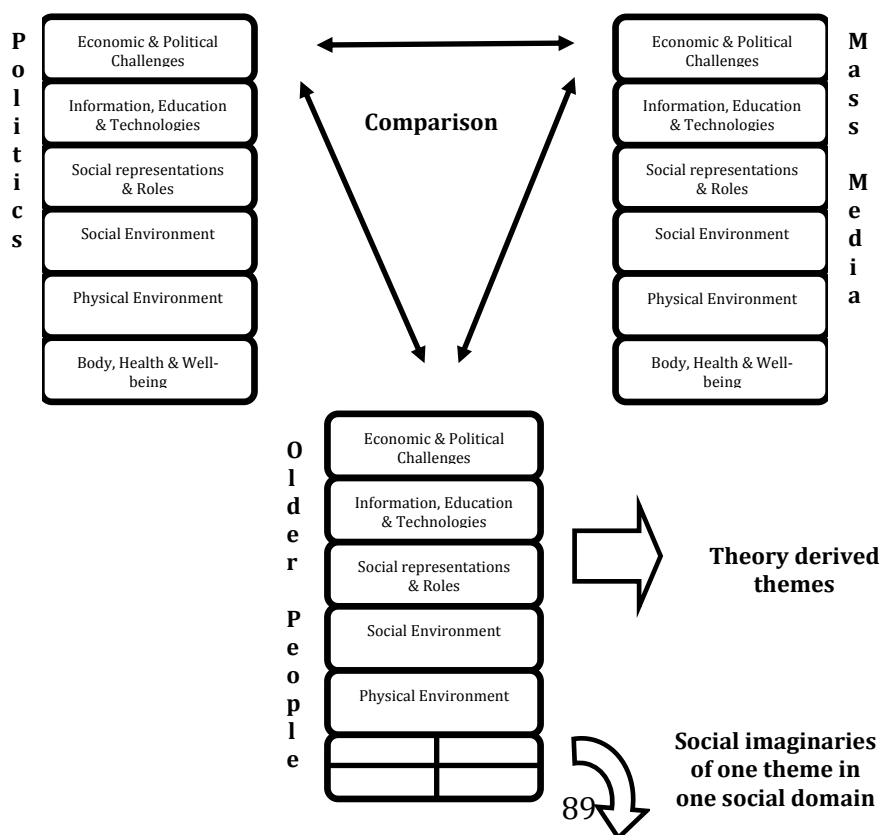
being produced; (2) create a frame for comparing the social imaginaries of the three social domains.

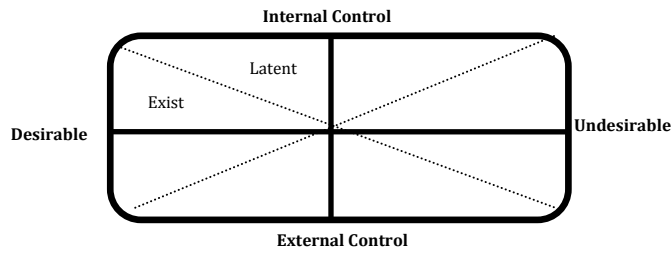
I fixed the perspective of observation using two criteria: (1) I identified relevant themes that could be compared across the social domains; (2) I framed the conditions for describing and comparing those themes in a two by two matrix. The first criterion was fulfilled by using the six themes I had identified in the literature review of social imaginaries and representation of ageing in Chile. The second criterion requires further explanation.

Research on social imaginaries extends interest beyond the description of what is said about a phenomenon such as ageing. Social imaginaries are concerned with how and from which perspective phenomena are described (Pintos 2007). I framed these perspectives by firstly emphasising linguistic differences across social domains, by selecting the evidence that represented the language commonly used in each domain to refer to age and ageing. I did this by creating word clusters for the documents representing each social domain, and eliminating irrelevant evidence. Secondly, I created two institutional dyads to classify the evidence: (1) events described as desirable or not desirable; (2) events described as controlled by older people and events described as controlled by others. I created these dyads following Pintos’ guidelines (Pintos 2004a; Pintos 2005). However the categories of desirability and control stemmed from my research about how individuals control transitions from mid-life to later life, and the accepted tenets of ageing in Chilean society. The cross-over between these dyads produced four relevant perspectives in each of the six themes selected for comparison. Thirdly, the analysis of social imaginaries also contemplated the effects of temporality. According to

Pintos’ (Pintos 2004a; Pintos 2005) guidelines, temporal elements classify events not in a linear time sequence, but between those that already exist or have been experienced, and those that are latent or possible.

Figure 5.1 Production of social imaginaries





These procedures produced descriptions of key elements of relevance in Chilean social imaginaries of ageing. However, due to the inability of a social imaginary to describe its own blind spot, what is left out of each social imaginary must be defined by contrast with an external view (Pintos 2001; Pintos 2003; Pintos 2004a; Pintos 2005). The comparison of categories across social domains provides such a backdrop. Mutually invisible or conflicting perspectives among the political, mass media and older people’s domains allow the establishment of what is included and what is excluded in the different constructions of ageing.

Following this outline of the analytical procedure to researching social imaginaries and how they have been oriented to fit the interests of this research, I now provide a detailed description of this procedure.

5.3 Sampling

The (re)construction of the social imaginaries of ageing in the political domain, the mass media and by older people themselves required the selection of materials representing each domain. Those representing the social imaginaries of the political and the mass media domain–parliamentary debates and newspaper articles–were available on the internet. I compiled a dictionary of search terms associated with

age and ageing (Appendix 2) from word lists contained in research about social imaginaries of ageing (Pintos 2007; Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010) as well as related terms sourced from a thesaurus. Relevant newspaper articles and parliamentary debates were collected by searching documents containing the search terms through the internal search engines of the Library of Congress and the websites of the selected newspapers (*La Tercera* and *El Mostrador*).

For the political domain, I selected transcriptions of parliamentary debates in the Chamber of Representatives and in the Senate¹¹, containing the key words. The documents comprised 17 parliamentary debates over seven bills discussed in the period 2002-2012 (Congreso Nacional de Chile 2002; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2005; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2010a; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2010b; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2011a; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2011b; Congreso Nacional de Chile 2012).

In these discussions, politicians express their personal views and the agendas of their political parties about the debated legislation. Each of the debates is fully recorded, transcribed and published on the web site of the Library of Congress (Anon). Once a bill is promulgated, the transcribed debates and the bill itself constitute a document called the history of the legislation.

Legislation is a set of normative guidelines by which the rights and obligations of individuals and organisations are regulated. Social

¹¹ Chile’s population (17 million) is represented by 120 Representatives and 38 Senators, distributed in proportion to the population across the national territory. Bills are drafted by a commission comprised by members of both chambers. Sensitive articles of the Bill are discussed and voted in the chamber of representatives, then by the Senate, and finally returned to representatives for final approval.

policies oriented towards the ageing population are created using the law as their main framework. By looking at the parliamentary debates one becomes aware that legislation affecting the institutions governing the ‘everyday’ of older people is borne out of governmental concerns to promote certain legislation, and its outcome is connected to vested interests that politicians and political organisations hold in relation to older people. The parliamentary debates in the sample included those that were directly oriented towards the ageing population or those were ageing or the old where a group of interest within a bill addressing a wider population.

The mass media have an extended outreach to the population and therefore the imaginaries of older age presented in multiple formats are dominant contenders in instituting conceptions of age and ageing. Mass media works with public information, easily accessible to everyone. However, the quantity of available information does not account for its quality, nor for how the events are presented to audiences (Damoni 2013).

I selected a sample of articles from online newspapers to represent the domain of mass media. The articles were published in two different newspapers¹²: (1) *La Tercera*, with a moderate conservative editorial line, releases a printed version distributed across Chile as well as the online version; (2) *El Mostrador*, a completely online newspaper, with an editorial line more akin to liberal thinking. The articles in the sample covered the period from January 2011 to September 2012. After conducting the online search for matches of articles containing key

¹² (El Mostrador, La Tercera)

words, *La Tercera* produced 382 matches and *El Mostrador*, 89. In order to keep a proportion between editorial lines, a quarterly random sub-sample was selected from *La Tercera*. Details of the sampling can be seen in the table below.

Table 5.1 Sampling newspaper articles

Year	La Tercera					El Mostrador		
	Arti. Year	Quart.	N° Articles	% Year	Sample Year	Arti. Year	Quart.	N° Articles
2011	263	1	65	25	16	55	1	8
		2	78	30	23		2	13
		3	67	25	17		3	17
		4	53	20	11		4	17
2012	119	5	37	31	12	34	5	7
		6	34	29	10		6	17
		7	48	40	19		7	10
Total			382		108			89
Sample					197			

The domain of older people was represented by transcriptions of 15 focus groups with people aged 60 and above. These focus groups were conducted during 2008 as a part of a study on ageing and quality of life in Santiago, Chile¹³ (Bunout et al. 2012; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). Because one of the purposes of the focus groups was to discover relevant dimensions of quality of life that could be explored further in a survey, the discussions covered a wide range of topics, thus making multiple experiences of growing older accessible to the researcher. The

¹³ Project “Quality of Life and Older Adults”. Research financed by the Vice-rectory of Research and Development of the University of Chile, in the frame of the Domeyko Programme in Health-Ageing (2007-2010).

focus group participants consisted of a structural sample by age, gender and socioeconomic status.

Table 5.2 Focus group distribution

	Age 60-74			Age 75+			Mixed		
	M	F	Mix	M	F	Mix	M	F	Mix
High			1		2	1			
Medium	1	2		1					
Low	2						1	1	
Mixed			2			1			

Following the sampling of these sources, they were analysed to produce exhaustive categories accounting for the social imaginaries of ageing in the political, mass media and older people’s domains.

5.4 The three-stage analysis

5.4.1 Defining observable units

In the first stage I analysed selected materials-parliamentary debates, newspaper articles, focus group transcriptions- by applying sensitising heuristics codes derived from the literature (Kelle, 2007:209). I drew these codes from the six themes identified from the literature review of social imaginaries and representations of ageing in Chile (chapter 5). I coded the documents with the assistance of the software Nvivo 9. The decision to use Nvivo during this stage of the analysis stemmed from its potential for using measures of reliability for the coding (Appendix 3).

In order to adequately identify relevant excerpts and apply the pertinent codes, I created a codebook (Saldana, 2013:34) based on the

diverse manifestations of each code within social domains and at different social levels of the events described in the documents. For instance, events and circumstances related to economy and politics can look very different at a domestic-micro- level from those at a governmental-macro-level. Although the codebook served as a guide for coding a corpus of information of nearly 3000 pages, the codes themselves were not limited by the empirical content in the codebook. Rather, the possible manifestations of each code served as a skeleton (Kelle, 2007:210), a basis for comparison with the situations emerging from the data. Given the diversity and quantity of the materials, this holistic approach (Saldana, 2013:42) facilitated preparation of the data for more detailed analysis.

Table 5.3 Codebook

DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES	Sources of income. Work and retirement as a matter of personal circumstances. Economic support that older people give to others. Strategies to manage their personal finances (includes debt). Needs, desires and attitudes to consumption.	Older people and private or community entrepreneurship. Preference and access to goods and leisure. Common places for consumption. Concessions and discounts. Unpaid productive activities.	Government policies responding to the pension system, economic vulnerability. Facts, expectations and consequences related to the ageing of the population. Work and retirement as a matter of political concern. Effect of the national and international economic scenario on lives of older people. Older people as a target group of consumers.
INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY	Use of technologies. Use of mass media and access to information. Informal training and self-taught skills.	Formal education and training. Dissemination of information about older people and ageing.	Academic and scientific development on age and ageing. Technological development for the inclusion of older people.
SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS	Older people's	Options available for	Social policy for the

A “tense” study of transitions

AND SOCIAL ROLES	routines. Values and opinions of older people. Roles of older people. Sentiments about death.	older peoples’ social participation. Empowerment and disempowerment. Allocation of responsibilities. Intergenerational images.	inclusion of older people’s diverse domains of society. Representations of older age and older people in the media and the arts. Death and older age in society.
FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	Loneliness and its determinants. Contact with family and friends. People they live with. Preferred and actual place of residence. Love and affection. Widowhood.	Daily social interactions and wider social networks. Isolation and its determinants. Organizations that promote community ties.	
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS	Decisions on housing. Home modifications. Sentiments of safety/fear of the immediate environment.	The neighbourhood as a physical environment. Access to public and private transportation. Accessibility to shops, services and amenities. Green areas and parks. Crime/aggression against older people.	Urban planning and older people. Transportation infrastructure.
BODY, HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE	Presence and absence of Physical illness. Mental illness. Frailty. Performance of age. Life satisfaction. Experiences of the ageing process as physical change. Health related choices.	Carers and health practitioners. Available options for a healthy life style.	Access to Healthcare. Social expectations about the biological ageing process. Policies surrounding health and ageing. The cosmetic industry.

With the base for comparison across the three social domains established, the next step was sub-sampling the texts according to their linguistic consistency. This operation entailed the selection of excerpts

containing a common language used in each social domain when referring to age and ageing.

5.4.2 The language of ageing in Chile

For producing corpora of text characterising how politics, mass media and older people refer to the six themes of concern it was necessary to concentrate the analytical efforts on the evidence that was representative of institutionalised meanings of age and ageing. Because I had constructed a priori the sensitising concepts to analytically divide and compare social imaginaries, clustering text by its linguistic content allowed the emergence of groups of words from the text inductively. The information in the documents escaping the emerging word clusters was deemed marginal to the social imaginaries of ageing¹⁴ (Pintos 2007).

Because the documents for the political, mass media and older people’s domain had been coded for the six themes I identified in the literature review, I produced 18 language fields: one for each theme within each social domain. Each social domain was conceived as having a specific linguistic corpus to refer to the six areas of interest identified in the literature review. In combination, these corpora constitute language fields of the social imaginaries of ageing in social domains. The language fields were constructed through cluster analysis of the texts, aided by the software Word Stat 6.

¹⁴ In his guidelines for producing social imaginaries, Pintos searches for the most frequent terms, and then categorises them by themes. Here I have drawn the themes from the literature review and then identified relevant clusters of words within each theme. This method allowed efficient processing of large volumes of text.

To produce the language fields I first compiled 18 documents in Nvivo by exporting the excerpts of each code in each type of document-parliamentary debates, newspaper articles and focus groups. These reports were then imported to QDA miner, the software platform upon which Word Stat operates. Word Stat contains dictionaries of stop words in different languages, including Spanish, with the most common words in the language to be excluded from the analysis (e.g. and, the, question words, etc.). It also has stemming registers that can be edited to allow grouping of words with the same stem (e.g. ‘hija’ and ‘hijo’ refer to female and male children). Once the documents were prepared for the analysis, each document produced an independent set of word clusters.

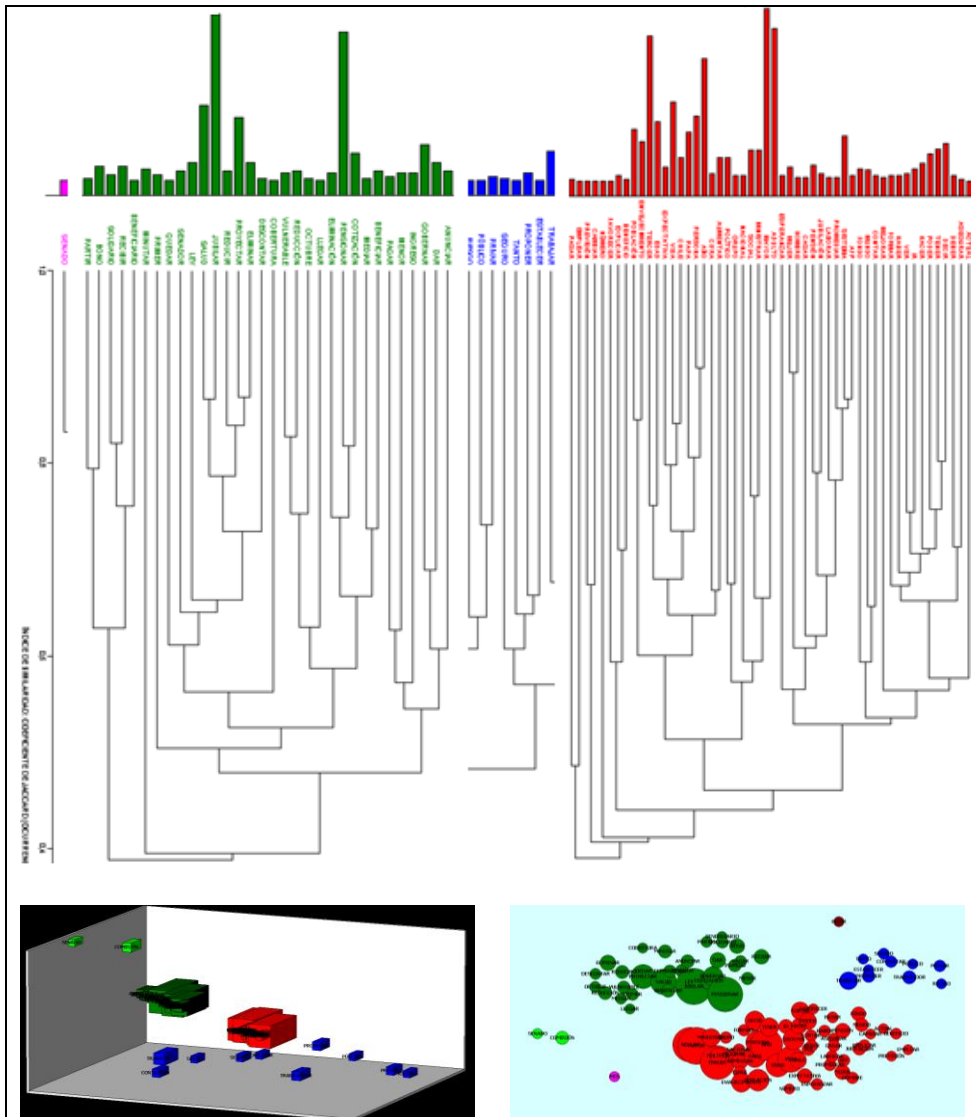
Each of the 18 documents was analysed individually and I used the paragraphs (excerpts) in each of the 18 documents as the units of analysis. The criterion for determining the clusters was Jaccard’s coefficient, which compares multiple pairs of paragraphs. This compared the sum weight of shared terms between paragraphs to the sum weight of terms that are present in either of two paragraphs but are not shared terms. Jaccard’s coefficient has been found to produce more coherent clusters of words than other methods, such as the Euclidian distance (Huang 2008).

To avoid excluding relevant terms, I decided to use a second order type of co-occurrence. First order co-occurrences identify the corpus of words that appear in the vicinity of a given word, whereas second order co-occurrences can group together words that never appear in each other’s vicinity, but their ‘environments are similar’ (Grefenstette 1994). This method was particularly useful because the basic units of analysis were paragraphs within a document, and one word grouping

was excluded from clustering. Thus, seeking relationships between at least two terms in units of analysis as small as single paragraphs required a method that recognised semantic patterns beyond the scope of immediate vicinity.

Although one can find several semantic corpora within social imaginaries represented by clusters, only up to four clusters are deemed relevant before the linguistic categories become linguistically isolated (Pintos 2004a; Pintos 2005). The cluster analysis produced between one and four clusters for each document, but when the number of groupings exceeded four, the least robust were discarded (Appendix 4). Figure 5.2 illustrates the outcome of one of the word clustering models.

Figure 5.2 Clustering of key words on Demographic, Economic and Political Challenges within the mass media domain



The dendrogram and agglomeration graphs show clusters of words in different colours. The frequency of the words is displayed by the size of the bars and bubbles. The similarity between words in a cluster is illustrated by their proximity in the graphs. In the example, the red and dark green clusters are more robust than the blue cluster, but all clusters are clearly distinct from one another. The brown, pink and light green clusters contain too few words and with a low frequency, so they are considered irrelevant. Only excerpts containing words of the red, blue and green clusters were considered in subsequent stages of the analysis.

With the language fields for the topics within social domains defined, it was possible to create refined versions of the documents entered as input for the cluster analysis. These new documents only

included paragraphs containing key words that grouped together, excluding information that was marginal to representing the social imaginaries of ageing in parliamentary debates, the press and older people’s focus groups.

Given that every social imaginary contains a language field that represents a common terminology used to speak about ageing in each social domain, I created visual representations of this language using word clouds. Looking at words clouds is helpful in the reconstruction of the main concerns and topics of social imaginaries and to glimpse into the sensibilities at play in the production of these realities. I created the clouds using Word it out¹⁵, a virtual word cloud generator: i) I used the documents generated from the outputs of the cluster analysis as input for the word clouds. The purpose was that only text relevant to the final construction of the social imaginaries was included in the word count. ii) I used a stop word list¹⁶ with common Spanish words to eliminate these words from the word count of the word cloud generator. iii) Once the word cloud in Spanish was generated, the words were ordered by frequency in ‘Word it out’ and the ten most frequent words in each cloud were translated to English. To this ten, I then added others words that represented the topics addressed in the social imaginaries.

¹⁵ <http://worditout.com/>

¹⁶ Appendix 5

5.4.3 Creating and analysing categories in social imaginaries

Having distilled the materials to include only the most thematically and semantically relevant information, in the next stage I analysed the content in each social imaginary for the three social domains.

Social imaginaries contain four internal perspectives. These perspectives stem from the cross-over of two axes. As explained in section 6.1, the axis frame the conditions for producing internal perspectives in a social imaginary (Pintos 2004a), and to compare different social imaginaries across social domains. One axis represents control: events are controlled by older people themselves or by others. The second axis in this model represents whether the events described in the documents are desirable or undesirable. I derived these two axes from my original research questions about control of ageing transitions and the accepted tenets of ageing in Chilean society. This axis refers to the valuation given to the events and circumstances described in the documents by first order observers - that is the politicians in debates, the journalists and editors in the press and the older participants in the focus groups. The combination of control and desirability produced four internal perspectives in each social imaginary. The perspectives constitute a fixed frame of reference for the observation of understandings of age and ageing in each social domain.

The four perspectives created by the superimposition of control and desirability contain a latent temporal category. Time does not refer to the linearity of events, but to the difference between events that have been experienced (present) and those that are possibilities or latent (future) (Pintos 2004a). Attention to the temporal dimension is crucial,

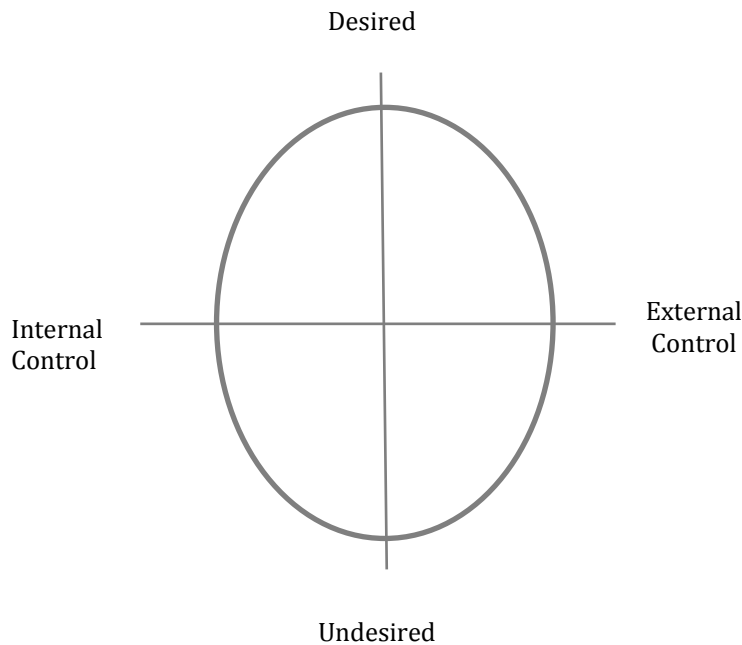
as it provides clues about changes in the frames of reference in each social imaginary.

For the sake of keeping contextual information that may aid the analysis during this third stage of the analysis I worked directly on the original materials rather than the documents resulting from the production of the linguistic fields. The original documents were imported into the software Atlas ti 7 and then, using the internal text search tool, I was able to find and code every paragraph in the output from Word Stat. The decision to use Atlas ti instead of Nvivo was due to its powerful capacity for visualisation of different units of analysis (e.g. quotations, codes, memos) that allows visualisation of all the elements, moving them easily around the screen and modifying them, facilitating the modelling of ideas and categories.

I coded the documents using the categories stemming from control and desirability. Because these codes are dyads (e.g. desirable/undesirable), and thus encompass a grading system, they would be considered, according to Saladana (2013:72), as magnitudes codes. New categories emerged out of the cross-over of these codes, constituting a matrix. I replicated the process for each theme across the three social domains, creating 72 possible combinations, each representing a perspective. However, not every combination produced all possible perspectives in each social imaginary. Categories were considered empty when they contained less than two excerpts informing a particular category. The categorical matrix is a methodological procedure oriented to account for the semantic fields within each social imaginary (Figure 5.3). While each social domain constructs social imaginaries of ageing that are treated as truths consistent with the domains’ functions and concerns, each domain will also produce

different internal perspectives, accounting for the mobility and transformation of their own institutionalised imaginaries.

Figure 5.3 Categorical matrix of the social imaginaries of ageing in Chile



Following the construction of the categorical matrices, I concentrated on the analysis of each category using an eclectic approach (Saldana, 2013:188). The analysis includes a combination of thematic analysis (Saldana:175, 2013), in ways that resemble conventional content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) and the axial coding stage in grounded theory methods (LaRossa 2005). This resembles conventional content analysis in the sense that one approaches the text searching for concepts that can help explain the whole. However, the themes remain contained within the holistic codes defined in the first stage of the analysis of the social imaginaries. It also shares elements of the axial coding in grounded theory because it seeks to relate the emerging concepts to the holistic and magnitude codes.

The themes thus serve as comprehensive illustrations of the multiple semantic fields in the control-desirability matrix.

This method of analysis allowed the exhaustive characterisation and comparison of the social imaginaries of ageing within each social domain, concluding the third stage of analysis.

5.5 From opacities to tensions

I undertook one final task to go beyond the characterisation of the social imaginaries in each social domain. It was also necessary to look into the opacities of each social imaginary, in other words, those ways of constructing ageing that differ, or that are invisible across social imaginaries of the political, mass media and older people’s domains. This can result in a conceptual void in one or more imaginaries, but may also reveal opposite views for describing the same phenomenon. These opacities, in the sense that what one domain sees is opaque to the others, can be translated into tensions surrounding the accepted tenets of ageing in Chilean society.

I explored and compared the six topic areas across the three social domains, identifying one or two core variables in each area of interest that had the analytic power to ‘pull the other categories together to form an explanatory whole’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 in LaRossa, 2005). The resulting categories were thus classified as tension categories, core oppositions in the definition of ageing among the political, mass media and older people’s domains. These tensions are presented below and discussed in detail in chapter 7.

Table 5.4 Tensions of ageing in each theme

TOPICS	TENSIONS
DEMOGRAPHIC, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CHALLENGES	Being economically dependent vs having dependants
INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY	Information as a value vs information as instrumental
SOCIAL ROLES AND REPRESENTATIONS	Predominance of passive social roles vs active social roles
FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT	Sociability in family networks vs wider social networks
	Abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency
PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS	Preference for collective vs preference for private spaces
	Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment
BODY, HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE	Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness

The decision to conceptualise these categories as oppositions engages with the contentious relationship that characterises the social imaginaries of ageing. If social imaginaries hold the potential for both consensus and conflict, focusing on the latter was helpful in exploring how such conflicts were resolved in subsequent stages of the research. The conflicts can be understood as contentious territories, competing definitions of ageing in Chilean society which are experienced as tensions by individuals during their transitions from mid-life to later life.

With the emergence of the tensions of ageing as analytical categories the first empirical stage of the project was concluded. In the following sections I explain how the new constructs were used in methodological

designs aimed to jolt ageing identities to bring forwards strategies at control of transitions.

5.6 Words and images: measuring and visualising tensions

John Prosser (2011) in his accounts of arts-based approaches in social research stresses a distinction between what is visual, and what is visualisation. The visual, he says, is concerned with the meanings attributed to images. Visualisation refers to the researcher’s epistemologically grounded conceptualisation, analysis, and modes of representation (Prosser 2011:479). For me, this distinction expresses quite accurately the methodological scaffolding presented in this chapter.

Throughout the second part of this methodology chapter I present the role of the visual in producing stories of control. However, this is only a part of a larger process of visualisation. Social imaginaries have inspired verbal and visual images. These images evoke particular representations of ageing identities in various sites. The analysis of the strategies of control of ageing identities compelled me to consider simultaneously the premises sustaining this study, maintaining a sense of wholeness (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011:107) in the voices of the participants, and finding forms of creating visual representations of my findings. Following the first empirical stage, the second accentuates the mixed methods approach that has been gradually unfolding. In the sections that follow, the visualisation will turn to describing the juxtaposition of modes of organising, analysing and representing data and findings (Ellingson 2011:605).

5.7 Making sense of tensions as analytical constructs

Having constructed the social imaginaries of ageing in three social domains, I characterised the main tensions or disputes in the definitions and understandings of ageing in Chilean society. These tensions as analytical constructs were then tested using quantitative methods.

The goal of my analysis was not to establish whether the tensions were resolved in one or other direction of the binary oppositions. My aim was to see if there were differences between the sides of the binary tensions and if so whether these differences were related to age. I did not intend to establish causality by explaining ‘how’ people solved the tensions in the social imaginaries of ageing. On the contrary, my intention was to gauge the internal generalizability (Maxwell 2010) of the construction of these tensions within the frame of this research. In simpler terms, how likely was it that my analytical constructions were understood in the same terms by the participants of the study?

Although the data produced during this stage were coded and analysed using a quantitative approach, the findings were treated as evidence of viewpoints within the universe of participants. These viewpoints, as I will show later in this chapter, assisted in bracketing my analytical inferences during the first stage of the research, with the selection of information during the second stage.

I conducted a survey to measure the distance between opposite sides of each tension. In the following sections I explain how I translated these categories to items in a questionnaire, the procedures

for conducting the survey, and the methods used to analyse the data and to decide whether tensions were recognisable for participants.

5.7.1 Measuring tensions

In everyday life we develop impressions of people and realities based on a composite of multiple pieces of information. When building a scale we recreate such processes. Likert scales are built in order to measure attitudes toward the underlying concept that we are defining (de Vaus 2002). The items in the questionnaire (Appendix 6) aimed to assess whether the participants’ impressions of age and ageing were consistent with the constructions of tensions in the definitions of age and ageing across social domains (see **¡Error! No se encuentra el origen de la referencia.**).

Table 5.5 Tensions of ageing

Being economically dependent vs having dependants
Information as a value vs information as instrumental
Predominance of passive social roles vs active social roles
Sociability in family networks vs wider social networks
Abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency
Preference for collective vs preference for private spaces
Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment
Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness

These tensions were represented as items in a questionnaire. The questionnaire contained four items per tension, with two items representing each side of the tension (e.g. the tension *outdoor/indoor risk* contained two items oriented toward outdoor and two for indoor risks). Organised in this way, the items facilitated visualising the direction in which the participants were resolving each tension, assuming that the solution was not a binary one

Each item in the questionnaire was based upon arguments in the social imaginaries of age and ageing that represented an aspect of the cultural tension. The figure below is an example of how items for the ‘being dependent’ vs ‘having dependants’ tension were constructed. Some of them address the issue by directly using the conceptual opposition, whereas the other four items take examples discussed in the social imaginaries, and turn these into statements. Participants were then asked to state how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the statements on a scale of 0 to 10. The eleven point scale was chosen due to the possibilities of treating the variables as interval level variables, which are amenable to a wider scope of statistical tests.

Figure 5.4 Construction of items for the being dependent vs having dependants tension

People should avoid becoming an economic burden on the family as they grow older	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree
As I grow older the family should avoid being financially dependent on me	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree
A good economic policy would provide benefits and bonuses for older people	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree
A good economic policy would give equal job opportunities for all ages	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree
As I grow older I will need more financial help	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree
Considering the state of affairs, the younger generations will always need support from the elder	Strongly agree	○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○—○	Strongly disagree

Pilot version with six initial items.

Besides these items, background questions on age, gender, Municipality of residence and level of formal education¹⁷ were included.

¹⁷ Considered if people had attended post-secondary education or not.

The questionnaire was translated into Spanish from English before being used with respondents in Santiago.

5.7.2 Conducting the Survey

After conducting a small pilot with ten participants 32 of the 48 original items of the survey, were retained Initially each side of a tension was represented by three items, but only the two items that were more strongly correlated were kept in the final version of the questionnaire. The pilot used face to face interviews that were audio recorded. In this way queries made by the participants served to clarify the questions.

The sample size was 266. The questionnaires were completed either in face-to-face interviews or through an internet based survey system. The response rate for the online survey was 61.7% and 99% when invited to complete face-to-face. To avoid influencing the results, during face-to-face interviews, I simply explained the purpose of the survey and occasionally responded to queries about instructions, after which participants responded without external interventions. Face-to-face interviews took longer, but they allowed me to reach participants who would otherwise have been absent from the sample, particularly those with limited or no access to the internet, or those not reachable through my personal and organisational networks.

The survey was conducted in the period July-September, 2013. The targeted participants were men and women between 40 and 90 years old. Socioeconomic status (Adimark 2004) of participants was determined by the Municipality of residence in the Santiago

Metropolitan area¹⁸. They were classified as high, medium and low SES, according to the data used in the Domeyko study on age and ageing in Metropolitan Santiago (Bunout et al. 2012). The sampling was theoretical (Patton, 2001:238), that is, on the basis of its potential to manifest theoretical constructions. Consistent with normal practice in statistics, the sample size was set to include a minimum of 30 cases (Annis) in each of the categories of the background variables age, gender and SES. Samples below 30 are treated as ‘too small’ to have statistical power.

5.7.3 Analysis of the Survey data

Analysis of the questionnaire data questionnaire aimed to find out if the identified tensions between the social imaginaries across the political, mass media and older people’s domains were indeed understood as tensions by participants. I was concerned to find out whether there were significant differences between the two sides of each of the eight tensions. Table 5.6 shows a step-by-step account of the methods I used to answer this question.

Table 5.6 Questionnaire: methods and stages of analysis

Correlation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spearman’s Rank for pairs of items representing a side of a tension ($r_s \geq 0.2$, $p \text{ value} \leq 0.05$) • Tensions discarded if one pair of items did not meet the criteria (<i>family networks vs wider social networks; abandonment vs emotional dependency; collective vs individual environment</i>)
Principal Component Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalised retained variables using Box-Cox transformation ($\alpha=0$; $\lambda=5.6$) • Confirmatory PCA for variables in each tension • Reliability test for items in each sub-scale (Cronbach’s α)

¹⁸ Includes education, assets and household income. Santiago’s municipalities tend to concentrate households of the same socio-economic status.

	<p>≥ 0.5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All variables were retained
Factorial ANOVA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added scores of variables of each side of a tension • Created variables with ratios between sides of each tension where 1 = no distance in scores (no tension) • Ratios transformed in 50 point scale (each point 0.2 to the right or left of 1) to facilitate interpretation (low scores= low tension) • Normalised data for Factorial ANOVA with Box-Cox transformation ($\alpha=1$; $\lambda=1.1$) • Tested data for outliers: difference between 25th and 75th percentile multiplied by $g = 2.2$ (Hoaglin et al. 1986). None found • Tested equality of variance (p value of $F \geq 0.05$) • Factorial ANOVA tested significant differences for ratio scores in models intersecting background variables: age, gender, socio-economic status (SES), education (p value of $F \leq 0.05$) • Discarded <i>indoor vs outdoor risks</i> due to lack of significant differences in scores in models including the variable <i>age</i>.

All statistical tests were conducted using SPSS. During the first part of the analysis I conducted Spearman Rank¹⁹ and Principal Component Analysis (PCA)²⁰. The threshold for inclusion or rejection of variables in Spearman’s Rank was set at $r_s \geq 0.2$ ²¹ and p value ≤ 0.05 . These techniques were used to explore the reliability of the items included in each of the tensions. Considering each tension comprised two pairs of items, the purpose of using these methods was to exclude pairs of items that did not correlate, as well as confirming that those item that were correlated constituted groups of reliable sub-scales. Considering that some factors included as few as two variables, the threshold for

¹⁹ Measures the association between two variables that are non-normally distributed.

²⁰ Method aimed to locate underlying dimensions in a data set. When used in combination with reliability analysis, it is useful to measure the consistency of the constructs measured in a questionnaire.

²¹ It was reasonable to set this threshold, as it conventionally indicates the minimum value for the existence of an association.

reliability was set at Cronbach’s alpha ≥ 0.5 , which is considered and acceptable threshold for scales with few items (Field, 2005:675).

Because the variables were negatively skewed, with many values at the highest end of the Likert scale, before conducting PCA I normalised the data, as this test requires variables that have a normal distribution. To normalise the data I performed a Box-Cox transformation ($\alpha=0$; $\lambda=5.6$), adequate for distributions with many values of 0 or approaching a natural limit (Osborne 2010).

Figure 5.5 Box-Cox transformation

$$\tau(y_i; \lambda, \alpha) = \begin{cases} \frac{(y_i + \alpha)^\lambda - 1}{\lambda(\text{GM}(y))^{\lambda-1}} & \text{if } \lambda \neq 0, \\ \text{GM}(y) \ln(y_i + \alpha) & \text{if } \lambda = 0, \end{cases}$$

Source: Box and Cox (1964)

During the second part of the analysis, I constructed new variables to display the ratio or ‘distance’ between the two sides of a tension (Table 5.7). In these ratios, a score closer to 1 reveals less difference in the scores at each side of the tension, whereas the farthest from 1 expresses a larger difference in the scores.

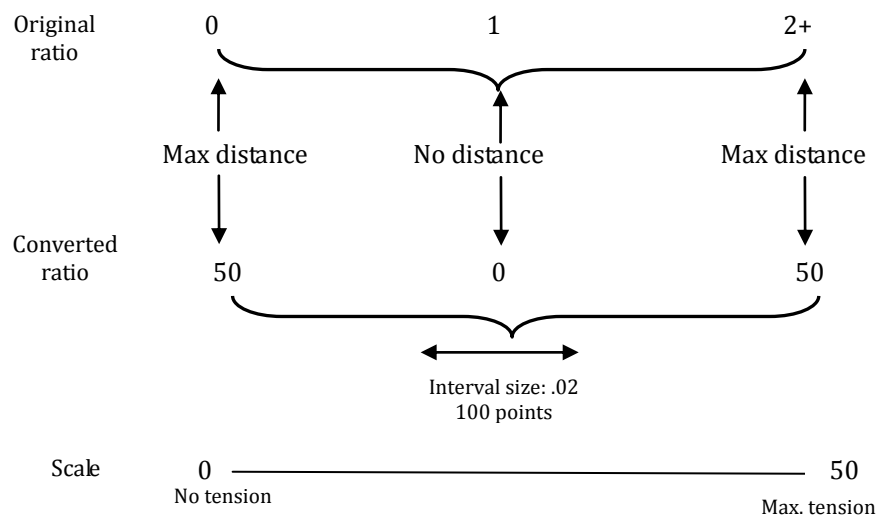
Table 5.7 Construction of ratio variables

	Items	Score Likert Scale	Sides of the tension	Added Scores	RATIO 1
TENSION 1	1	1-11	A	A= \sum It 1,2= [2,22]	A:B=[0, ∞)
	2	1-11			
	3	1-11	B	B= \sum It 3,4= [2,22]	
	4	1-11			
The four items in each of the five remaining tensions were transformed to ratio variables					

To facilitate the interpretation of the scores, I created a scale ranging from 0-50 (Figure 5.6); 0 indicating no tension (value 1 in a tension),

and 50 indicating complete opposition between sides of a tension. Although a maximum of 50 was an arbitrary choice, it covers 100 intervals in .02 increments to each side of 1. The purpose was to make the scale highly sensitive to variations in scores. Values with up to 1 point of difference from 1 (e.g. 0 and 2) were given a score of 50, and as the values drew closer to 1, their scores decreased in .02 increments down to 0 score. The few values in the distribution with an original score higher than 2 were all given a score of 50. This facilitated the interpretation of the scores, with higher scores indicating greater degrees of tension.

Figure 5.6 Transformation of ratios to scales



The transformation of the original ratios into a 50 point scale produced extremely positively skewed variables. In order to meet the criteria of normality and equality of variance, I performed a Box-Cox transformation ($\alpha=1$; $\lambda=1.1$). The advantage of the Box-Cox transformation is that it normalises the data, but because it is a monotonic function (Weisstein), it keeps the relation to the original scale (0). As a result, I was still able to interpret higher values of each

variable as a higher tension or difference in the scores of each side of a dimension.

The ratios converted to scales were contrasted against the background variables (age, gender, socio-economic status and education) in a Factorial ANOVA²². Significant differences in scores across groups supported the premise that the tensions as I constructed them could also be interpreted as such within my sample. Differences between groups were considered significant when the p value of F was lower than 0.05.

The Factorial ANOVA models allowed me to discard the tensions that did not make sense, while retaining those that did make sense to participants in the sample. I retained four tensions: *being dependent vs having dependants; information as value vs instrumental; passive vs active roles; health vulnerability vs resourcefulness*. In the following sections I explain the methodology used to tease out strategies of control in age transitions by looking at the ways in which participants resolved the tensions presented to them.

5.8 Weaving strategies of control

Once the social imaginaries of older age in the mass media, political and older peoples’ domains were constructed, I was in a position to compare the themes that emerged, and identify shared understandings of ageing as well as tensions in the social imaginaries of these three

²² Factorial ANOVA allows looking at differences across groups when there is two or more independent variables (Field, 2005:422).

social domains. Such understandings constitute external identities attributed to older people.

During the following stage of my investigations I reintroduced the broad range of possible identities for older age in Chilean society. With these descriptions it was possible to begin to observe how people negotiate their identities as they become older. Having confirmed which tensions of ageing were recognisable to the participants of the study, the next task involved the use of stories and narratives to tease out the strategies participants were using to resolve these tensions.

5.8.1 Narratives and their representation

Although the connections between transitions and identity will be discussed in detail in chapter 7, I will introduce some of those ties now in order to make justice to the role of narratives in understanding transitional journeys. Methodologically, this research examines connections between transitions and identity through the strategies people develop for accepting or rejecting externally attributed ageing identities. These strategies take the form of narratives that can be observed in stories imbued with meaning. Externally attributed identities disrupt the state of equilibrium (Feldman et al. 2004) and individuals’ ageing identities react to disruption in stories, or ‘loss of footing’ (Godart and White 2010). Ageing identities require ‘footing’ to steer desired interactions in situational networks operating within social domains. ‘Footing’ is a stance in relation to other identities, with can entail the purpose of survival, domination or type of relationship (Seeley 2014). This ‘footing’ is only sought when a communication event appears and presents a threat to the stability of one or more identities. Footing itself is an exercise of control, because it attempts to

temporarily fix identity in order to organise a response to disturbances. Disruptions in this research emanate from the tensions stemming from the social imaginaries of ageing.

Narratives are nonetheless contextualised by forms of storytelling, and storytelling may appear partial and contradictory (Hendry 2007). Narrative research stresses the importance of temporal sequence in storytelling (Feldman et al. 2004; Elliott 2005; Phoenix et al. 2010; Phoenix and Smith 2011; Barusch 2012). However it also explains that sequences in people’s lives are rarely linear. Firstly, lives are chaotic and full of contradictions and secondly, reflection and interpretation dissolve the narrative structure of time (Jarvinen 2000; Abbott 2007; Hendry 2007). Attending both to the narrative sequence and to seemingly chaotic storytelling, demands that we strive to understand how stories are organised. Tenses in storytelling must be continuously reformulated, because salient time horizons will depend on the action which demands most attention (Hitlin & Elder, 2007); and how differences and similarities of identities across the lifecourse (Adam et al. 2008) are organised around those salient time frames.

Most problems in using narrative methods are less concerned with how participants make sense of their stories, but with researchers’ struggles with representation of those stories. On this subject Hendry (2007) tells us that the gap between lived experiences and what we write about them is a source of perpetual discomfort. He suggests accepting narratives as an assemblage of categories. The challenge is to change the way in which we assemble categories: instead of bringing narratives together from a collection of pieces of storytelling, narratives should emerge from the relationships in a networks of stories.

In the following section I explain how I dealt with this challenge.

5.8.2 Deconstructing and reassembling narratives: Visual elicitation interviews

Before I explain the design of strategies for the production and analysis of qualitative data in this study, it would be useful to revisit the methodological imperatives in the lead up to visual elicitation interviews. First, the research techniques should connect tensions about ageing with stories I hoped participants could help illuminate. Second, the format in which tensions were presented demanded ample room for the participants’ interpretations, because I needed to guard against the possibility that I might inadvertently influence participants’ responses. Finally, because of the diversity in my sample, the instrument had to make sense and elicit stories from participants in early middle age to participants already in later life. I kept these guidelines in mind when I designed the images and interview format for visual elicitation interviews.

5.8.2.1 *Visualising the visual*

The choice of an arts-based method to produce material for visual elicitation interviews was informed by my attempt to fulfil these three research imperatives. I introduced my participants to the tensions in the social imaginaries of ageing I had identified in the mass media, parliamentary debates and older people’s accounts to see: i) how they reflected on these imaginaries and ii) how they produced stories while they related these imaginaries to their own experiences. In a recent article, Raymond, Grenier & Hanley (2014) explained how they used collective writing with a group of older adults with disabilities to produce stories that spoke about their experiences in relation to the opportunities and barriers for inclusion fostered by the State’s

participative policy agenda in Canada. Whilst in this study art is produced by participants themselves, in my study images are presented to participants. Both experiences actively make use of arts as a medium for participants to interpret externally constructed identities, and construct narratives portraying their own experiences and beliefs.

One of the advantages of visual methods is their power to suggest, to ‘invoke beyond-text sensations... meaningful in ways that are ineffable and invisible using conventional text-based methods’ (Prosser 2011:488). One must not however, be misled into believing that graphic images are natural in contrast to artificially constructed text. The meaning of an image is shaped by our previous knowledge of the logical organization of space, the cultural signs and symbols and what is proper to say about it, the verbal imagery that surrounds it (Mitchell 1984). This is precisely what made images so useful here, because they showed scenarios of contention among ageing identities. However, these scenarios were still open to the interpretation of participants. I intended to ‘tap into participants’ sensory systems’ and invite them to engage (Cole and Knowles 2008) in the interviewing activity. The interview was thus an invitation to fill in the blanks of what was not explicit in the image.

Finally, enquiring about strategies in a context of transitions means asking participants to deploy sets of expectations and to assess how likely those expectations are to be disappointed (Luhmann 1991). In other words to seek strategies while considering their possible horizons for deciding about conflicting expectations, to anticipate scenarios. By exploring anticipation we can make sense of the linkages that are being created between the present and the future. Graphic images acted in this situation as projective tools (Johnson and Weller

2001; Prosser and Loxley 2008). They enabled participants to use the visual media as artefacts mediating between their current realities and what they anticipated as possible future ageing identities.

One of the main advantages of visual elicitation interviews is that images and materials act as intermediaries to simulate responses. In this way, participants engage directly with the objects, facilitating discussion of sensitive topics. However, visual stimuli may ‘evoke inaccurate, distorted and even painful memories’²³ (Prosser 2011:484).

5.8.2.2 *Image making*

When creating images for visual elicitation I encountered two main obstacles: expertise and representation. The first one I could anticipate as soon as I thought about this type of approach: I simply cannot draw. In these cases Eisner (2008 in Finley 2011) suggests researchers work with practitioners in order to ‘combine both theoretically sophisticated understandings and artistically inspired images’ (Finley 2011:440). I was fortunate that my lack of talent with a pencil could be compensated by the skill of my sister, whose expertise in both the arts and linguistics were invaluable for the execution of the design. We jointly decided that the format should be black and white, with very simple lines. The purpose was to remove elements such as colour or shading that can be given multiple connotations, when the intention was to leave as many things as possible open for the interpretation of the participants.

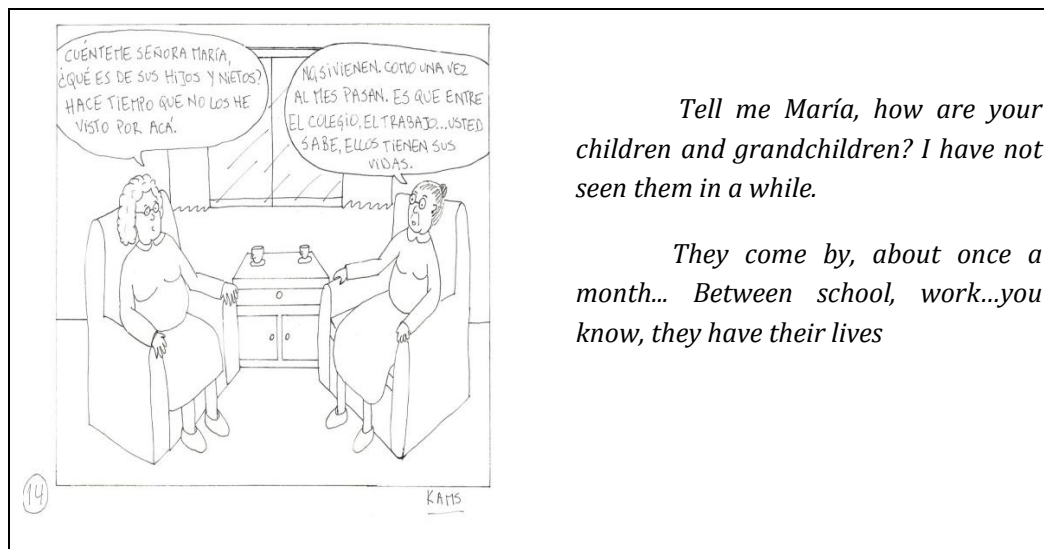
To overcome the second obstacle required a lot more finesse. The challenge of representation was converting the abstract

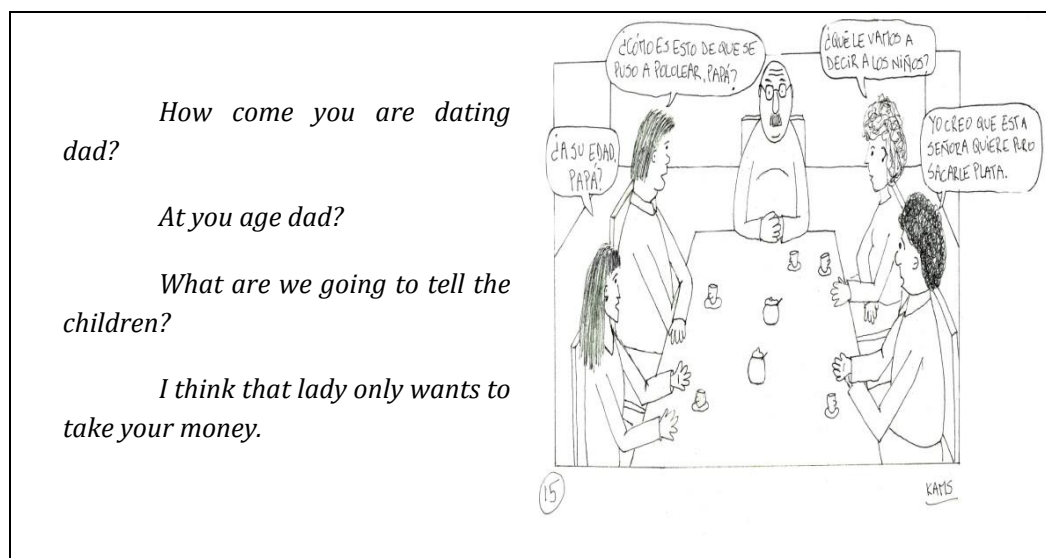
²³ This aspect of visual elicitation interviews was considered for the study’s ethical approval. See Appendix 8 for details

conceptualizations of a tension about ageing into visual stories, ensuring that the images conveyed the original concepts. How plausible is it to transform verbal accounts into visual images?

For the sake of simplicity and also to maintain both sides of a tension close to each other, my original intention was to create a single image that represented each tension. However, when revising the text to visualise how the images should appear, it became clear that a tension was too abstract to illustrate in a single image. So instead of creating synthetic images, the constitutive stories of the tensions were deconstructed. In order to do this we went back to the original excerpts in the analysed documents, in search of symbolic elements that could be turned into concrete visual representations (Appendix 9).

Figure 5.7 Sample drawings from the set





During the final stage of the design, we used as many stories as necessary to represent multiple aspects in each tension. I paid particular attention to maintaining neutrality in the representation of the stories.

Stories come with positive or/and negative values. This is because the actors voice the situations as they experience them and thus provide them with value, and because the construction of perspectives in the analysis of social imaginaries emphasized those values by employing the desired-undesired dyad as analytical categories. However, those values needed to be neutralized as far as possible in the drawings. Therefore the situations that were comprehended from the stories during the documentary analysis were kept, but to neutralize extreme positions, speech bubbles were used to moderate the original positive or negative values and allowed the interviewees to infuse the stories with their own experiences, meanings and values. The success of this technique relies on trusting participants' knowledge of their

context (Latour 2005); richer and more complex than the representations I could provide in my research instruments.

To ensure the images responded to the participants’ visual culture (Prosser and Loxley 2008) correctly, they were tested in a pilot. Ten participants (Table 5.8) were asked to describe the scenes in the drawings. The aim of the exercise was not to obtain standardised responses, but to make sure the symbolic elements did indeed represent the type of situation that they were intend to represent. When a specific drawing was difficult to interpret or when it strayed too much from the original story, the participant was asked to explain what elements in the drawing had led them in that direction. These responses were recorded and used to adjust the images before the interviews.

Table 5.8 Pilot sample

			Age			
			40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
SES	Low	Female		1	1	
		Male	1			
	Medium	Female			1	
		Male	1			1
	High	Female		2		1
		Male	1			

5.8.2.3 Interviews

In drawing the sample of participants, I attempted to achieve balance across gender, age group and socio-economic status. The final sample included 32 residents of Santiago, Chile: 16 men and 16 women between 40 and 75+ across three SES.

Table 5.9 Distribution of participants

		AGE							
		40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75+
SES	GENDER								
LOW	M	1			1				
	F			1	1	2		1	
MED	M	1	1	2	1	1		1	2
	F	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
HIGH	M						3	2	
	F	1	2						1

During the interviews participants were encouraged to interact with the drawings by classifying them and discussing their classifications²⁴. Participants were first asked to divide the images into two sets: those that they felt represented the reality of ageing in Chile and those that did not. Afterwards, using only those they deemed representative, they were asked to divide this pile into three sets: desirable, undesirable and neither desirable nor undesirable images of ageing. This latter pile was discarded, because those images did not serve the purpose of stimulating discussions over tensions in ageing. Participants were then asked what it was that they found desirable or undesirable about the suggested stories in the images, and what sort of strategies they could use in their lives to achieve the former and prevent the latter.

Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format (Bernard, 2006:212). Participants were free to speak and tell their stories largely without interruption. The images served as powerful elicitors of stories

²⁴ Appendix 10

as participants engaged personally with recognizable characters and situations. I asked them to discuss the images they had selected, explaining what aspects of the stories they thought were desirable or undesirable. Then I asked them what resources, relationships, skills, memberships and values were useful to them in achieving the desirable and avoiding the undesirable ageing identities they had described. This process generated narratives of addressing tensions about ageing that confronted them in the drawings. This required participants to go back and forth between the stories in the images and their life experiences. They associated each image of a tension about ageing with personal meanings and structures connecting the micro with the macro.

This arts-based approach played a crucial part in making use of ‘affective experiences, senses and emotions... for gathering and exploring meaning in experience’ (Finley 2011:444). During the sessions I heard participants laugh at the stories, express nostalgia, become outraged or sigh as they saw familiar stories portrayed. Moreover, this approach encouraged the meanings in those stories to be re-written. The reintroduction and re-interpretation of analytical concepts from the first empirical stage indicated that stories and narratives were co-produced by participants and myself during interviews.

The interviews were designed to present disputed meanings of ageing and for participants to offer solutions to these tensions or disputes. However, precisely because different stories presented contentious understandings of ageing, with each image participants had to readjust their perspective. The shift of perspective disconcerted some people, especially when they became aware that the position they adopted in discussing one image might contradict a position they had

adopted in discussing an earlier image. For each image, participants had to reflect and rediscover the resources that allowed them to solve the tensions, preventing them from over-adapting the interpretive framework behind the research (Jarvinen 2000). In these situations a form of identity with the function of reconciling mismatches between known identities (White et al. 2007) emerged during the interviews in the process of discussing the images.

5.8.3 Strategy for analysing interview data

During the interviews, participants reflected on strategies to accept or reject externally attributed identities of ageing. These strategies connected understandings of ageing at a macro level with experiences lived in routine situations. Their strategies to accept or reject externally attributed identities were also triggered by contentious identities stemming from tensions in the social imaginaries of ageing in the political, mass media, and older people’s social domains. During visual elicitation interviews I attempted to mobilise individuals’ ageing identities by presenting images representing tensions of ageing, and asking them to solve these tensions. The resulting analytical challenge was to follow the route those identities had traced. Latour (2005) presents a detailed description of the task at hand:

‘To be faithful to the experience of the social... we first have to learn how to deploy controversies... then we have to be able to follow how the actors themselves stabilize those uncertainties... and finally, we want to see how the assemblages thus gathered can renew our sense of being in collective’ (Latour, 2005:249)

After controversies have been deployed, an approach from constructionist analytics offers the opportunity to open the analysis to

the overlaps of institutions, culture and social interaction that happen at both micro and macro levels across various domains in everyday life (Holstein & Gubrium 2013:262). To accomplish constructionist analytics, one must go back and forth between discourse practice (how the world is interpreted) and discourse in practice (institutional conditions, resources and related discourses mediating interactions with each other) (Holstein & Gubrium 2013:264). To swing between these two sides of discourse I used the techniques of situational analysis and network analysis combined. I explain these methods in the following sections, but for now let us anticipate that whilst situational analysis permits the articulation of situational contexts and their meanings, network analysis (or reversed network analysis in this case, to be explained below) was crucial in creating visual representations of the main elements in the emergent narratives.

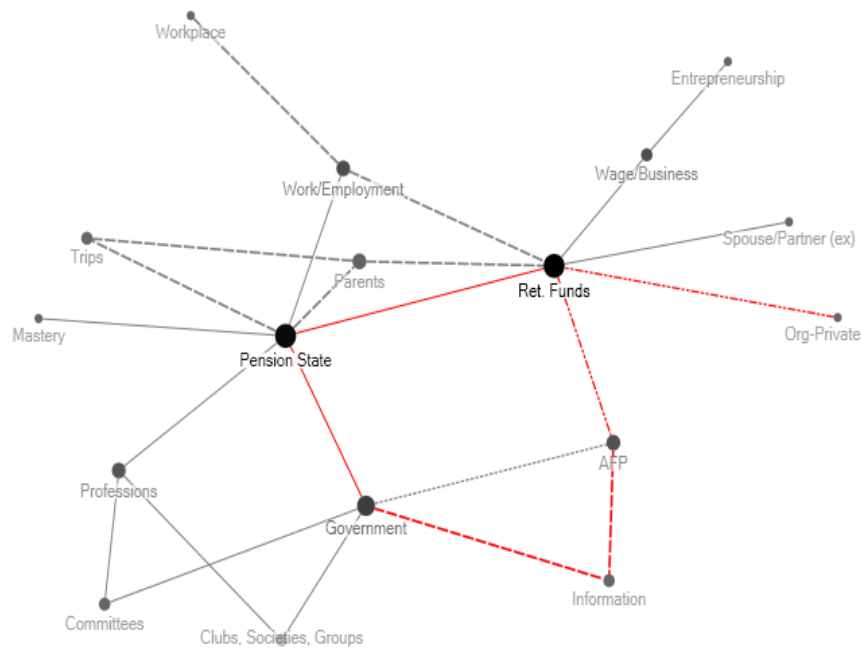
5.8.3.1 *Constructing narratives from resources networks: the emergence of public and ontological stories*

Narratives express strategies - strategies that are accessed through text, produced during interviews and read in verbatim transcriptions. However, it is possible to move beyond individual productions of reality and look at narrative practice, that is, the ‘conditions and resources surrounding how narratives are assembled’ (Holstein & Gubrium 2013:271). Analysing narratives mobilised by ageing identities means looking at participants as particular types of actors (Holstein & Gubrium 2013:273), producing certain types of stories in response to the tensions they confronted.

Although interviews would be better complemented with direct observation of the routines of the participants, multi-site ethnography was beyond this study. Nevertheless, interviews offered insight into

certain structural elements shaping people’s lives and expectations as each story revealed resources of the most diverse nature. The constitutive elements of stories were a mesh of social and non-social elements, connected in multiple contextual situations. Seeking narrative practice in a text allows objects and entities that have been traditionally considered non-social to be reconsidered in their roles in shaping the social (Latour 2005). Each time participants solved a tension, they needed to switch on to one or more identities. These identities find footing in diverse resources or conditions that may be material, spiritual, people, and skills, among others. The resources are organised in situational networks (e.g. for the tension being dependent vs having dependants, I identified four typical situations. See an example in Figure 5.8. Stories are woven during the exercise of connecting tensions of ageing to their life experiences.

Figure 5.8 Example of the situational network 'State dependency'



Individuals in the sample frequently relied on personal experiences - and the associated resources - to bridge visual stories with their knowledge of the context. However, sometimes there were blanks as lived lives can hardly encompass all the turns in multiple stories. Institutionalised social imaginaries play a role here, because they act as a proxy for experience. In this context, participants told two types of stories, public and ontological (Somers 1994). Public stories refer to individuals’ general attitudes and beliefs about ageing, detached from personal experiences, and they were thus told in a more abstract, ‘othered’ way. In contrast, ontological stories are more specific because they speak of personal experiences or those that participants observed directly, told in ways such as ‘I believe I will...’ or ‘my mother once...’

By comparing public and ontological stories it is possible to tease out the convergent and divergent strategies individuals and groups of individuals develop to cope with the cultural changes about ageing as they happen.

5.8.3.2 *Mapping strategies with situational analysis*

To begin mapping the relationship between resources of varied nature, in both public and ontological stories I used situational analysis. Situational analysis is a spin-off of grounded theory, but its focus is the delimitation of social worlds by tracing interactions of collective actors through shared discourses. According to Adele Clarke (Clarke 2005) social worlds include more than factual participation of individualised actors; they encompass actors and actants, that is, human and non-human actors constructed discursively by others for their own purposes.

The main analytical tool of situational analysis is situational maps. These maps require prior coding of the materials. They centre on

understanding the relations and transformations among the key elements, materialities (e.g. assets, financial resources, etc.), discourses, structures and conditions of the situation under enquiry (Clarke 2005: xxii).

Situational analysis, therefore, presented a tool for allowing narratives to emerge from relationships between elements. Heeding Hendry’s warning on the risks of dissecting stories, I wanted to create situated maps of resources and the meanings given to the interaction of resources in a network. Focusing on this interplay facilitated constructing a ‘meta-narrative of whole people, not reducing people to parts, but recognizing in the interplay of parts the essence of wholeness. Only then can we begin to imagine the real’ (Josselson 1995:42 in Lincoln et al. 2011:107).

The interviews were analysed using the following coding scheme: firstly, I distinguished public from ontological stories, and then identified temporal dimensions (past, present and future) as well as resources in each type of story. Temporality gives us a sense of the stability of these strategies over time. It is how we know, for instance, if participants imagine they will replicate current strategies in the future, and even their plans to enact a strategy that has not been set in place yet. Resources could be people (e.g. friends, offspring, partners, etc.), organisations (e.g. care homes, clubs, Municipalities, etc.), material (house, income, benefits, etc.), and resources of the self (e.g. drive, mastery, beliefs, etc.). I reconstructed the strategies by tracing in each story the one-on-one relationships between resources²⁵. Through the

²⁵ Appendix 11

iterative repetition of this procedure patterns of connections between resources and temporality emerged.

Situational analysis permitted me to observe the outcome of combining multiple sets of resources across different situations in which a tension was being resolved. These situations were analytical categories emerging from the analysis of the combination of resources. Typical combinations of resources belong to specific contexts. The actions and meanings attributed to the resources in those contexts constitute a situation. Once a typical situation has been established it can be described through the resources it holds, and the strategies through which the resources are used in context. Finally, each strategy was described within a temporal frame indicating whether it had been used to resolve this tension in the past, present or if it was expected to maintain its relevance in the future.

5.8.3.3 *Visualising strategies with network analysis*

Concluding the visualisation exercise are networks. Network analysis provides a compelling visual representation of the structural aspects of the narratives. Networks also help in visualising the narratives of control in each of the explored tensions. However, mine is a particular type of network analysis. Instead of defining the nodes that may constitute a network and then measuring them; the network is constructed of nodes (resources) connected in the stories told by participants. It is therefore a reversed network analysis. I used networks to summarise the solutions to tensions in specific situations by illustrating the resources participants drew on whilst resolving a tension. Visual networks are equivalent to situational maps, because they both follow the one-on-one relationships between resources.

The limitation of this method that became immediately apparent is that some metrics normally used in network analysis, such as density, closeness and eigenvector centrality, cannot be applied in this case. They would not make sense when the nodes and node classifications are not delimited a priori. However, other metrics, like degree and betweenness centrality, that represent the salience of certain nodes within a network, were used to visually represent the resources with most connections or that acted as bridges between resources in a network (Hansen et al. 2011). The salience of some resources in a network, and the types of connections or ties between them illustrate the facilitators and constraints individuals encounter in developing strategies to control transitions.

Visual networks summarize how public and ontological stories of ageing address the distribution of resources: which resources are involved in the resolution of a tension, if the connection between those resources is positive or negative. A positive connection facilitates a desired strategy to resolve a tension, whereas a negative connection represents a potential problem in its resolution. Negative ties can be attributed to either a lack or scarcity of a resource resulting in the lack or scarcity of another; or they can be the result of a failed tie leading to the resolution of a tension in an undesired direction. It was also relevant to pay attention to the temporalities given to the ties. The connections that belong only to the past may be accounting for strategies that are no longer in use. Those belonging to the future represent expectations that have not yet been enacted. Ties belonging only to the present are strategies being used at the time of interview with a chance of being included in future resource networks. Finally, ties that related both to the past and the future were being enacted in the present and were expected to prevail in the future.

5.9 Summary

Social imaginaries of ageing across social domains highlight certain aspects of ageing, whereas others are barely noticed or even entirely neglected. We also know that the selection of dimensions of ageing and the attribution of meaning to selected attributes vary across social domains. The theory of social imaginaries proposes that definitions of ageing are contingent on the interests of different social domains, but it also helps us understand that these contingent definitions are operatively treated as universal truths within each social domain (Pintos 2001; Pintos 2003; Pintos 2004a). Because the aims and interests of each domain differ, ageing may encounter points of consensus and conflict that compete to gain social visibility.

For the purposes of this study I construct the social imaginaries of ageing in three social domains: political, mass media and older people themselves. I describe and compare these social imaginaries across six themes derived from a literature review of studies of social imaginaries and representations of ageing: (1) physical environment, (2) information, education & technology, (3) social environment, (4) body, health and quality of life, (5) demography, economy and politics and (6) representations and roles (see chapter 5). My aim is to achieve a comprehensive view of the most salient understandings of ageing in Chilean society, and to identify the main point of consensus and conflict among the social imaginaries of the three selected social domains.

In the first empirical stage, I conducted a documentary analysis within each social domain: parliamentary debates for the political domain, newspaper articles for the domain of mass media and focus

groups with participants aged 60 and above representing older people themselves. In order to compare social imaginaries across the six themes I fixed a perspective or lens of observation. This lens was a matrix with two axes: i) control: whether the situations described in the documents were controlled by older people or by other actors; and ii) desirability: whether the situations were described as desirable or undesirable. During an analysis in three stages, I coded the documents according to the six themes created a priori (Hsieh and Shannon 2005), then I performed a cluster analysis of the text (Grefenstette 1994) in these documents to discard the information that was semantically irrelevant in each theme, and finally I coded the remaining excerpts to create categories that fit the control-desirability matrix.

By comparing the contents of the matrix for each theme across the political, mass media and older people’s domain I was able to identify salient divergences, or conflicts, in the understandings of ageing. I organised these conflicts in analytical categories that emphasised the tensions in the definitions of ageing in Chile: (1) preference for public vs preference for private spaces, (2) indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment, (3) information as an intrinsic value vs information as instrumental, (4) sociability in family networks vs wider social networks, (5) abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency, (6) health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness, (7) being economically dependent vs having dependants and (8) predominance of passive social roles vs active social roles. Because these tensions are drawn upon unsolved definitions of ageing in Chile, I used them as an entry point to explore strategies to control transitions during a second empirical stage.

I developed a methodology for using tensions of ageing in Chile as an entry point to understand age transitions. I retained only those tensions that made sense to the participants of the study based on the results of statistical analysis of survey data aimed to discover whether there were significant differences in the scores given to opposite sides of a tension. I presented participants with the remaining tensions in the form of images. They then discussed the images with the aim of resolving the tensions. In doing so they produced: i) public stories representing beliefs about ageing and ideal solutions to the tensions and ii) ontological stories representing practical strategies to solve the tensions. I classified their strategies for resolving the tensions into typical situations or themes. In every situation where participants resolved a tension, their stories revealed the multiple resources they drew on. I portrayed such strategies using networks summarising the salience of resources and the ties between them.

In sum, the solutions participants gave to the contentions about ageing in society explained the strategies for exerting control over their ageing identities, and thus how ageing transitions are shaped from within and without.

6 Social imaginaries of ageing in Chile

In part II of this thesis I started tracing the path to understanding how individuals control multiple situational identities. The first step in my investigations was constructing social imaginaries of ageing in Chile in the political, mass media and older people's social domains. In chapter 4 I explained the concept of the social imaginary and its implications as a research perspective. I also presented a literature review of studies of social imaginaries and representations of ageing relevant to the empirical context of this research, organising the literature according to the most salient themes. In chapter 5, I explained the methodological approach in producing social imaginaries of ageing in Chile, and how I compared these across the three social domains to reveal consensus and conflict in understandings of ageing.

The purpose of this chapter is: i) to display and discuss imaginaries of ageing in Chile and ii) to explore the tensions stemming from competing perspectives across themes in the social domains of politics, mass media and older peoples' own perspectives. Throughout the chapter, my findings are discussed in the light of the literature on social imaginaries and representations of ageing reviewed in chapter 4. The discussion is therefore situated largely within the boundaries of knowledge about Chilean ageing.

The chapter is organised as follows: I first present the results of the analysis of social imaginaries about ageing in i) the political domain, ii) the mass media domain, and iii) in older people's own domain. In

reading these findings it is important to keep in mind that each social domain produces social imaginaries for each theme, and that any social imaginary accounts for multiple internal perspectives that a social domain holds for each theme. However, the perspectives I present in each section aim to reveal which aspects of ageing are deemed to be - as understood within each social domain - under the control of older people, and which are controlled by others. The sections that follow these findings focus on the most salient areas of convergence and divergence between social imaginaries. The interpretation leads to the construction of the tensions of age and ageing in Chilean society.

The tensions of ageing are the triggers of control efforts, because they present ageing individuals with contradictory expectations about ageing that must be resolved in everyday situations within the multiple networks in which they engage. These tensions exist because each social imaginary represents a constructed reality, which operates as a practical truth to its social domain. The construction of a reality involves the use of a semantic field, a specific language that is indexical (Fontdevila et al. 2011) in speaking about that truth. The word clouds presented throughout this chapter are graphical representations of the language used in each social domain when reproducing their social imaginaries of age and ageing. The size of the words represents their frequency relative to the other words in the word cloud. Their function is to provide evidence as the basis for discussion of each of the social imaginaries in every social domain²⁶. In the sections that discuss the

²⁶ These discussions are extensive, therefore I am using this type of evidence because it effectively summarises information that otherwise could only be expressed in excerpts that would expand this thesis beyond the permitted word limit.

tensions in the social imaginaries, my sources of evidence are excerpts from the analysed data.

A final consideration relates to the lens of observation I used to produce and compare the social imaginaries. In chapter 5 I explained that my perspective of observation was a matrix comprised by two axes: control and desirability. The notion of control refers to whether, according to the discourses of each social domain, older people are active agents in defining their daily life experiences. Conversely, external control refers to others making decisions that will affect the conditions of older people's lives (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011). Both self-determined and hetero-determined (external) control occurs in contexts that are rendered either desirable or undesirable in the social imaginaries of the political, mass media and older people's social domains. Desirability provides a sense of the accepted tenets for older people's lives in Chilean society. In order to emphasise how control shapes the frames of reference and the expectations of ageing in Chile, desirability will remain a latent category throughout this chapter, and the organisation of the findings hinges on what is controlled by older people, and what is controlled by other agents.

6.1 Political domain

Mostly concerned with the economic challenges posed by the fast growing ageing population, the discourses of the political domain hover principally over events at the macro social level, particularly reforms of the network of social protection. Dominating the political social imaginaries of ageing is a tension between discourses portraying later life as a period of inherent vulnerability, and those presenting its possibilities. These seemingly contradictory positions are however

tethered to the same root: the necessity of modernising the State in order to respond to the Chile's rapid economic change. Parliamentary debates centered their discussions on policy matters common to most ageing societies, such as financial security, healthcare and care provision in later life. Stemming from these concerns, possibilities for engagement of older individuals in their welfare arose in the form of existing local organisations, the coordination of older individuals with the National Service of Older Adults, the perceived interest and appetite of the older population for learning and training, and their general good knowledge of State services and bureaucracy. However, these opportunities are frequently overshadowed or suffocated by ageism - particularly in the labour market - , by the threat of abandonment and of abuse, and by the failure of the privatisation of pensions and healthcare that has finally taken full effect three decades from implementation. The political domain struggles to simultaneously justify and apply corrective measures to policies that have weakened security and quality of life in later life. As a result of this effort, the political social imaginaries reinforce stereotypes of vulnerability and frailty as characteristics of ageing.

6.1.1 Control as empowerment and capacity building

6.1.1.1 *Budding empowerment*

Despite the views pointing to the ageing population as problematic to the country's economy (Jorquera 2010), parliamentary discourses highlighted that in the near future older people will undertake important economic, social and cultural roles. However, before this happens, measures need to be taken to improve the quality of life of older people. Steps taken in that direction have been supported by the

opportunities for meeting local concerns. The amendments to the Service's structure were possible due to the previous existence of local organisations, mostly articulated at a municipal level. It is through these local organisations that central government expected to channel older adults' views on policies proposed and implemented by local and central agencies. For instance, the Central Union of Pensioners of Chile was one of the organisations that brought up the necessity to exempt older adults from paying 7% of their pensions to the healthcare system. By doing this, older people assumed some control over situations that are affecting them, reminding the actors in the political domain of their responsibility in providing an environment in which they older people exercise their economic autonomy.

Parliamentary debates evidence the emergence of capacity building potential that had been invisible up to this point to the political domain. By connecting local and central organisations, the imaginaries of older people as potential contributors to forthcoming political projects represents a shift from the imaginaries of ageing found in the press by Torrejón (2007), in which older people were seldom viewed in positions of power and more frequently portrayed as passive recipients of social policies. The opening of channels of communications between political actors in governments and older people's organisations started widening envisioned areas of participation for older people, particularly those where they can be active agents in shaping their social and physical environments.

First, the political domain indicated that Chile is beginning to prepare for future scenarios where older people will be expected to apply actualised knowledge on par with their younger counterparts. These expectations implicitly challenge assumptions of irreversible

cognitive rigidity (Edwardh 1987; Peñaloza and Rojas 2005 in Torrejón, 2007) and envision that access to information and training would allow older individuals to lead active lives in formal and informal settings in their communities and families, as well as assuming control of their routines and be admitted to those networks they wish to join. An example was the identified need to encourage the inclusion of older people as active subjects of health policy. Although still a developing perspective, a few interventions by parliamentarians referred specifically to preventive health and how policy could empower older adults to make better health related choices by improving their access to information and education. The turn to a paradigm of empowerment in preventative health is novel in the political imaginaries of ageing. Despite evidence showing that older people are already well acquainted with available health care services (SENAMA et al. 2010), prior approaches to preventative health failed to harness this capital and focused on expected outcomes in terms of reducing public health expenditure (Torrejón 2007).

Second, political debates discuss how law and regulations can achieve greater control for older people over the physical and social spaces in which their lives unfold. This discussion focuses less on the actual usage of space by older people, and more on the potential control that individuals and groups may exercise over their environment. For instance, infrastructure is a condition for the development of social activities. Social clubs and recreational activities were acknowledge as the principal way in which they make acquaintance with peers, who can become relevant sources of support. Parliamentarians discussed the convenience of removing bureaucratic obstacles for allocating spaces in public buildings that groups of older people can use to their own ends. Such innitiaves on the one hand present a unique opportunity to listen

to the users of community centres and applying design principles to create inviting spaces (Charness, 2008; Landorf, Brewer, & Sheppard, 2008) for intensive use by older people. However, the allocation of spaces for social activities should also consider that although Chileans find joy in sharing social activities with their peers (Bunout et al. 2012) and that evidence shows that friends are effective in preventing loneliness (Bowling 2006) in later life the majority of older adults- at least in the Santiago area- are not engaging in group activities outside of their immediate social network (Bunout et al. 2012; SENAMA et al. 2013).

6.1.2 External control as non-participative policy design

6.1.2.1 *Promoting a cultural turn*

One of the key problems discussed in parliamentary debates is a growing generalised individualism in Chilean society. Among the many undesired consequences of this cultural turn in values, is the indifference of policy makers to the particularities of older people as an interested social group, resulting in their marginalisation. Although studies about the representation of older age in Chile highlight the perceived role of the mass media as the main institution responsible for the dissemination of negative stereotypes (SENAMA 2009b; SENAMA and MaSS 2011), the political domain has adopted a more critical perspective about its own negligence in creating conditions for the proliferation of more diverse images of older age and in battling exclusion which, according to Jorquera (2010), should be at the top of the political agenda. Aware of its own shortcomings, since the beginning of the 21st century, the Chilean political domain has begun to pay close

attention to the effects of rapid ageing. For the first time a Service for Older Adults was created with the aim of organising schemes to address some of the urgent needs of the ageing population, generating knowledge to anticipate problems and promoting cultural change in response to the new demographic dynamics.

6.1.2.2 *Social protection network*

As the demographic dependency rate of Chile grows faster than anticipated²⁷, the need for an extended network of social protection for older people, with national coverage, has moved up the political agenda. Alongside restructuring the bureaucratic apparatus of the National Service of Older Adults, by creating regional offices, the healthcare and pension systems are also demanding major modifications.

It had become evident to politicians that Chile's organisational and bureaucratic structures were unprepared to meet the needs of a rapidly ageing population. The caveats in parliamentary debates certainly resonate with the study of inclusion and exclusion in older age, demonstrating public opinion that Chile is unprepared to face the challenges posed by demographic ageing (Abusleme et al. 2014). The political domain portrayed older people as a particularly vulnerable group of the population. In terms of material vulnerability, this view is consistent with the national figures that estimate that over 80% of the older population brushes the poverty line (SENAMA et al. 2010). Parliamentarians shared views torned between optimism on the capacity

²⁷ It is now expected that by 2020 the population over 60 years old will equal to 0-14 years old.

pension to those whose individual savings pensions²⁹ fall below the minimum pension established by law. The positive aspects of these policies highlighted in parliamentary debates are: i) they represent an improvement in the income of 80% of retirees; ii) they can alleviate the economic dependency of older people on their families; iii) they acknowledge inequalities that result in impoverishment in later life.

Besides the explicitly discussed implications for senior citizens and for the healthcare system, the healthcare bill was a battle ground for partisan politics. As older people are a growing portion of the voting pool, and this bill in particular was keenly awaited by the ageing population, parliamentarians included in their speeches claims for the role of their coalition in proposing, designing and advocating the initiative. The bill was conceived and entered for discussion in Congress during centre/left coalition governments, formally entered for discussion in 2008 under Bachelet's government of the centre-left political coalition, but approved and signed during Piñera's conservative coalition government. However, parliamentarians of the conservative coalition emphasised that the former Head of Treasury opposed this bill. Evidence presented in Congress shows that the average health expenditure of the population over 65 is up to six times that of people in their thirties. This evidence raised questions about whether the State healthcare system could be sustained without the contribution of all the waged and retired population. The political implications are complex. As the wealthier quintile of the population does not contribute to the public healthcare system (SENAMA et al.

²⁹ Chile's pension system is based on individual savings administered by private agencies (AFP).

access was regarded as an equalising measure challenging the discourse of older adults as intrinsically vulnerable, while selective access was defended by those believing that public expenditure should focus on the most deprived.

An additional argument questioning the intrinsic vulnerability of older adults came from strong critiques of Chile's pension system from within the political domain. Between 1980 and 1982 Chile moved from a redistributive pension system to a private one. However, the financial returns from the AFPs (Pension Fund Administrators) have resulted in a dramatic drop in the value of pensions. As a result, income after retirement is now less than half of the average wage of an active worker. I argue this critique of the core structure of the social protection network implies that older people are not vulnerable because of their age but because, regardless of their efforts, the pension system is designed to impoverish them from the very beginning. Their personal savings are used as investment capital by AFPs in the stock markets and loans to large companies. AFPs charge fixed fees to administer pension funds, but losses due to the volatility of financial markets are absorbed by pensioners, resulting in dramatic losses to lifelong savings during global financial crises. The hardest impact falls on those near retirement age who cannot recover from these losses.

programmes for older people have been already set in place (i.e. nutrition, subsidies for optic and hearing devices, geriatric nursing care in hospitals, travel and leisure concessions), it was the hope of politicians that a holistic programme focussing on older people would be set up across the entire Chilean healthcare system.

6.1.2.3 *Work and training as pathways to independent living*

The focus on healthcare and pension policies was not conceived by the political domain as a permanent solution to the economic struggles of older adults. It is a stepping stone towards building up their economic stability and further independence from both family and State in the future. The strategies to accomplish these goals were: i) to strengthen community organisations of older adults to develop activities, provide skills training and find alternative support; ii) to coordinate with local organisations seeking the skills and experience of older people thus increasing employability and community engagement among older adults. Thus, consistent with the imaginaries of ageing in the press (Torrejón, 2007) productivity in later life was deemed to be enabled by public policies. The political domain regards the intervention of the State as necessary to steer the transformation of the roles of older people from what politicians describe as traditional passive roles, to becoming active and productive for society.

Although parliamentary debates gave only minor consideration to discovering pre-existing social and cultural capitals, I argue that due to the increasing proportion of people in retirement who have left employment unwillingly (SENAMA et al. 2010); a course of action aimed to increase employability is likely to find at least initial support among the older population, depending on work conditions. However, policies also need to consider obstacles to inclusion in work

environments, such as those found in the studies of social imaginaries in Chile (Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010) i) barriers presented by age-related ill health and disability and ii) ageist stereotypes that presently discourage organisations from hiring older workers. With the exception of the evidence from National Survey of Images of Old Age (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002) that found that 93% of participants did not consider older people to be a burden to society, imaginaries and representations of ageing have so far portrayed older people as passive and unproductive (Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008; North and Fiske 2013).

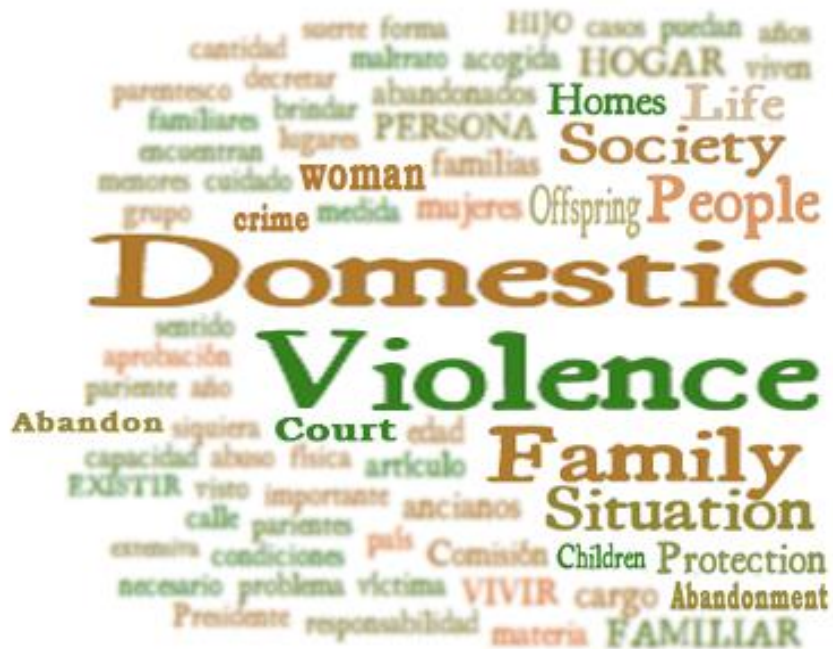
Hand in hand with the attempts to shift the productive structure of the country in order to include older workers, parliamentary debates addressed the responsibility of the State to produce information about ageing dynamics in Chile in order to articulate the relationship between practitioners and workers in the public sector and older users of State services. Political discourses argued that the educational process should be led by the National Service of Older Adults and should involve: i) training State services in the needs and forms of communication of older adults; ii) training older adults in the use of information technology and guaranteeing access to information to keep updated on relevant changes. The social imaginaries of political domain acknowledged expectations of having an older population that can easily access and manage new information (Torrejón 2007). Nonetheless, political discourses did not mention specific plans for helping older generations overcome the current technological gap (Jorquera 2010).

6.1.2.4 *The perils of care*

Parliamentary debates discussed the consequences of the dissolution of traditional family dynamics. Older people's embeddedness in family environments has been viewed positively in this domain as the family represents the primary community in which older adults participate by sharing experiences with its members, as well as undertaking grandparenting roles, sometimes as primary carers. From the political perspective, in exchange for engagement in family life, people receive the advantage of growing older in a social environment that can provide them shelter, affection and emotional support.

Parliamentarians nevertheless acknowledged that modern life conditions present challenges to sustaining ideal family dynamics. Smaller families, changes in traditional gender roles and pressures on the time of individuals have weakened the familial network of support for older people. As a consequence, social problems such as difficulties in caring for older family members, abandonment and abuse seem to have increased across every social stratum of Chilean society. I argue that the observations highlighted in the political domain point to Chile going through a transitional period. Societal transformations have increased the challenges to maintaining family support. However, a majority of Chilean older people cohabit with younger family members, and it is common to be in regular contact with multiple family members (SENAMA et al. 2010). The social imaginaries of the political domain added insights to what is happening to the increasing proportion of older adults that do not have a reliable family network. Moreover, they acknowledged the potential for abuse of older adults living with family members.

Figure 6.5 Most frequent words in parliamentary debates on 'family, community and social environment'



The word cloud shows that domestic violence is the most salient concern of the political domain. Family members and care homes can be part of the network of protection of older people or perpetrators of domestic violence.

Despite the concern for adequate care in older age, most discussions focused on the topics of abandonment and abuse. As a result legislators have included older adults in the bills that regulate domestic violence. By recognising the vulnerability of older people, parliamentarians also acknowledged the responsibility, ability and disposition of the political domain in safeguarding the rights of older people within the law.

Although domestic violence towards older people appears in debates between 2002 and 2005, it is not until 2010 that specific legislation is sanctioned. This is consistent with the fact that abuse has only started to gain interest in Chilean studies about ageing during the last decade (SENAMA 2009c; Abusleme and Guajardo 2013; Abusleme and Caballero 2014). This topic also presents a gap in the research of

imaginaries of ageing in Chile, which is explained in part by its recent position in public attention. Key measures to protect older adults against domestic abuse discussed in parliamentary debates involved broadening the frame of what constitutes abuse and who are likely perpetrators. Abuse was expanded to include not only physical, but psychological and financial abuse. In the matter of who can be defined as a perpetrator of domestic violence, the framework extended the definition from kin to all members of the household, and even those who have close ties to the members of the household, without necessarily living in the same place.

Much attention was also given to the intersections between violence, abandonment and neglect. It was proposed by some legislators that when older people cannot provide for themselves, their families should be bound by law to give sustenance and not to abandon older members. Abandonment and neglect were defined as not meeting the care needs of the person, not providing sustenance, leaving a family member in the care of third parties but not visiting them, or emotional neglect in ignoring their affective and psychological needs within or outside the household. The common stance taken in parliamentary debates was that only in those cases where the family is unable to provide, the State should intervene by subsidising organisations whose aim is caring for older people.

Despite the specifications of what constitutes violence against and abandonment of older people, parliamentary debates also tapped into the practicalities of implementing effective solutions that protect victims. By 2010, the main problems were: i) the low rate of report by the victims and witnesses; ii) a weak legal framework; iii) the lack of organisational and material infrastructure to provide shelter and care

to victims of violence, abandonment or both. Although the National Service of Older Adults estimated about 30% of older individuals are victims of some degree of psychological, physical or financial abuse, the rate of reporting is estimated to be only 1% of those cases (SENAMA 2009c). The information provided by the Service to parliamentarians suggested that abuse produces a cumulative deterioration on people's health and overall quality of life. To these conditions must be added a combination of shame and guilt experienced by the older person that makes it difficult to report abuse (SENAMA 2009c). When victims attempt to report abuse only to find that courts lack the legal tools to implement protective measures, there are no places for them to find refuge, and domestic violence continues to be hidden.

According to parliamentary debates these obstacles are exacerbated by other challenges such as the normalisation of violence in domestic environments, uncertainty of the future and fear of loneliness that discourages seniors from reporting these situations or seeking any form of external help. Charities and non-profit organisations, whose personnel are mostly volunteers, have assumed the responsibility of sheltering vulnerable older adults who are homeless, victims of domestic violence or other ill treatment. Although during parliamentary debates the work of these organisations was praised, the increase of older adults in need of long term care facilities raised awareness among parliamentarians of the poor organisation and infrastructure that exists in Chile. Moreover, care homes and organisations taking in vulnerable older people can also become involved in the same cycle by neglecting those in their care, acting as a location for institutional abuse, or operating with inadequate staff and infrastructure.

The stance taken by parliamentarians aligns legislative efforts with an interest to preserve quality of life³⁰. All steps taken in the direction of providing older people with supportive environments are crucial, and considering the overlaps between the provision of care homes and the increase of elder abuse substantially widens the network of protection for older people in Chile. If we consider domestic violence as a hindrance to older people's autonomy, the impact on their quality of life could hasten the shift from independence to dependence (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). Conversely, protecting the victims of domestic violence could be effective in enabling older people to regain control over their quality of life and well-being.

6.2 Mass media domain

Different from the political domain where the dichotomies between challenges and possibilities of social inclusion in later life were bound, and thus temperate, by a common political project; the social imaginaries of the mass media are notably more polarised. The mass media showed how older people are gaining visibility in terms of their citizenship rights and their involvement in political roles, as well as incipient but positive changes to the possibilities of their inclusion in the job market. Within the family, they have the potential to act as mediators in intergenerational conflict. The mass media also

³⁰ 'WHO defines Quality of Life as an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns. It is a broad ranging concept affected in a complex way by the person's physical health, psychological state, personal beliefs, social relationships and their relationship to salient features of their environment' (WHO, n.d.).

emphasised the importance of possibilities for older individuals to lead healthier lifestyles to an even stronger degree than is evident in parliamentary debates. This emphasis follows increased availability of information and improvement of living conditions.

But imaginaries of the mass media also reported how multiple negative stereotypes of ageing have a negative impact on the inclusion of older people in multiple spheres. For the most part, reported events and situation were seen as being out of the scope of control of older individuals, who were presented as victims of structural inequalities as of poorly designed policies, as burdens on the State, and as targets of ageism and violence. As a result, constant monitoring of older people's living spaces and activities was promoted. Attention was also given to biomedical research and its potential to increase longevity and improve health-related quality of life, as well as the consequences of extended longevity for society.

6.2.1 Control as striving for inclusion and as generativity

6.2.1.1 *Visualising the structure of opportunities*

Political news articles do not just talk of policies and politicians, but they also cover the potential contributions of older people to the successful implementation of showcased policies. Three different types of contributions for older people were salient: (1) dialogue between organisations of older adults' and political representatives to express their concerns. Politicians pledge to work towards creating a national awareness of the needs and rights of older people. Collaboration between older people's organisations and governmental agencies to battle abuse in later life was emblematic in showing older people's

empowerment. (2) A second prominent role was older people as consumers of leisure, especially in the tourism sector. Retirees have the potential to increase the dynamism of local tourism during the low season due to their flexible schedules. (3) The third role was collaborating in quality control of existing services for older adults (e.g. care homes), due to their better knowledge of their peers' needs. These imaginaries contrast with alternative roles identified by Torrejón (2007) in which the role of seniors was mostly restricted to consumption of leisure, and their social participation was frequently limited to the family sphere, mostly related to grandparenting roles. Involvement in roles that highlight political and citizenship dimensions have, so far, been exceptional, principally associated with contexts mentioned in Jorquera's (2010) study of Chilean school textbooks such as tribal leaders or elders' councils in traditional societies.

Concerns with financial stability and inclusion in later life reported in the press are consistent with those expressed in the social imaginaries of the parliamentary debates. The reported responses to these overarching anxieties are articles about government schemes to broaden the inclusion of older people, mainly through consumption of leisure and by facilitating post-retirement employment. In response to the decreasing value of pensions, the government took responsibility for the material well-being of the older population, as expected by the Chilean population according to the survey of inclusion and exclusion in later life (SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014), and created conditions for older people to participate, if that is their choice, in part-time, flexible jobs. I interpret these initiatives as instances of shared control, in which the government externally creates conditions for employment, improving older people's economic autonomy; however, it is left to individuals to decide whether the options offered by the

government are a good fit for their circumstances. But at least policy aimed towards inclusion in the job market attempts to challenge economic vulnerability due to exclusion from the labour market (Jorquera 2010). Integration of older individuals to the labour market facilitates strategies to mitigate the effects of the falling value of pensions. Mistrust in the AFPs as effective managers of their pensions has led some workers to choose early retirement, over the risk of losing their life savings due to poor decisions made by the APFs and lack of measures to protect pension funds. Nearly 30% of individuals are working after retirement age, of whom 75% work because of financial necessity. But 66% of people in post-retirement employment would continue working regardless of their financial situation (SENAMA et al. 2013). Opportunities to supplement pensions in later life are therefore likely to be well-received by the older population. However, these opportunities should also consider older people's productive capital and networks (Torrejón, 2007) if they aim to encourage control and autonomy in later life.

Figure 6.7 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'social representations and social roles'



This word cloud shows the concern of the mass media with programmes at a national scale that can improve older people's lives. Some of these programmes are related to tourism, others with improvement of healthcare centres, and others with the protection of older people against maltreatment. It also showcases the relationship between older people and youth, which can be collaborative or conflictive.

This sort of negotiated strategies, where control is shared by older individuals, organisations and institutions repeat itself throughout the social imaginaries of ageing in newspapers. It is not only a part of plans for inclusion in the labour market, but also a part of education programmes, where special attention is given to transfer of skills to communities and families; and it is a part of the reported approaches to health, where the media reported on how the combination of improved living conditions (i.e. less physical strain, advances in the medical field), combined with better sources of information about leading healthy lifestyles (i.e. diet, active minds and bodies, preventive medicine) creates better opportunities for individuals to control their ageing.

Examples of these opportunities were given by centenarians who advised readers on healthy habits. As anticipated by Jorquera (2010) older people were encouraged to lead healthier lifestyles and gain awareness of early signs of illnesses.

Perhaps the most evident demonstration of perspective of shared control was represented by reports on policies about the physical environment. In particular by articles referring to subsidies offered by the government for house alterations and adaptations. The idea is to enable an older person to move in with their family, or the other way around, to build a new independent bedroom and bathroom in their houses, to allow a companion to move in. The flexibility of the scheme allows for older individuals and their families to improve the existing infrastructure and to choose the most fitting living arrangements. This scheme only considered those older people who made the decision to live in the same home with others, whereas modifications of the physical environment to prolong independent living were excluded. However, the specifications applied to subsidised expansions could ideally lead to creating physical environments that facilitate safe mobility (Jorquera 2010) for older people.

6.2.1.2 *Nurturing the social environment*

The mass media presented stories about the roles adopted by seniors as mediators in intergenerational relationships. These relationships typically involve friction; however, some older people believe that the antagonism between generations is aroused by political interests, although no specifications were given as to what those interests are. Older people expressed that the older generation should reach out to the young and listen to their opinions and views in order to kindle intergenerational solidarity. This mediation position highlighted

by the mass media is very much in tune with recent proposals for constructing more positive images of ageing that include the substitution of polarised images of infantilisation and obsolescence by images referring to later life as a journey in which maturity enables older people to reach a balance between projecting the future and detachment (SENAMA 2009b). These proposals seemed to be informed by ageing theories such as selective optimisation of resources in later life (Baltes and Baltes 1990; Brandtstädter 2009), as well as continuity theory (Atchley 1989).

Newspapers emphasised how social networks trigger community engagement in later life. Families, educational settings and government programmes can function as facilitators for older people to connect with others, to pursue their dreams and interests and to contribute their skills in promoting intra and intergenerational solidarity. The social imaginaries of the mass media were vested in mobilising individuals' capacity to expand and reshape their social environment, and thus prevent isolation and loneliness. However, the news did not report whether the different programmes consider the health and financial limitations associated with self-exclusion from social interaction (Torrejón 2007; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011).

Figure 6.8 Most frequent words in newspapers on 'family, community and social environment'



Besides the emphasis on family relationships, this word cloud also mentions the Minister, the political figure in charge of presenting programmes that facilitate older people remaining in their families' homes (e.g. day care centres). The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is also portrayed in the word cloud and refers to the contributions that grandparents can make to their grandchildren's education and care. Words such as affection and home are also related with familial relationships. The word cloud of the mass media emphasises the aspect of families as providers of care, whereas the political domain was more concerned with the problem of domestic violence.

Examples of the synergy between older people and their social environments were training programmes leading to seniors tutoring their grandchildren, or organisations and activities for older adults acting as social hubs for them to meet peers and develop leisure, training and educational activities. In accord with Jorquera's (2010) findings about family relationships, programmes connecting grandparents and grandchildren have a better chance of success with young children before they reach adolescence, when intergenerational relationships begin to be conflictual. The second type of programme has

better chances of success if more people are encouraged to engage in activities out of the home. Although the news did not report explicitly, it is likely that most older people involved in organisations for older adults are women. This is due to women's tendency to diversify their social networks in later life, whereas Chilean men tend to stick to their known social environments (Osorio Parraguez and Jorquera 2013).

6.2.2 External barriers to inclusion, biomedical constructions of ageing, and surveillance of individuals

6.2.2.1 *Social protection and prejudice*

The news was frequently aligned with reports from the government. It was normal for these reports to stress the perspective of the decision makers, disregarding the views of older people although the oversight of older citizens is continuously reiterated. Newly implemented policies, such as the 'Integral Policy for Positive Ageing 2012-2015' (SENAMA 2012) aim to restore justice over omissions in addressing older people's needs. The policy aims to improve the lives of the old in economic, legal, leisure and care provision. Despite the declared need to improve social policies reported in newspapers, over 80% of older people declared in a national survey of ageing and quality of life, that they had not experienced unfair treatment within their families, neighbourhoods or public service institutions because of their age, with the exception of health care institutions (SENAMA et al. 2010).

The mass media attributed discrimination to negative perceptions about older people that lead to perceptions of them as financial burdens to healthcare services, but it stressed the moral obligation of the State to support its older citizens, who have more healthcare needs and live with less means than those of working age. Wavers to healthcare

contributions for the lower three quintiles of Chilean retirees anchored the debate, with the press reporting both the positive aspects of the bill as well as criticism of this project by parliamentarians of a political coalition opposing the government who express their disappointment at its limited coverage of pensioners. The opposition coalition also argued that some aspects of the bill would lead to further exclusion of older patients by ISAPRES³¹, especially those with pre-existing medical conditions. By pointing out these problems, the reported news clearly demonstrated the policy contradiction implied by conferring rights on the basis of i) economic and ii) health needs. It can be argued that the social imaginaries of health in the press highlighted the dichotomy between looking at healthcare in later life from the usual perspective of public expenditure (Torrejón 2007), and establishing healthcare as a matter of rights. This latter perspective has only arisen in previous studies of the social imaginaries of ageing and health in Chile in the form of expectations of older individuals to have an improved healthcare system, supporting them in coping with the challenges of growing older (SENAMA 2009b).

³¹ Companies running the private healthcare scheme.

Although the press placed more emphasis on benefits as a measure to counteract balance in later life, measures to integrate older workers into paid work seem to be more urgent given the increased perception of financial dependency reported in the survey of inclusion and exclusion in later life (SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014), as well as studies of social imaginaries of ageing in the press and school textbooks (Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010). These present older people as economically passive and older workers as victims of permanent discrimination by private industry. Since Torrejón (2007) identified social imaginaries in the press presenting older people as potential beneficiaries of governmental programmes to encourage work in later life, little progress seems to have occurred in developing alliances. Exclusion from active citizenship and from jobs requiring skills attributed to the young (e.g. driving) stemmed from stereotypes reported in newspapers such as older people's passivity and lack of strong opinions and inventiveness. Such stereotypes resulted in prejudice perpetuated by the adoption of superficial measures of integration that failed to tap the real opportunities for social participation in later life. North & Fiske (2013) have reported that older people are the target of most prescriptive stereotypes in society, especially from young adults. The social imaginaries in Chilean newspapers showed that it is not only youth, but also other groups yielding power (e.g. employers) who perpetuate beliefs of what older people can or cannot do. Such proliferation of imaginaries of ageing that limit participation to extraordinary individuals or to leisure contexts has been described by Osorio Parraguez, Torrejón, et al. (2010) as detrimental to generating images of active citizenship and societal engagement in later life.

segment of retirees. The same criticism applied to benefits targeted on the poorest. This perspective constructs older people as an economically vulnerable group that is suffering the consequences of poorly designed policy, and should be compensated accordingly. Yet the opposite perspective is represented by international economic organisations and by AFPs in Chile. From this perspective demographic ageing is causing stress on the country's economy; therefore workers need to work longer to produce the necessary surplus to fund their pensions and increased need for healthcare services. Both positions have been represented in the imaginaries of ageing in school textbooks (Jorquera 2010), that show the inequalities resulting from the gap between wages and pensions, and portray older people as conservative and reactive to innovative economic programmes. However, given the negative impact that policies such as those suggested by the OECD have had on the current pension system, it may be that conservatism is being mistaken for caution.

6.2.2.2 *Ageing bodies*

Research on the ageing bodies was a central topic of discussion in the news, with an emphasis on longevity and on illness in later life. The topic intersected with the imaginaries of information, as it drew on the production of knowledge about the ageing body. Here, older people became subjects of observation for research on ageing related phenomena (Pintos 2007). The identification of prevalent conditions in later life and their treatment remained a central topic in the social imaginaries of health and ageing. The press was mostly concerned with the production of information (Pintos 2007) about the relationship between ageing, longevity, and the prevalence of chronic illness in later life. Conversely, social imaginaries intersecting health and information

growing numbers of older people as a burden to their social environment, and to public services. Other than this, the imaginaries of longevity portrayed in the press discussed both the social and environmental factors that affect longevity and the association between longevity and degenerative biological processes.

When longevity is affected by people's environments, factors such as diet, exercise, cumulative stressors, as well as different lifestyles across gender and geographical location, could either improve or threaten the life expectancy of groups and individuals. In particular, alcoholism, sedentary lifestyles and obesity were singled out as risk factors which, according to the articles, were matters of personal choice and accountability. However, it was also explained in the news that older people are at greater risk than younger people of being affected by certain conditions such as malnutrition and dehydration. Chronic illness is also more prevalent in later life. Degenerative diseases such as arthritis, loss of bone and muscle tissue and dementia are some of the conditions that were associated the most with biological ageing. The press reported that medical research is placing most of its efforts and hopes for the future in finding a cure for these diseases, as well as others like tinnitus and cancer, which not only threaten the longevity of older individuals, but their overall quality of life.

In Chile, despite interest in the association between health and ageing, studies relating these associations to imaginaries and representations of ageing seem to be more focussed on the effects of illness on cognitive performance, mental health and psychological wellbeing (Cortés 2001; Mella et al. 2004; De Ridder et al. 2008; SENAMA et al. 2010; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Bunout et al. 2012).

6.2.2.3 *Care and the environment*

If we wish to understand the discourses about care expressed in the social imaginaries of the media, it is essential that we attend to the interconnections between physical and social environments and the emergence of care practices based on control and surveillance of older people.

The media highlighted the vulnerability of individuals when physical spaces are fragile. One connotation of risk in the physical environment responds to the violation of spaces by force. Newspaper articles referred mostly to attacks on older people in their own homes during violent burglaries. The implication is that older people are chosen by their attackers because of their vulnerability. Thus, houses were seen as becoming less secure physical environments as their inhabitants grow older, establishing a relationship between people's perceived frailty and the frailty of their environment. Newspapers reported that fear of crime seemed to be constant among older individuals. Nevertheless, while the mass media emphasise crimes in the home, increased feelings of vulnerability among older adults after leaving their homes have also been identified (Osorio Parraguez, et al., 2010).

Other examples of the relationship between age and risk were reports of hazardous events such as a fire. The diminished capacity of residents in care homes to respond in the case of fire, resulting in death, raised concerns about standards and inspection by the government over care homes. Yet while highlighting the poor quality of service provided in some care homes, the media also made it clear that these establishments are sometimes the only choice for older people to avoid homelessness. The implication is that in exchange for shelter,

individuals surrender the control of their physical environment and their freedom of action within those spaces.

Risks in the physical environment were mostly attributed to older people's frailty and to human error in safeguarding older people. Government authorities responded to these deficiencies through the media, stating they need to be addressed urgently. Indeed, parliamentary debates discussed the risks older people are exposed to, both in terms of inadequate infrastructure and personnel, as well as environment where neglect and violence can occur. In newspapers emphasis was placed on the need to provide housing, and physical environments in general - whether residential facilities or the family home - that could provide adequate infrastructure and care to keep older adults safe. This line of argumentation, although it did place more emphasis on infrastructure and not on older people's frailty alone, followed the same line as with burglaries in older people's houses. The social imaginaries of the mass media therefore confound the causes of risk in physical environment, by attributing equal weight to the (in) adequacy of the material conditions of physical environments (Phillipson 2007; Landorf et al. 2008; Charness 2008), as to older people's frailty as a direct cause of accidents in physical environments. This line of argumentation could reinforce stereotypes of frailty as an essential condition of later life, and undermine older people's control over the decisions they make about where and how to conduct their daily lives.

long term care centres scheme, aimed at older people whose families are unable to care for them. Although this policy was still in the making, special attention is to be given to guaranteeing older peoples' safety and well-being. Supervision of facilities and staff of care homes will be increased. Measures included a ranking system of care homes, and subsidies for establishments that comply with the legal requirements. Despite the positive portrayal of care alternatives the press emphasised the role of the family as the primary source of affection and care in later life. The media took the position that intergenerational households are the best social environment in which to grow older, hence reports of social policies encouraging intergenerational cohabitation.

Although the package of policies is expected to improve the living conditions of older people, when reporting these policies the press reinforces associations between ageing and frailty (Gilleard and Higgs 2011). Because the press only reported on these policies from the perspective of State agencies, and did not address the experiences of those who are targeted in public discussions and policies, frailty and dependency were unproblematised. For instance, although the concern of the press with the shortage of care settings has existed for several years (Torrejón 2007), the mass media did not report the effects of institutionalised care on older individuals' perceptions of independent living, nor the consequences over how they may internalise images of loss of autonomy (Abusleme et al. 2014), nor their assessments of health related quality of life as recipients of care (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). Neither the political nor the mass media domain considered that living independently or in a care home can be a valid choice for older people (SENAMA et al. 2010). Both imaginaries of the social environment, by stating that the family household is necessarily the

best environment for older people imply a confounding relationship between social isolation and having alternative living arrangements.

Attention was drawn to the necessity of developing these programmes as a response to weakening networks of family support, due to causes attributed to increasing individualism in society, to circumstances where geographical distance represents an obstacle to appropriate care arrangements and to the isolation of older people from their immediate social surroundings (e.g. neighbourhoods). Bowling (2006) has argued that given that families are the main social ties, and if these ties are loosened or severed, the possibility of becoming isolated increases. As reported in newspapers, older people thus become dependent on the good will of community members and on the scarce support of State social services, which is not available to all older people. I argue that it is worth exploring the role that community members and friends can play in the support networks of older people. Despite these ties being weaker than those within families, the mass media showed that occasionally their involvement may go beyond what has been observed (Bowling 2006) as mere companionship and prevention of loneliness (e.g. spending holidays together).

6.3 Older people's domain

Older people are more concerned with roles than with representations. When they are in control of defining the social roles they adopt, older people look to themselves, their motivations, their ability to gain new skills, their life trajectories and particularly the intersections with gender and intergenerational solidarity. Those situations where control is external refer mostly to families. In

navigating intergenerational relationships, older adults need to reconcile their expectations of what their role should be in the family, with the space that is given or denied by younger relatives to actually fulfil those roles, or occasionally even cope with the influence of the family in older people's actions and decisions.

Perspectives about the relationship between income and work vary depending on the perceived freedom to engage in activities that are enjoyable, and on whether individuals perceive that their income is sufficient to meet their needs. Loss of control stems from the combination of financial scarcity, with the impossibility of finding paid work. Intergenerational solidarity, corresponding to a micro social level, refers to positive experiences of ageing when either the young or the old are in a position to help while, conversely, constrained collaboration refers to when generations and familial obligations are in competition. Macro social policies such as pension reform and programmes aimed towards work inclusion are perceived to be ineffective, and thus individuals do not see improvement in their material well-being, but see themselves excluded from activities they used to enjoy due to post-retirement impoverishment.

Imaginaries of control over the physical environment refer to urban spaces, and to how they can facilitate or hinder older people's control over daily activities. In this context, the imaginaries identify two types of urban physical environments. While home and neighbourhoods can facilitate independence as long as they have enough services and amenities, as well as safe walking routes, the wider city - beyond older people's neighbourhoods - represents a lack of control. The pace is much too fast, anonymity allows aggression and infrastructure is generally deemed to be inadequate for people with limited mobility.

Older individuals describe themselves as active agents in maintaining their health or coping with existing health conditions in order to keep at bay the threat of loss of autonomy due to the effects of bodily decline. The pursuit of control over health conditions is shaped by individuals' own understanding of healthy lifestyles, by the use of information and healthcare services to their advantage, and by purposefully protecting their subjective well-being. Protection of older people's subjective well-being depends on maintaining harmonious social environments, as well as active pursuits of joy generating activities. Conversely, healthcare systems that are meant to aid individuals achieving their goals may have the opposite effect when older people are at risk from being excluded from much needed treatment on account of associated costs. In the same way, the absence of family, which can be a source of emotional and financial support during illness, increases older people's financial and health vulnerability, and can cause severe detriment to their quality of life.

6.3.1 Control as harmonious and independent development

6.3.1.1 *Role reorientation and the search for harmony*

When older people assume control over their social environments, strengthening networks of support in later life blends into everyday practices. These comprised a wide spectrum: from deferential and considerate treatment towards family and friends, to establishing relationships of companionship and mutual aid.

Besides family, friends and neighbours were the most important members of the social environment of individuals. Certain individuals may even undertake multiple functions at the same time (e.g. neighbour

and friend). Friends provided affection, companionship and confidantes in later life, as well as reference points with whom to share common experiences. Other mentioned benefits of keeping a network of friends include encouragement to have an active social life by participating in social events, joining groups of interest and starting new activities.

Maintaining social activities was one of the main strategies to cope with isolation and loneliness that was frequently described as a product of distancing from the family. Whereas men highlighted the events of the past that led to their current loneliness, women focused on their strategies to cope with loneliness. They included combating isolation by keeping busy, making new acquaintances or resuming contact with friends of the past. In this line of action, joining community centres or groups of older adults has been described by women as an effective strategy. However, although men reportedly enjoyed the benefits of friendship and companionship as much as women did, they also stated more frequently than women their reluctance to socialise in organised groups. One explanation given by men for this gender difference is that they shy away from social environments where they assume they will be outnumbered by women. Another explanation is they fear ridicule when participating in activities they have not mastered. They are nonetheless slowly beginning to integrate themselves into activities such as sports or workshops. Women have frequently undertaken multiple roles and activities throughout their lives; therefore it is easier for them to continue this pattern in later life. Despite their incipient exploration of after retirement activities, men are affected by their development in a macho culture, a cause of disorientation when confronted with domestic life. Men attribute these circumstances to natural differences from women, arguing they are endowed with skills for domestic chores and caring for children. Women respond by saying

that men are frequently too controlling and reliant on their male status for self-worth. Hence, discussions among older Chileans pay little attention to the negative consequences of differential capacity building for women (Guzmán et al, 2012:63) at earlier stages of the lifecourse. Instead they highlight what those differences imply for men after they distance themselves from some of their decision making roles

But although self-isolation practices seemed to be more common among men, they affect both genders in ways that often have little explanation other than personal preference. There is a perceived general lack of gregariousness holding older men and women back from engaging in collective activities. Although most of the participants in community groups, clubs and organisations are older adults, only 25% are formal members of any of these. And among those who do not participate, the main reason (55%) is lack of interest (Boreal & SENAMA, 2011: 109- 111). In the focus groups they mentioned other reasons, reflecting religious differences and financial difficulties that impede enrolling in a given class or workshop. They did not mention reasons such as health problems or lack of time due to work or household chores that have been mentioned in national surveys (Boreal & SENAMA, 2011:111).

These descriptions that older people provided about their social environments confirm that there is not a widespread interest in participating in groups for older adults (SENAMA et al. 2010). However, they also confirmed that the reluctance to participate in age-oriented organisations is not necessarily matched with disregard of all social interaction. On the contrary, older individuals enjoy the company of peers (Bunout et al. 2012), which normally requires having worked on building these ties in previous life stages. Also, as suggested in the social

imaginaries of the mass media, friends and neighbours were crucial in maintaining social interactions and thus keeping loneliness at bay.

Yet personal preference is a powerful element in shaping social environments. Individuals' priorities and sentiments change through life and as a response they develop dynamic routines. Older people showed that shifts from attention to others to satisfy inner quests may occur. Personal growth and maintaining a sense of life are ubiquitous in the imaginaries of older people. They reflect on life trajectories, on the challenges life presents and the consequences of past decisions and events. Growing older is an unpredictable avenue travelled with few guidelines. Nevertheless, older people have learned to cope with obstacles such as broken marriages, financial struggles, depression and discrimination among others. Control over this affective dimension allowed older people to discover what really made them happy: for some it could be harmonious and loving relationships with those close to them. For others, it could mean contentment with being by themselves. The clue was finding peace and satisfaction with life. However, alongside awareness of spiritual fulfilment there was a perceived risk of losing what has been achieved. Women especially expressed fear of losing their new found equilibrium to unsettling circumstances such as falling into loneliness, being constantly overruled in their decisions by their families, being unwillingly moved away from their homes, or even a new partner attempting to impose their own criteria.

people as necessarily passive and conservative (Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008). But it aligns better with aims of constructing more positive images of older age, in which people are encouraged to pursue new endeavours (SENAMA 2009b). Older people expressed their pride in successfully raising a family despite the obstacles they had to overcome. In the present they enjoyed the fruits of their efforts, by sharing affection and care with their children and grandchildren. Grandchildren were one of their greatest joys in life and one of the main motivations to continue looking after their families by working towards family union, participating in festive occasions, or through every day actions such as helping with chores or running errands.

Satisfaction also stems from being able to help offspring to gain a solid start in their own lives. Resources can, therefore, flow in a downward direction within the family network (SENAMA et al. 2010). Giving small monetary contributions to children, or allowing them to live at home for a period of time to build up their savings, are the most common forms of support that represent a continuation of family traditions. Although it is not explicitly stated in the focus groups, helping out their families may be bolstering older people's sense of self-efficacy (SENAMA et al. 2010; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). Thus, maintaining their status as providers of the younger generation helps older people to maintain control over their financial and other types of decisions.

Marital relationships in later life, and particularly the level of conflict in a relationship, were construed by older people as tightly connected with satisfaction with the wider social environment. Insights into the role of spouses and partners in the constitution of social environments are very valuable. Up to this point, studies of social

imaginaries and representations of ageing in Chile have focused mostly on the family as a whole or offspring who are normally the centre of older people's attention. However, marital life has had a very low profile, which is surprising considering the majority of people in later life are either married or widowed (SENAMA et al. 2010).

Some couples accepted the changing nature of a relationship, and adjusted their routines accordingly to find new forms of companionship. Others, either married or separated, continued to care for each other, while leading more independent day to day lives. In both cases, there were low levels of conflict and mutual esteem prevailed over negative sentiments. However, clashing temperaments or progressive estrangement in couples can erode relationships and build up conflict in domestic environments. Women who have lived through troubled marriages took a stance of enduring rather than modifying their social environment. Nevertheless they were reluctant to remarry after separation or widowhood. They attributed their attitude to selfishness and control oriented behaviour in men, which they wished to avoid in the future.

Bereavement represents a different type of challenge. Widows and widowers must confront the loss of their spouse and battle against loneliness, the absence of the other, as well as assuming a set of roles that had been entirely or partially undertaken by their partners. For men, domestic chores represented both an obstacle to maintaining continuity in their routines and an opportunity to keep themselves busy and help them cope with loneliness. Also, given that the social networks of men tend to become smaller but tighter after widowhood (Osorio Parraguez and Jorquera 2013), it is likely that widowers amass

support from family and friends to help them adjust to the transformation of their routines.

6.3.1.2 *Ageing in the era of information*

With municipalities broadening the available resources for information and education, older people respond by enrolling in courses or using public resources such as libraries and internet points to fulfil their learning interests. Older people's social imaginaries confirm the increasing interest in formal education in later life (SENAMA et al. 2010). They also remind us that despite enrolling in classes, they are also autonomous in their learning experiences.

Reading and staying informed are usually considered valuable in their own right. To stay informed older people privilege magazines, newspapers and the internet. This suggests a discrepancy with research (Osorio Parraguez and Meersohn 2012) pointing to television as the main source of information despite the greater potential of the internet that appears to be used by a minority of older people. This discrepancy can be explained by the results of a survey of quality of life in older age (SENAMA et al. 2013), that confirms that television is the most frequently used media by older people, although there is a direct relationship between formal education and the frequency of reading newspapers, magazines and books³³. In the focus groups, a few individuals with academic interests also relied on books or on what they learn in courses. Becoming familiar with the use of computers had become a way of furthering their pursuit of knowledge, broadening

³³ Discussions about media and information are more frequent in focus groups of older people of high SES.

circulating stereotypes about diminishing mental capacity as they grow older (Edwardh 1987; Peñaloza and Rojas 2005 in Torrejón, 2007), but have simultaneously internalized these stereotypes while also taking action to resist them.

In terms of the importance of the relationship between technologies and intergenerational relationships discussed by Jorquera (2010), older people indicate that besides learning and enhancing their health, a secondary motivation for learning IT skills is creating bridges for communication with their children and grandchildren. This relates to the interest expressed by older people in becoming computer literate. IT literacy provides effective means to keep in touch with families and take part in conversations that require a general understanding of modern technologies.

6.3.1.3 *Routes and routines*

Older individuals expect their physical environments to fit their lifestyles, routines, habits, finances and corporeal abilities. Their homes, their neighbourhoods, and the city are concentrated areas of action they tread with different degrees of caution.

The home as an environment offers safety. It is not a mere barrier against potential risks of the outside world. There is safety in the familiarity of cognitive maps. Routines and activities such as gardening and keeping animals were connected to the home environment. Plans to feel safer inside when the external physical environment was deemed to be risky were conceived in the house (e.g. moving the bedroom to an inner room). Thus, control over the home space was essential to older people's continuous reassertion of environmental control.

The sense of mastery over the home space was enhanced when individuals were able to keep open the possibility of living independently. In this regard, housing that is functionally and financially designed for older people can help in promoting independence. Affordable homes and financial schemes designed for post-retirement increased the possibilities of older people staying in their own homes. The design of functionally friendly houses and artefacts was seen by older individuals as favourable to maintaining or regaining control of home spaces. Accidents and injuries could be prevented through functional design, and maximising mobility can be achieved by using devices such as grab rails and ramps. This shows an interesting contradiction with the finding that the majority of older people would not like to live in a space designed especially for them (SENAMA et al. 2010). It also shows an interesting contrast with the imaginaries of the mass media that showcased policies that support adaptation to houses for shared living. According to the social imaginaries of older adults, they strongly agreed that technology and design facilitate independence (Phillipson 2007; Landorf et al. 2008; Charness 2008). A possible explanation is that housing designed especially for older people may serve two contradictory functions for older people: safety and control, and isolation from other social networks.

Once the imaginaries of the physical environment step out of the home, daily routines were confined mostly to the neighbourhood. In Santiago at least, it was unusual for older people to move beyond suburban areas to urban areas. Although a few individuals expressed a longing to visit historic attractions and museums, most daily activities were conducted closer to home. Changes to the city's transport system affected the bus routes to many local amenities and services. In

response, older people said they had experienced the satisfaction of reclaiming the neighbourhoods themselves. They have built routines as close to home as possible and decided to walk, literally, to undertake their errands. They have thus become more aware of their surrounding area, as well as getting more physically active.

The unexpected consequences of the changes to the bus system suggest differentiated assessments of the urban environment (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2010a). Although the city as a macro space can be difficult to transit, neighbourhoods are still familiar environments that can strengthen people's autonomy as well as their connections with the social environment (Landorf, Brewer, & Sheppard, 2008; Phillipson, 2007).

Going out and constructing social networks close to home can also help to maintain independence. Collaboration between members of a community helps preserve safety and tranquillity within neighbourhoods. This form of collaboration was reinforced by older people engaging in face to face interaction with members of their community whilst going about their daily routines. Interactions created support networks for older individuals if they found themselves in need of assistance.

6.3.1.4 *Getting to know the mind and body and learning self-care*

Older individuals employed several interconnected strategies to maintain control over their bodies. Expectations and fears about ill health led to preventive and self-care strategies. These strategies were aimed to maintain physical and psychological wellbeing, as well as to cope with health conditions that may arise. Also, personal and

organisational support networks were fundamental in carrying out successful preventive and coping strategies developed by older people.

Definitions and expectations of health in later life were partially comprised by the presence or absence of illnesses. Nevertheless, older people's concerns were centred on the impact that a particular illness may have on their lives. Moreover, the realisation that regardless of the steps each person may take to maintain good health, and autonomy, the future remains uncertain. The wish to stay independent was permanently threatened by the fear of a disabling condition or the loss of mental faculties. Abusleme et al. (2014) speak precisely about this transition between autonomy and dependency. As individuals grow older, awareness of signs of illness and of minor corporeal limitations is heightened. Ambivalence towards life was shown by older people in the form of fear of what the future may hold in terms of bodily decline.

Figure 6.15 Most frequent words in focus groups on 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'



The word cloud focuses on multiple strategies older individuals develop to cope with illness, and remain independent for as long as possible. Habits such as eating well, exercising, going out, seeking happiness and finding support in

family and friendship networks are crucial. Older people are thus concerned with the resources at their disposal, and topics such as biomedical research and domestic violence are not salient in their discourses. However, The focus groups upon which this word cloud is constructed were conducted in 2008, a couple of years before abolition of healthcare payments and domestic violence became were discussed in parliament and disseminated in the news.

Responses to these expectations and fears could be found in the form of preventive health measures, active self-care of existing conditions, and sometimes disregard of any sort of prevention or treatment. Self-care and health prevention are consistent with the findings of Arber et al. (2014) in the UK, where older people developed a series of strategies that showed they were active in promoting their own health.

Preventive strategies are those lifestyle choices individuals make in order to maintain good health. These lifestyle choices can involve active steps toward health enhancement implying body self-awareness, and included diverse actions such as working out, targeting overall or specific health objectives, eating certain types of food or food supplements, choosing herbal remedies instead of chemical drugs for minor conditions, energising the body by following sleep routines, and enjoying treats while avoiding the development of 'bad' habits (e.g. consuming alcohol and sweets in moderation). But, in contrast, lifestyle choices can mean withdrawal from activities that may be potentially damaging to health. This involved behaviours such as not eating food considered unhealthy or staying away from potentially disruptive events (e.g. late night). These avoidance approaches to preventive health tended to treat the body gently in consideration of its age.

Self-care strategies were also set in place to deal with existing health conditions. Similarly, older people developed greater awareness of their minds and bodies. In the process, they not only learned care strategies

for particular illnesses, but also renegotiated their personal preferences and habits in relation to their health expectations (i.e. gentle movement instead of complete rest of a knee, decreasing sugar consumption instead of suppressing it to treat hypertension, talking to the cat to remember what they need to do during the day).

There were nevertheless circumstances in which older people with health conditions would not take preventive or self-care measures. Sometimes, illnesses had struck as a consequence of knowingly or unknowingly leading an earlier unhealthy lifestyle (e.g. pulmonary ailments associated with smoking). The body was subject in these cases to even more perceived uncertainty than in the previous situations.

The strategies I have described are in tune with the increasing awareness among older people of the benefits of leading healthier lifestyles described by Jorquera (2010). But there were also older people acknowledging the negative effects of habits on their health. Sedentary lives have been reported to be a generalised behaviour among older adults (SENAMA et al. 2010). The social imaginaries of health among older adults portrayed polarised attitudes: the healthy vs the unhealthy. However, it is likely that health practices fall over a broader spectrum. Understanding the motivations and circumstances shaping conceptions of the body, and the strategies adopted by older people would provide better insights into how these adjustments happen over time.

Drawing a parallel with its physical counterpart, psychological wellbeing was also subject to prevention and coping strategies. Consistent with the centrality of family, partners, friends and paths of inner growth that shaped contexts of control within older people's social environments, psychological well-being was achieved through

happiness, which was described by older people as a combination of life satisfaction, gratefulness and peace with their life trajectories, and positive relationships with family and friends. Happiness was an inner state that could be achieved through joy producing actions, such as dancing, enrolling in a class, participating in social events, and talking about cheerful things whilst avoiding gloomy topics.

While joy seeking can be an effective protector of overall psychological wellbeing, illness is a weighty stressor. Older people admired the capacity to accept the life conditions imposed upon a person by a disease. Despite the challenges posed by disabilities, surgery and chronic illness, some individuals adjust their expectations and are still able to seek happiness. In other cases however, chronic health conditions may negatively impact a person's overall quality of life. Older people described these cases as those when a disease determines the isolation of the person, and hence depression and 'bitterness' take over their life. The delicate balance between health stressors and subjective well-being has been studied by Cummins (2000, 2005), who found that even though subjective well-being has the capacity to orchestrate a response to such pressures, if subjective well-being is low, then deficit in the perceived standards of living will drop more easily.

Studies conducted in Chile have associated psychological illness in later life with chronic conditions (Cortés 2001; Mella et al. 2004; De Ridder et al. 2008). However, imaginaries of health among older adults showed that those who successfully reduce the impact of illness on their quality of life were seeking what the same studies have identified as protective factors, especially strengthening of social networks. The pursuit of happiness and joy can be interpreted in this context as a high

regard for life satisfaction (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Bunout et al. 2012), which is not accomplished passively, but requires active pursuit and determination.

In achieving both preventive and coping strategies, it is pivotal to conduct an assertive assessment of the available networks of support. In making decisions about their health, information and available support was essential to older people. For instance, medical advice suggested that a woman should not exert her back excessively, but she may feel household chores are beneficial for her physical and mental wellbeing. Hence, her daughter helped her with the heaviest tasks, without her renouncing entirely her housework activities. In another case, a woman attended a course that informed older people of all the health benefits available to them. In both cases, older people were optimising their personal and organisational networks for health purposes. Reaching out to their available resources, among which a supportive house environment was one of the most important, can increase the sense of control over health (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011; Arber et al. 2014).

It is important however to understand that coping strategies and networks of support cannot compensate entirely for the effects of chronic conditions. Doctors may provide patients with advice and treatment, families may be willing to help toward the financial costs and care needs of their older relatives. However, the palliative effect of these networks was sometimes outweighed by the multiple types of impact illness has on different aspects of a person's life. Under these circumstances individuals may perceive a loss of control over their health conditions (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011) and thus begin incorporating self-images of dependency (Abusleme et al. 2014).

6.3.2 External disruption of personal preferences

6.3.2.1 *Ambivalent feelings in intergenerational relationships*

Expressions of life satisfaction and perceptions of living in an inclusive social environment are attached to the actions and circumstances of family members. Older people were happy knowing that their family was doing well. However, this knowledge needed to originate from frequent contact with the family group. Expressions of interest and affection, such as calling personally or on the phone, are actions that older people deemed to be signs of consideration and social inclusion. Indeed, it was common to stay in touch with relatives on at least a weekly basis (SENAMA et al. 2010). Based on this information alone, one may think that isolation is not a problem Chilean older adults have to battle against. However, family dynamics are problematic when examined against the background of fears and expectations as illustrated by Jorquera (2010) who found that the imaginaries of older people extend sentiments of exclusion from familial dynamics.

Reflecting on the tight connection between family actions and affection, and older people's sense of inclusion and social worth, can result in troubled perspectives for some older individuals. Discontent with what they perceived as lack of mastery over their social environments stemmed from the realisation that they planned their lives around their families' intentions. More concretely, older people were uneasy when they became aware they organise their schedules around the plans of others, or when they found themselves unable to voice their own views about situations that perturb them. An example

frequently in the imaginaries of the social environment among older people. They didn't speak about their personal experiences, but abandonment cropped up from stories about others that percolated through their imaginaries of the future like cautionary tales of those who were thrown into a care home by their relatives never to be visited again; or those who were once surrounded by a loving family that later disintegrated when the members grew increasingly independent and distant.

Relationships between older people and their families were connected to their quality of life. Stressful situations from strained relationships, neglect and domestic violence had a negative impact on older people's psychological wellbeing. Although in the focus groups, participants did not overtly discuss this matter, there were some ambiguous attitudes. In this context, older individuals reported that as a group they deserved better treatment; however they also said that sometimes people bring neglect by the family on themselves (e.g. not having brought up the children well, not making enough of an effort to be pleasant). Weak social networks as well as the absence of a supportive house environment represent a double vulnerability for health and quality of life (Cortés 2001; Mella et al. 2004; De Ridder et al. 2008; Arber et al. 2014). In this context, any bodily deterioration could easily lead to psychological illness, and to an overall sense of loss of mastery over their health and auto-determination of their body's management (Cummins 2005; King et al. 2012; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013). The helplessness of a future when the right to choose has been taken away is what made older people fear disability and dependency the most.

Strained relationship with relatives or the perception of family members overstepping boundaries were also experienced as a loss of control over the social environment. Sometimes tensions are fleeting and only require temporary distance to dissipate the unease. There are however other types of undesired situations that linger over time. Continuous overstepping of boundaries can be as harmful as abandonment. Some examples of these were unwillingly assuming the responsibility of raising grandchildren in the absence of the parents, or maintaining the status quo by staying in an unhappy marriage, which signified a surrender of freedom. Loss of freedom can also appear in the guise of concern if children interfere when older people want to start a romantic relationship. Finally, external control of the social environment may also appear in more mundane situations, such as making a family visit an exhausting experience, when children and grandchildren turn up but avoid helping with any chores. In varying degrees, these all represented experiences in which freedom is taken away from individuals.

From the point of view of older people, intergenerational relationships should be collaborative. Older members ought to advise the young on the basis of their life experience, and in return, contact with young people keeps them up to date with the contemporary social dynamics. But when their support is taken for granted or when they are plainly shunned as a burden on the family group their perceptions of these roles are ambivalent. This ambivalence in the adoption of active or passive roles within the family replicates the contradictions documented in reports describing familial participation of older people. Their role within the family can be characterised as wardens of tradition, social norms, experience and the knowledge that must be passed on to younger generations, as well as guides through critical

moments (Jorquera 2010). But being subject to numerous stereotypes (Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008; SENAMA 2009b), can prevent older people from fulfilling the roles they have traditionally considered their own.

6.3.2.2 *Resources drying out*

Despite the desire to lead independent lives, many older individuals also acknowledge the need for support from relatives and communities or private agencies. Experiences and skills acquired during the lifecourse have an important effect on material conditions in later life. Financial literacy, such as learning how to budget and save, is frequently absent, affecting spending power in later life. Also, the number of children raised and support received from the extended family in earlier years affect the capacity to prepare for older age. In the case of women, many have devoted their lives to child rearing with low and irregular incomes or none at all, and married women have commonly been dependent on their spouses' income leaving little opportunity to develop economic independence. In later life it is therefore more common among women to assume that children will assist them financially, especially when facing medical expenses. These perspectives are partially supported by the literature, for example surveys showing that gender and social class affect multiple types of capital in later life (SENAMA et al. 2010; Abusleme et al. 2014). However, although older people may express expectations of being supported by their children, Abusleme et al. (2014) show that among the Chilean population there is an ongoing shift in the allocation of responsibility for older people's well-being from families to the State. Therefore, what is assumed as normal intergenerational reciprocity today, may be dramatically altered in forthcoming years.

In contrast with some individuals who feel content with modest pensions as long as they have freedom over their choice of activities in later life, others experience deep disappointment in seeing that their pensions are a poor reflection of the years of work and the wages they used to receive. They are very critical of the reforms on the pension system and special benefits for older adults, as the measures implemented to date (2008) only benefit the poorest of pensioners, leaving most struggling every month with their meagre income. In addition, exclusion from healthcare manifested in restricted access to free prescription drugs, and refusal from insurance companies to offer their services to older people with State healthcare. With older people counting on healthcare services to construct viable life projects (SENAMA 2009b), local healthcare centres were fulfilling that role. Nevertheless, the forms of exclusion described constantly threatened to curtail any long term projects. Even routine activities that boosted life satisfaction and increased the possibility of maintaining autonomy could end abruptly (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011) if energy and resources needed to be diverted towards finding resources for treatment of ill-health.

quality of work does not have a significant impact on older people's material conditions.

Exclusion from the job market combined with reduced material means produce profound disorientation and loss of identity. Even engaging in leisure activities or treating themselves to small gratifying experiences may be financially prohibitive and, as a consequence 'your personal desires start being erased and that hurts, to begin erasing all those habits that have taken roots in you over the years, when the activities start to end, your habits, the pain sets in and the bad life within this feeling' (male, low SES, 60-74 years).

6.3.2.3 *Disruptions to free movement in the city*

A problem resulting from loss of control over physical environments was restrictions on the free use of space and safe movement in the city. The flow of routines of ageing individuals was disrupted by the perceived risks associated with the urban crowd. It was not necessarily risks related with being mugged that provoked unease in older people - despite the imaginaries of the mass media stating the opposite - although the destruction of public spaces, and fear of violence, especially among individuals living in less safe neighbourhoods did provoke feelings of helplessness. It was mostly the ongoing experience of moving in an aggressive environment, where speeding bicycles, shoving and elbowing, as well as blatant disregard of priority seating in public transportation, which made them uneasy. These struggles are a daily confirmation that others do not acknowledge the different bodily rhythms that older people follow in the urban space.

What older people expect is welcoming urban spaces, conceived for their needs, particularly green areas for exercising safely and housing

that is functional and budget friendly in tranquil areas. These wishes however, did not point to any responsible entity or authority for making them a reality. Neither did older people express a desire to take action to bring these dreams closer. Therefore, although the expectations themselves are very specific, there were no proposals as to how they could be accomplished.

Transportation is central among the misgivings of ageing individuals about the urban physical environment. Poor distribution of appropriate infrastructure in transportation facilities (i.e. easy access to buses, escalators, lifts) excluded individuals with reduced mobility from public transportation systems. Older people stated that the modifications to the urban transport system in Santiago during 2008 negatively influenced their scope of action in the city. Changes in the bus routes produced disorientation, and the longer distances to bus stops resulted in increased dependency on family members for transportation. This loss of autonomy led to reduced activity in several domains. For instance, if getting to a specific place proved too complicated, some people withdrew from activities such as shopping or gym class, and reduced their social activities. Despite these disruptions, some individuals found substitutes to their preferred circuits, running errands or shopping at more convenient locations. Otherwise, they accepted changing buses and making longer journeys at greater expense. Such adjustments were reluctantly made, and perceived as unfair, associated with losing control over their environment, going only where there *can*, rather than where they *want*. The experiences of older people in the urban environment not only show a series of obstacles encountered when venturing outside the homes, but also show that health condition and socioeconomic status (reflected in the neighbourhood of residence) in Chile deeply affect the accumulation of

parliamentarians only spoke of local problems and older people spoke of local solutions, with no convergence of these perspectives.

6.4 Tensions

Having outlined the social imaginaries of ageing of the political, mass media and older people's social domains, one can appreciate that while there are areas of convergence, opening this dialogical space also highlights conflicts in understanding of ageing in contemporary Chilean society.

When addressing these emergent conflicts, I conceive them as tensions for two reasons. First, the idea of tension introduces the assumption that when a tension arises, solutions need to be sought. Nevertheless I would argue that solutions are never complete, as new developments create new tensions. Second, it facilitates the construction of conceptual binaries, comprising two sides of a tension. These tensions are neither binary in nature, nor do I expect their solutions to be binary, but they are constructed as such to facilitate the development of research instruments in subsequent stages of this study. I will describe these methods in detail in chapter 9. It is the purpose of the following section to lay out the main tensions of ageing in Chilean society. I say main, because the eight tensions outlined here are not the only ones, but they are the most salient within the analysis of social imaginaries of this study. These tensions express the dilemmas encountered by the growing older population in a wide array of situations.

6.4.1 Being economically dependent vs having dependants

What is the root cause of economic vulnerability in later life? The political, mass media and older people's imaginaries point to the pension system as the main culprit for age-related economic inequalities. They are particularly critical of the impunity with which AFPs have profited from people's contributions without being held liable for any detrimental consequences to the pensions fund.

"If we are talking about pensioners, we cannot avoid referring to the current pension system, that every month forces workers to play Russian roulette with their pension's savings. And the majority of them, after contributing over many years, do not receive a pension even 50 percent of what they earned at retirement". (HL N° 20.531, 2011)³⁴

"The need to increase the purchasing power of retirees is more closely related to the meagre pensions they are paid, than with the use of 7% of these for health. Clearly our modern pension system, recently renovated, continues to place many pensioners in poverty". (El Mostrador, 2011)

"One goes to get paid, but taking the list of things you have to pay, one comes home with very little money. All the money we accumulated during a lifetime of work, and someone came and took the money... they left us some scraps and from that we get our pensions, they come from scraping leftovers of the pot". (Male, 60-74, SES Low)

Notwithstanding agreement on the flaws of the pension system, State policies and news reports deal with economic vulnerability as an intrinsic condition of ageing. Benefits and exemption from certain payments are presented as devices to ameliorate this inevitable

³⁴ The sources for each domain can be identified as follow: HL N° (History of Law, Act N°) refers to parliamentary debates. Sources for the mass media are La Tercera and El Mostrador. Sources for the older people's domain are identified by the characterisation of participants (gender, age, SES) in the Domeyko study on Quality of Life and Older Adults.

impoverishment. Conversely, measures that AFPs should adopt to give pensioners fairer treatment are not discussed in parliament.

" And so, if things go our way, in October next year, 20 % of our most vulnerable seniors are not going to make 7% payments on health, which means that their pensions will be 7% better than they are today, " said the president." (La Tercera, 2011)

"If there is something that seniors are expecting at this time of year, it is the payment of \$45,000 pesos, which allows them to face increased costs in winter". (La Tercera, 2011)

Older people, despite their criticisms of the pension system, also attribute their impoverishment to other factors, such as cumulative disadvantages (e.g. education, number of children), financial illiteracy and their own lack of provision to save for the future. In doing so, they bolster perceptions of inevitable economic vulnerability.

"We haven't been provident, it's way easier to be provident when one has had the benefit of an education, and if the family has been supportive one may even have a good job, but when the person didn't have the possibility of getting an education nor the support of the family so they can start out working in something, it's difficult to be provident and think about the future, they can't because they don't have in mind what they can achieve" (Male, 60-74, SES Medium)

Perspectives promoting economic vulnerability as intrinsic to ageing promote welfare policies that assume dependency as an inevitable consequence of growing older. Welfare benefits policies are conceived to ameliorate the difficulties families face in supporting an economically dependent member. The mass media and parliamentary debates, however, do not discuss to what degree family groups depend on their older members. Traditional values in Chilean culture still have a hold on family dynamics, dictating lifelong obligations of parents toward their children. Thus, senior family members contribute to the well-being of the group with time, money and assets. However, in a contracted job

market, intergenerational interdependence and competition are accentuated when the young and the old aspire to the same sources of income through work, or when all resources of the family combined are insufficient to meet everybody's needs.

"...they started as a rare thing... "Mom, I'll leave the child with you today"... let's give mom let's say 150,000 pesos, mom was happy. But the money started decreasing...and the grandmother all week stretching the money, running around, getting up early, doing what a mom [would do] at 25 years old" (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

"That's the line of continuity: a welfare system that extends the rights and upholds the autonomy of each older person. That these people are not dependent on the goodwill of their children and grandchildren or State or municipal system, but have decent pensions to help themselves". (HL N° 20.427, 2010)

In this way older people challenge the imaginaries of dependency promoted in the press and parliamentary debates. They present alternative scenarios in which the economic relationship between generations is not based on the good will of the young, but on the interdependency of generational resources.

6.4.2 Information as an intrinsic value vs information as a means to an end

Information can connect diverse types of networks across multiple contexts. The quality of access to information determines the possibilities older people have to negotiate their position in situational networks. However, the conditions and opportunities for older people to access and manage information are given a different purpose by the political domain than that attributed by themselves.

Older people value information because learning and keeping up to date is gratifying. Information therefore has value in itself, whether it is

applied in other contexts or not. In order to stay informed, older people use varied sources like newspapers, the internet, and courses in diverse subjects. They care about the reputation of the sources of information, generally established by reputation, which influences which newspaper they buy, or which authors they read.

"I like to read, a lot. I read an article about research done by a doctor, and it said that old age is different to longevity; there is no one who can stop old age" (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

Commenting and talking about what they learn is a part of older people's routines. They may do this in informal conversations, but also in more formal instances such as literary circles or debate groups. Older people's ability to select and learn relevant fragments of information has also developed into a tool to become better integrated with younger relatives, with whom they share little common ground.

"It is worth, in any newspaper or magazine, reading a bit about technology because now kids are into technology. But read a tiny article and learn about it, then one is well informed... They start taking you more into account, even if I don't understand anything of the conversation afterwards" (Female, 75+, SES High)

The value of information has been delimited by older people. The first aim is to fit into specific social environments. The second, learning about health and ageing to improve the understanding of their own processes. Parliamentary debates however, on focus Chile's accelerated demographic ageing, and on scientific breakthroughs that point to a healthier older population in the future. This information is beginning to signal a change in the paradigm for the organisation of society. For parliamentarians it may be helpful that older people like to be informed, but it is even more important that they can be trained. Being

active in older age will not be enough from the political perspective. Information must be used to make older people productive.

"Universities have an important role, not only from the perspective of incorporating them into special programmes, but also to generate instances of participation, where they have the opportunity to share their experiences and thoughts about everyday situations" (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

"I understand that seniors will be trained to disseminate the policies of the pension reform to extend the network, so those who improve their pension are active subjects in disseminating these benefits" (HL N° 20.427, 2010).

6.4.3 Passive versus active social roles

What sort of roles and representations of ageing dominate Chilean society? The political, mass media and older people's domains all acknowledge intergenerational tensions, sustained by stereotypes flowing between generations, which have direct implications for older people's social participation especially in the job market. However, social imaginaries of ageing about roles and representation in later life across the three social domains also show areas of conflict.

The political domain defines older people as a group transitioning from passive to active social actors. Challenging prevailing views of passivity, this domain constructs an imaginary in which the potential strengthening of citizenship in later life needs to be steered by State designed policies. Despite the acknowledgement of latent human potential, the specific forms of integrating older people into more active social roles remain largely unspecified. An exception is their participation in regional consulting committees of the National Service of Older Adults and in other local organisations of older adults.

"It ensures at least a third (five of the members in the Consulting Committee) is reserved for representatives of organisations of older adults pursuing social, cultural or leisure purposes, as well as organisations pursuing

economic concessions (pensioners, retirees, widows' pensions) regardless of national, regional or local level" (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

The mass media raise red flags about the prevailing stereotypes of ageing that result in the exclusion and abandonment of older people but also presents imaginaries of very active political engagement. Although formal organisation is still incipient, older people constitute a strong emerging political force. They have turned into strong campaigners, organising collective and individual demonstrations to voice concerns about the rights of older people and other social causes capturing their interest.

"The idea, explains the parliamentarian, "is for older adults themselves to be their peer inspectors, because they enjoy more free time and who better than them to assess if the people receiving care are getting the attention they deserve and need" (La Tercera, 2011)

Older people present a very different social imaginary of roles and representations of ageing. Their scope of social participation is mostly limited to the family sphere, where they can at best assume roles of guidance and watching for the well-being of the younger generations. Gender differences in the approach to social participation, especially the effects of a macho culture, result in men withdrawing after retirement and restricting women's participation as well. Passive roles are also reinforced by a generalised lack of interest for engaging in collective pursuits.

"I know older adults that live locked up in their flats... so I don't know what kind of life these people lead... I have invited them here or to the friendly society where I go to workshops, but it's hopeless" (Female, 60-64, SES Medium)

"70, 75 year old men are extremely chauvinistic, they ask you where you are going and with whom... think that you are crazy because you join a drama group, the gym, or anything. A new generation is needed for men's mentality to change" (Mix gender, 60-64, SES High)

Although all three domains bear close resemblance in their perspectives of exclusion from social roles in later life, the limits to inclusion and participation differ markedly from one another.

6.4.4 Sociability in family networks vs wider social networks

The family is unquestionably the main network of support for older people in Chile. Multiple perspectives in the social imaginaries of the explored social domains confirm that a family constitutes a web of mutual collaboration. Reciprocity between generations is rarely simultaneous. Older people normally contribute most while they can, but they expect their families to take care of them if and when they begin losing their functional autonomy.

“At this age, for us, to have the support of the family is the greatest happiness...I think that’s important, the love, the affection that children, grandchildren feel for us; that makes one happy and it makes you be aware of the tasks at hand to help them in what you can” (Male, 60-74, SES Low)

Parliamentary debates also assume that families and the roles that older individuals assume within families belong to a natural order of organisation of networks of support, and legislate in agreement with this premise.

“As people age, they need bonding and a sense of belonging. Hence, the older a person gets, the more they need the sense of belonging and return to the family... If for the children and grandchildren “grandparents” is a valuable institution, it is even more important for them to feel they maintain not an invented responsibility, but a natural one, in the family of their children” (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

They must however acknowledge the situations where older people are alienated from their families. Hence the need for a more prominent

role for the State in protecting those individuals who do not have a support network at home.

“If we want the elderly not to be marooned, along with requiring families -when they have them to take care of them, we must set the State to sponsor a grant to enable these institutions to tend elderly adults” (HL N° 20.427, 2010)

Due to the continuing fragility of the organisation and structure of alternative care environments in later life, State agencies and charities do not reach all isolated older people. The press reports cases of neglect and flags up the consequences of isolation for frail individuals.

“She had poor nutritional status due to not receiving adequate feeding, given three months ago she lost the set of keys that let her out of the house, and some neighbours of goodwill gave her food through a window, without any certainty about whether she was consuming it appropriately” (La Tercera, 2011)

The intense focus on strong family ties has kept the media and parliamentarians from discussing the potential of other networks of support. Friends and neighbours are frequently mentioned by older people in their social environment, and more frequently than groups for older adults, which are instead considered in the imaginaries of the mass media. Interactions with friends and neighbours may be less intense, but they are built steadily over long periods of time. Trust is thus strengthened, and ties with more specific or unique functions than family members are carved deeper with every event.

“This year the happiest thing happened to me, my lonely chum here picked up the phone “mate, do you want to come over and spend New Year’s even with me”. He spent it merry in my house, me too” (Male, 60-74, SES Low)

Some friends are better companions, other friends are better at helping with practicalities (e.g. drive to the hospital). Some neighbours

are also friends, whilst other neighbours can be trusted to keep an eye on the house when they are out.

"We all know each other and spend time together, especially those who are closer to us, and there are elderly as well, and sometimes we get together in a house and have our socials to talk, to tell stories, what happens to us" (Female, Mix age 60+, SES Low)

"I have very good neighbours. I am calm because I know my next door neighbour is looking after my house ... and we are all very close neighbours, a very quiet neighbourhood" (Female, 60-74, SES Unknown)

Perhaps due to the informal nature of friendship ties, they are not considered a reliable network by the political domain. Or perhaps the potential of friends and neighbours in bolstering networks of support has not yet been addressed in policy design. Although these types of ties do not always exist, some older people would rather confide in friends than family, which is why we need to know more about older people's strategies for choosing family and alternative networks.

6.4.5 Abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency

Despite the centrality of family in all social domains as the expected care givers, there is also uncertainty about the fulfilment of this expectation. For older people the possibility of abandonment is a concern hovering over their imaginary of the social environment.

"Right now I enjoy my grandchildren, I enjoy them all the way, but if one day, I don't know if they will take heed - I've told my children- for no reason I want to live in a nursing home; "we won't mind" [the children say] "you'll have to mind because I'm telling you with all my good senses" [the participant says]" (Female, 75+, SES High)

Understandings of abandonment and care differ among older individuals. While for some cohabitation with the family is essential, for

others, moving to a care home does not pose a problem, as long as they remain visited and considered by their relatives.

"I want a quiet old age, I hope they come and visit me at the home and that they lie to me, and if they are not going to lie to me... that they tell me only nice things, that's what I want for my old age" (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

The most disturbing aspect of fear of abandonment is the overwhelming realisation that there is little that older individuals can do to prevent it. Among the few cautionary measures they take is voicing their apprehension of being separated from the people and environments they know. In expressing their fears out loud, older people carry the hope their families will respect their wishes if they ever become disabled and dependent.

"People who live alone, both men and women, no longer have a place in their own children's house, then everyone has to take to nursing homes and nursing homes are overwhelmed by adults who need shelter somewhere" (Male, 60-74, SES Medium)

For the political domain, abandonment is problematic because it shakes the foundations of social networks of support. The State infrastructure and organisational apparatus that deals with cases of abandonment has become acutely wanting. This deficiency is accentuated by awareness of the need for refuge experienced by growing numbers of older individuals. The main problems identified by parliamentarians are, that courts and social services lack effective instruments to create and supervise standards in long term care, and poor coordination between the State and organisations that currently offer residential care for vulnerable older people.

"There is no specialized entity in the country in charge of the care of the elderly, as happens with children, who are placed in multiple homes" (HL N^o 20.427, 2010)

“Currently, the family court has no specific authority in relation to seniors in this situation, which has resulted in the neglect of the elderly who suffer” (HL N° 20.427, 2010)

Notwithstanding the problems stemming from abandonment and neglect in later life, there are also problems that derive from excessive surveillance by families of their older relatives. Whilst the disempowerment of older people produced by this vigilance is invisible in the imaginaries of the social environment of the political and mass media domains, it is dominant in the imaginaries of older people, especially among women.

The extension into later life of traditional caring roles limits older women’s options for personal development. This explains why the social imaginaries of older people show that widows may find relief in their new status. They unexpectedly discover freedom in defining their routines and preferences. Aversion to losing their newly discovered autonomy is sometimes a powerful motivation to reject prospects of re-marrying. However, it is not only spouses, but children too can smother their parents. They may do so by being controlling of behaviours, attitudes and decisions. Constraints also come from the imposition of undesired tasks and responsibilities, as well as control over the development of new relationships.

“The daughter doesn’t want anything to do with her, and they are also making life impossible for the gentleman, exactly because of that, he is well off, and he still works and he is quite senior. They have this problem and they want to get married because he doesn’t like living alone, but now she is having second thoughts because of the problems with the family” (Female, 60-74, SES High)

“The son comes with the grandchildren, the daughter with the grandchildren and the daughters in law come, all to greet mom, and what happens: mom has to cook for everyone; then does the dishes and cleans, and none of the daughters in law or sons stands up to even clear the table” (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

Perhaps due to the focus on basic rights and needs of older people in parliamentary debates and the mass media, a discussion about the right to autonomy in later life does not feature in these domains. The boundaries between affection and control in the family are also difficult to demarcate. There is however, a growing unease among older people about the imposition of expectations relating to duties and rights within family dynamics.

6.4.6 Preference for collective vs private spaces

Physical environments for senior citizens are predominantly imagined as collective spaces in press reports of policies as well as in Congress. This means that the physical environment is conceptualised in terms of older people's relationships with others.

The emergence of day care centres for older people is connected with a frequently limited infrastructure at home. Politicians then assume, from an external perspective, that it is always best and more enjoyable for older people to spend their days in a shared collective space, in the company of their peers.

“At the same time, a solution is sought for all poor families who lack financial resources and are unable to shelter seniors. For them it opens the possibility to have shelters that allow them to spend their last days with joy, in harmony and with dignity, which is the most important” (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

Policies oriented toward enabling private homes to become suitable physical environments for intergenerational cohabitation have been designed jointly with day care policies. The press provides readers a detailed description of construction standards and baseline infrastructure demanded by the State grant. In doing so, it shifts the attention from caring for elderly relatives as a social activity, to the relation between care and the physical environment.

"The planned extension for the elderly should include a bedroom that would put two beds, two closets, leaving enough room for movement within it. In addition, the extension will include a bathroom with direct access from the bedroom" (La Tercera, 2012)

Community centres are a third type of space emphasising the political perception of physical environments as collective environments in later life. The constitution of these spaces however, contemplates dialogue with groups of older adults who will be using them. Parliamentarians discuss with older people their priorities before addressing demands that are compatible with the political agenda. Thus, spaces for meeting together are key strategic elements to further those plans oriented to strengthening organisation among older citizens.

"I know there are neighbourhoods where nursery schools are being closed because there are not enough children. We should rethink their[nursery schools] situation and convert them to centres in order that older adults meet some of their needs, allowing them to envisage themselves from what they are in society"(HL N° 19.828, 2002)

When older people imagine the physical environments as their homes, unlike the press and politicians, they separate the social dimension of space from its physical functionality. Older people will first and foremost look at what the physical environment has to offer in terms of safety, and its potential for helping them live independently longer.

"They sold apartments for seniors, sold all modified inside so that there were no problems, no gas. That's over for seniors!" (Male, 60-74).

If the spaces that comprise their immediate physical environment can be found in affordable housing that complies with the desired requisites, control over the design of these spaces is unproblematic for older people. Older people may also praise the anonymous experts in

any given field that come up with solutions for their individual, everyday struggles. An example of such solutions is the inverse mortgage:

“a flat was handed to him for life and after death of the older adult it passes to another ... it was far out but he still was happy because he was going to pay \$30,000³⁵ and leased a room for \$60,000. He didn't have a salary; he had run out of money” (Female, 60-74, SES Medium).

A different strategy for maintaining independence is planning the location of homes to offer good connectivity to amenities, services, neighbours and family who are allies in controlling the physical environment. By having a secure network outside of the home, autonomy within the home is prolonged.

“She lives by herself, but a granddaughter lives next door, another granddaughter lives about three blocks away, and a daughter four blocks, so there is always someone dropping by. She goes shopping alone, to the market” (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

Thus, the home represents a bastion of autonomy for people as they grow older. It is the space where they can have the most control over their daily routines. The home for some is a permanent enabler of work and leisure activities, and of mastery over their time.

“She likes that all right, spending all day in the garden with the rocks... she is thrilled, she doesn't want to sell the house, she'd die in a flat” (Female, 75+, SES High)

However, the city, particularly neighbourhoods, can also be used for the fulfilment of personal projects and habits. In this sense, the use of

³⁵ Chilean pesos

public spaces in later life can also be imagined from an individual perspective.

“I don’t live in a very posh neighbourhood or anything... I go out to the park for my work out because I have to walk a lot, I care about being active, I’m always thinking, at home they tell me “what’s that you are planning already””
(Male, 60-74, SES Medium)

The understanding of the physical environment from an individual perspective is almost completely absent from the political and the mass media domains. With the exception of community centres, physical environments are conceived to improve the conditions of dependency rather than facilitating autonomy and self-fulfilment.

6.4.7 Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment

The physical environment comprises different types of risk. However, each social domain will adopt a different perspective of what those risks are and how relevant they are in the daily experiences of growing older.

The mass media connect physical environments closely with frailty in later life. Frail individuals are deemed unable to control their physical environment. Hence external surveillance is justified to prevent accidents and fatalities in the home.

“We ask the Minister to create a certification of quality and infrastructure that allows a better quality of life for the older adults living in these homes, to avoid situations like the one that occurred a few days ago in the south where older adults died in a home that didn’t have the right conditions” (La Tercera, 2011)

Also associating place with frailty, the press make headlines of risks at home presenting older people as easy targets for burglary and assault.

"They were arrested after being recognized by an old man of 84 years as the subjects who attacked him in his home for 20,000 pesos" (El Mostrador, 2011)

Instead of emphasising criminal acts against older people, parliamentary debates are particularly concerned with the environmental risks that stem from homelessness and inadequate shelter. Like the mass media, politicians see a solution to precarious physical environments in increased control of nursing homes.

"There are serious deficiencies in the control of conditions in which thousands of seniors live, and who, for various reasons, sometimes almost amazing- are confined in nursing homes" (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

"Some time ago, the House passed a bill...which established the creation of State homes for the elderly, so they would foster those living in the street" (N° 20.427, 2010)

Despite the different emphasis in their selection of topics, both the mass media and political domains sustain the argument that indoor environments contain most potential risks to older people's physical and psychological well-being. Risk in both imaginaries is deemed to be a by-product of the inability of the elderly to exert mastery over the home environment due to frailty that is commonly associated with age.

The social imaginaries of older people shed a different light on the risks they confront in their daily routines. Although concerns about safety in their homes affect decisions such as moving from a house to flat to feel safer, indoor spaces are mostly described as shelters from outdoor risks. The risks of the city are invisible to the press and politics because neither of these domains regard city public spaces as potentially problematic for senior citizens.

Older people however, inhabit public spaces with continual difficulty. Fast paced city users are aggressive: rushing pedestrians and

speeding cyclists pose potential risks of being injured. Anxiety of being pushed or run over by others who move through the city faster and carelessly translates to seniors as a perceived loss of control of their surroundings.

“Youth and also people who are older have gotten in the habit of cycling full speed on the pavement, and you have to be aware because they will just run you over” (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

“There is a lack of education of youth at a widespread level, so they would gain awareness that one does no longer walk like them, that if they run into you, you may lose your balance and fall down, they walk by and run you over” (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

Public transportation is experienced as particularly problematic. Symbolic and verbal aggression towards older adults is perceived to be more acute in city spaces, manifested in a general lack of deference, disregard of priority seating and even insults.

“People in general are aggressive. In the street, in the buses, the elderly we always complain about people being aggressive to us. If you get in a bus, nobody gives you a seat; if you are getting in, nobody tells you “you pass lady”” (Female, 75+, SES High)

6.4.8 Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness

In the discussions of social imaginaries of the body, health and well-being, it becomes clear that the political domain uses quality of life in later life as a vehicle to address other topics. Conversely, older people and the mass media focus on topics directly related to physical health and psychological well-being.

Parliamentary debates lead the discussions on the health bill under the assumption that older people are intrinsically vulnerable. They thus constitute a group at risk and the State is therefore morally bound to

protect them. The stated need for protection derives from defining older people as vulnerable and frail in the political domain.

This emphasis on older people's vulnerability, however, contradicts the resolutions made by parliamentarians. For instance, despite the evidence presented in Congress about the widespread increase in health expenses in later life, not all older people benefit from the health tax waiver. Also, although much is discussed about the definition of domestic abuse in later life, the measures that would effectively improve the quality of life of abused seniors are acknowledged to be acutely insufficient.

"20% of pensioners were added, because the benefit was extended to those who were 65 or older and did not belong to the 'pilar solidario'³⁶, but who are a member of a family group of the first four quintiles, who will benefit from reduced health contributions from 7% to 5%, that is, decreases their contribution by 2%, a benefit that will take effect twelve months after the initiation of the 7% discount"(HL N° 20.531, 2011)

"The regulations should be improved: because, while they State that the judge must declare protective measures for older adults in cases of domestic violence...[policy] does not provide specific arrangements to provide the necessary shelter, depriving judges of any practical power that will safeguard these people when they are in a situation of abandonment" (HL N° 20.427, 2010)

The focus of policies on the poorest older people, conflicts with the discourse of older people being vulnerable and frail. The arguments in parliamentary debates confound health vulnerability with economic vulnerability. Parliamentarians are then legislating for those who, in addition to health risks, are deprived of financial means or family networks that can ameliorate their increasing health expenses in later

³⁶ 'Pilar solidario' refers to a social care programme as part of pensions reform. It translates as 'solidary base'.

life. The convergence of the increase of health costs for most people in later life with the decrease in income, leads to politicians' construction of an imaginary in which older people are intrinsically at risk as a whole.

"We assume, too, that in the public health sector, the situation continues to be bad, since in practice there is no special system for the care for older adults, with facilitated access to specialized consultations in areas such as gerontology, nor financial support for those who must spend much of their meagre income on drugs to have a minimally bearable quality of life" (HL N° 19.828, 2002)

The mass media domain, besides reporting projects on the Government's agenda, highlights medical research and practice relevant to ageing. The main interest of the press is informing readers about advice on living longer, and in better health, as well as reporting the advances and limitations of science in extending life expectancy.

"Considering that there are more and more people who reach old age in better shape, we can assume that this is due to better eating habits, as well as better living conditions, education and progress in the area of medicine" (La Tercera, 2011)

"Gone are the days when people over 65 were considered "elderly." Instead, today it is common to see those playing sports, driving and leading an active life. And while ageing cannot be prevented, one can adopt habits and behaviours to live better at this time of life" (El Mostrador, 2012)

The information communicated in the press is consistent with the interests of older readers in improving or maintaining their health. Older people mostly describe themselves as active agents in this matter being interested in pursuing preventive health measures and developing strategies to cope with illness.

"I live with a cat all day long, my daughter works, so I tell the cat "I'm going to do this, I have to take this or that thing"... because talking I don't forget, but one loses the memory" (Female, Mix age 60+, SES Low)

Indeed, older people's main fear is dependency and becoming unable to make informed decisions about their health, or having others making these decisions for them. Such concerns do not make them refuse support from others. Rather, older people reach out to multiple sources and networks: they seek information and treatment from State services, they receive care and financial help for medical expenses from their families, and they rely on peers to maintain their psychological well-being.

"My greatest concern that I think of is having to afford an illness, because medications are crazy expensive. They all know my brother here and the condition he has, which is very expensive; he is retired and lives with me, the three of us with my daughter, and although everything goes into the same box, with serious illnesses it's not enough" (Female, 60-74, SES Medium)

"I chose a course on frail older adults and I learned a lot about the benefits that they can have... so now I say that I'm going to make use of everything the municipality can offer me, and there are people who are clueless about all of this" (Female, 60-74, SES High)

As a result, independently of the absence or presence of health conditions, ageing individuals do not see their health from the perspective of vulnerability; rather it is organisational and personal resources that dominate their outlook.

6.5 Summary

It has been the purpose of the past sections to explore the competing messages about ageing stemming from the social imaginaries present in three social domains. Within each domain I placed the emphasis on the contrast between situations seen as within the scope of control of older individuals and those situations where control over actions, beliefs, regulations and representations was attributed to others. The political

domain showed a core contradiction between the attempts of creating policies that lead to inclusion of older individuals in economic and political action, but operating upon a network of social support with engrained beliefs about the frailty, vulnerability, passivity and dependency of older people. This contradiction was even more pronounced in the mass media domain, where older people classified as politically engaged, active and creative, or passive, at risk of abandonment and neglect or as burdens to the State and to their families. Finally, the core opposition among older people was that of gaining mastery over transitions of the self and their personal relationships, but having that mastery perpetually threatened by obstacles stemming from inadequate physical environments, poor health, strained resources and troubled relationships with younger generations.

The imaginaries of ageing thus organised could be then compared across domains and allow the emergence of tensions, or competing messages about ageing in Chile. This chapter has discussed the tensions of ageing manifested in imaginaries of policy makers, the mass media and older people themselves. These tensions present ageing individuals with multiple and conflicting versions of what it means to age in Chile. Contentions among social imaginaries across social domains reflect the lived experiences of older people in daily life, particularly the contradictions they need to incorporate and articulate in an effort to make sense of their own narratives. I described these tensions as: i) being dependent from younger generations or having them depending on older family members; ii) enjoying information as a value in its own right or using information as a means to a (productive) end; iii) representations of older people as passive individuals vs those that portray them in active roles; iv) limiting social interactions to the family

network or including a wider network of contacts including friends, neighbours and acquaintances; v) troubled relationships stemming from abandonment of older individuals by their families in opposition of conflicts stemming from too much control of families over decisions and routines; vi) preferring physical spaces where gregariousness is encouraged vs preferring private spaces; vi) highlighting the risks within places of residence in contrast to highlighting urban spaces as the main source of risk; and viii) looking at older individuals merely through the lens of their health vulnerabilities vs acknowledging their resourcefulness in controlling their self-care and access to healthcare. The ways in which individuals navigate messages about ageing while they undergo long term transitions of growing older is the question I address in the following chapters.

PART III

Having identified the tensions of ageing in Chilean social imaginaries, part III addresses the theoretical and methodological findings of the second empirical stage of my thesis. Chapter 7 addresses how resolving the tensions leads to the observation of transitional processes. Tensions disturb individuals' ageing identities, triggering responses to resolve these tensions, and those responses draw from multiple resources that are selected according to specific networks in which individuals participate. Chapter 8 presents the findings and discussions about how individuals deal with the tensions of ageing. I explain why some of the constructed tensions could not be further pursued in this study, and for those that I did analyse, I explain the connections between public stories and social imaginaries, as well as the connection between ontological stories based on individual experience and public stories, showing how transitional processes occur at macro and micro social levels. Chapter 9 is the concluding chapter of the thesis, where I answer the research questions, and explain the contributions of my work to academic research and policy design.

7 Resource networks and control of ageing identities

In part II, I focused on social imaginaries as institutionalised, yet multiple, competing and flexible orientations of the accepted tenets of ageing in Chilean society. I now focus on the effects that social imaginaries have on the way individuals shape their own age transitions, as they encounter competing messages about ageing in everyday situations. The tensions of ageing trigger control efforts, as individuals make decisions and resolve the tensions of ageing presented to them. It is through these control efforts that transitions at the macro level connect with transitions at a micro level. In addition, control efforts require individual management of available resources. In gerontology, Continuity (Atchley 1989) and Awareness of ageing (Diehl et al. 2014) frameworks contribute to understanding that individuals use different types of resources to maintain a sense of stability, and to cope with age related stereotypes.

In this chapter I integrate several separately developed theories in a coherent theoretical framework to explain i) how these resources are controlled during age transitions, and ii) how individuals exert this control in shifting social environments. I argue that particular resource networks operate vis-à-vis styles of growing older. I first explain how I understand transitions in relation to changes in social imaginaries, Then I focus on identity: Harrison White's (2008) theory of identity and

control is at the heart of the emergence of identity as a source of action. Attempts at control triggered by identities result in tensions normalised through stories, narratives, styles and indexicality. The third section briefly explains how the observation of structures or networks is compatible with constructivist approaches. I argue this is possible if structural boundaries are defined by the limits of their purposefulness. I then move on to networks and how their purposefulness can be observed in terms of the ways in which resources and their connections are organised, resulting in enabling or disabling circumstances. In the final section I conclude with an explanation of how the flow of resources can be understood as styles of ageing, observable in relatively stable resource networks.

In ageing studies, the search for long term consistencies during the ageing process was developed in Atchley's continuity theory. According to Atchley (1989), internal and external structures are built in time through life experiences. In middle and later life people are drawn to rely on these familiar structures. He distinguishes between internal and external continuity. Internal continuity requires inner structure: the persistence of a 'psychic structure of ideas, temperament, affect, experiences, preferences, dispositions, and skills' (Atchley, 1989:184). This inner structure refers to an essential self-identity. To achieve continuity, identity must be plastic enough to fit changing circumstances. External continuity is the persistence of relationships and role oriented behaviours within familiar social and physical environments. According to Atchley, from middle life to older age, people increasingly seek stability in their routines, roles, relationships, and environments. Such stability gives them a sense of mastery or control as a coping strategy against exclusion from opportunities and groups due to ageism.

Internal and external structures are bundles of resources built throughout the lifecourse. The idea of resource networks as a crucial element in understanding age transitions has been recently introduced in psychology, although its incorporation has been more implicit than explicit. The theoretical model of *Awareness of Ageing*, developed by Diehl et al. (2014), refers to a person's general understanding of his or her ageing process. Despite its focus on chronology, the Awareness of Ageing framework acknowledges that ageing is not entirely passive, but people influence and monitor the ways in which they grow older. Awareness of ageing is affected by the interplay of four main influences: socio-economic resources, developmental influences, cultural influences and psychological resources. Particular combinations of resources within these four elements affect implicit attitudes and stereotypical thinking about ageing. These affect and are affected in turn by explicit manifestations of transition such as age identity, awareness of change, subjective ageing and self-perceptions of ageing. Although Diehl et al. (2014) have not yet adopted an explicit network approach, they do explain that age transitions have different outcomes depending on particular arrays of the elements in their model.

7.1 Transitions as navigating social imaginaries through the lifecourse

Transitions from mid-life to later life are closely tied with changes and contentions in social imaginaries. Chapter 4 explained how social imaginaries provide references for action across social domains. Meanings given to such frames of reference are contingent, not essential to any fixed morality. By being contingent they produce the conditions for the modification of social imaginaries. These changes in

social imaginaries, occurring in longer or shorter time spans, are alterations in the social environment. Harrison White argues that it is precisely these disruptions in the environment that lead identities to finding footing (White 2008; Godart and White 2010) in everyday life situations. I argue that the study of transitions during the lifecourse requires attention to the responses triggered in ageing identities by both abrupt and subtle alterations of the environment. Growing older entails shifting and negotiating one's position in networks that operate within domains (i.e. health, work, education, among others) with changing understandings of what ageing 'ought' to be.

Transitions constitute the ongoing and continuous realignment of experiences, in relation to representations of ageing. These representations of ageing are constructed by individuals during their exposure to contending social imaginaries of ageing. In chapter 3 I argued that the main approaches to transitions (Colley, 2007) have been characterised, by i) a focus on institutions and institutionalised life trajectories, ii) perspectives defining transitions as decisional processes with crossovers between agency, institutions and the historical context and, iii) more nuanced understandings of life as a mesh of ongoing, non-linear transitions.

My argument is that transitions encompass elements of each of these three perspectives. People's lives transpire in multiple settings and networks, each potentially overlapping across social domains. For instance, changes in health policies may also have an effect on people's personal finances. These more or less stabilised - but not necessarily exclusive - ties between networks and domains have been termed 'netdom' (White 2008; Godart and White 2010; Fontdevila et al. 2011). However, each social domain constructs its own definitions of ageing.

These definitions operate as 'truths' within a social domain and the institutionalised social imaginaries of ageing in each social domain delimit the boundaries of the domain itself. At the same time, institutionalised social imaginaries contribute to the establishment references for action, including those that consider age relevant to what can and cannot be expected from social actors. Work, for example, is frequently controversial. Governments and international organisations are trying to persuade individuals to retire later than they do now, yet individuals are divided between wanting to retire and engage in new projects, not wanting to retire, and needing to continue working to supplement their pensions. And finally, companies are reluctant to hire older workers they consider obsolete.

Individuals, mobilised by disturbances to their ageing identities must devise strategies to cope with ongoing changes in the imaginaries of later life and the ageing process in social domains. As they age, individuals must adjust the stories accumulated during long life trajectories to the possible changes in the meaning given to those stories across multiple social domains. Experiences and representations are thus in dialectic exchange with the environment. Ageing identities switch on and off netdoms - they alternate between being active and latent - and in doing so they must be able to organise their experiences and understanding in stories that are flexible enough to 'bridge discontinuities' (Fontdevila et al. 2011) in the significations given to age and ageing in networks. Transitions thus entail the permanent juggling of de-stabilising forces, as expressed by Bird & Krüger:

'If we assume that transition in one life domain is interlaced with simultaneous participation processes in other life domains, some of these abide by socially defined criteria of mutual exclusion

producing contradictory forces that push or pull in different directions' (Bird & Kruger, 2005:176).

Transitions between mid-life and later life depend on the capacity of individuals to position themselves in networks, where age has varying salience in the production of flexible stories of values and experiences. Chronological age, as with any other status attribute, does not carry any intrinsic value, but becomes socially meaningful when related to certain characteristics, and the State of each characteristic has a value level attributed to it, a process known as status typification (Berger, Ridgeway, Zelditch, 2002). There is a saying that 'age is just a number', a way of conveying that one is only as old as one feels. Nevertheless, this saying stems precisely from the need to negate characteristics and requirements imposed on one or other age group. However, because they have multiple statuses, individuals are subjects of more than one level of typification. Ultimately, the pace of transitions will not depend on age alone, but on steering a weave of status configurations, in which age may be more or less salient. For instance, being a father, a teacher, and the member of a union may lead to being a grandfather, volunteering as a tutor and an honorary member of the teacher's union. Here I draw from Bird & Krüger's (2005) understanding of agency within transitions. Participation in networks of social domains governed by multiple and sometimes contradictory social imaginaries of age and ageing, pull efforts to steer transitions towards the most salient processes, those requiring more effort to maintain overall stability. Transitions may thus be viewed as the 'interlacing of transformation processes in participation patterns' more than a change in statuses which independently mark positions (Bird & Krüger, 2005:189).

Maintaining capacity for bridging across netdoms depends on indexicality, the juxtaposition of linguistic strategies during extra-linguistic interactions. This juxtaposition creates multiple voices, (Fontdevila et al. 2011) that can be drawn on to maintain coherence, despite the divergence in contingent situations and typifications in netdoms. To take the example of adult education: ageing policy in Chile offers a diversity of programmes for business training and digital literacy. As individuals age they begin to internalise stereotypes of cognitive decline. Engagement in education opportunities depend on individuals relying on previous resources in order to overcome these stereotypes, and to believe they will have access to and be successful in learning environments. Every time identities mobilise individuals to perform indexicality, they do so with some uncertainty that they are able to incorporate new meanings. In this way transitions are institutionalised and situated, while also remaining in flux.

For people passing through mid-life, planning for the future inevitably entails large amounts of uncertainty. However, uncertainty is experienced as preferable to the inadequacy of multiple and frequently contradicting definitions of later life. As Giddens (1991) proposes, change must be coped with, not letting it interfere with the project of our future selves. Nevertheless, as argued by Erikson (1959 cited in Perrig-Chiello and Perren 2005), any pathway requires reflection, both prospectively and retrospectively.

How do individuals cope with the transition from mid-life to old age? Are their reflections and strategies institutionally structured, highly individualized, or somewhere in between? I argue that transition is a highly interactive process. The construction and reconstruction of identities and resulting strategies for control involve competing

narratives formulated in different domains of life. Policy makers, employers, the media among others, construct narratives of age as they mobilize the identities that suit their own fields of meaning and their own interests. For people in mid-life to be able to establish their own ways in later life, their own priorities instead of others' (Biggs 2008), they must be aware of the construction and power of these narratives and be able to develop strategies to resist them.

In this section I have developed the relationship between social imaginaries and transitions, but transitions cannot be understood separately from ageing identities, the focus of the following section.

7.2 Identity

7.2.1 The emergence of identity

Amongst competing social imaginaries of ageing, ageing identities are challenged to find secure footing in all netdoms – networks particular to some domains – where individuals participate, and where they must decide which of the competing understandings of ageing they will accept and which ones they will reject. Lawler (2014) addresses the problem of coherence of identity in a world in which self-identities, if they exist, are subject to acts of self-control when confronted with impinging social norms. But social imaginaries question the universality of any 'civilizing' social norms. Therefore, according to Lawler, more than essential and unified identities, what exists are processes of reconciliation of diverse co-constitutive identities. It also means, according to Stuart Hall (Hall 2000) that some of our identities are in tension, antagonised even, and thus identity can never be completed:

they are always subject to contingency and identities that cannot be combined function as the 'constitutive outside' (Hall, 2000:17).

The problem of reconciling identities has also been addressed by authors such as George Herbert Mead and Erving Goffman. Mead (1934) proposed the co-constitution of identity by the self and its social expression. Symbols provide information about social expectations. Individuals, through process of internal dialogue present adequate responses to those expectations. In this way identity is constituted by its internal and external aspects that form a whole, observing and reflecting upon itself and society. Goffman (1959) also argues that identities are a product of negotiations, but he moves the focus of negotiation to the social persona that performs certain roles (Lawler 2014:121). Interactions entail gathering impressions from other members of the social environment. Using this information, inferences are made about the positions and expected behaviours of the members of a group or participants in a situation. Individuals may then attempt to shape their actions in order to control the impressions they offer, and have a degree of control in the constitution of their identity (Goffman 1959).

For Harrison White, relationships between participants in a situation are also central to the expression of identities. In his view, control is not a function of the shaping of identities. Rather identity emerges from control efforts. He defines identity as 'any source of action, any entity to which observers can attribute meaning not explicable from biophysical regularities' (White, 2008:2). Thus, identities do not exist as essential attributes, but are drivers for action, lenses for observation. Control efforts bringing identities to the fore are triggered by perturbing events. For instance, every time conflicting

social imaginaries compete to gain the trust of audiences, multiple identities reveal themselves through actors in the situation. When individuals are confronted with the tensions related to financial dependency in later life, they may encounter situations when they are potentially dependent of others. At the same time, others may require their assistance. The resolution to these tensions is not always binary, but strategies to reconcile both sides of the tension must be sought. Control is a project to stabilise identities when defining their position against other identities. The relationships between identities can be conflictive, collaborative or of other kinds (Seeley 2014). Control projects will demand reflexivity from each of the identities involved in order to secure footing in a situation. Godart & White (2010) explain that in order to reconcile the interests triggered by multiple identities, actors try to gain control by coupling these identities to multiples netdoms. The resulting communication netdoms permit the emergence of meaning. As this process repeats itself, different couplings transform the emergent meanings creating fields of meaning where identities can act and thus find the footing they are seeking. Different identities will be co-dependent with different netdoms, configurations that control contingency and give identities a sense of consistency.

7.2.2 Types of identity and normalisation of control

Identity for White is expressed in four different ways. One is individual identity which seeks control by practices that lead to habits in relation to physical settings and access to netdoms. Second, is the expression of identity as an acting role, which has a part in achieving a goal for a larger identity. A third sense of identity emerges when there are conflicts between identities, subsuming the two previous forms of identities to integrate mismatches in the face of change. The fourth is

identity as rhetoric, which is built from stories that are held by the person as an institution (White & Godart, 2007) or 'the career of a person is an institution with rhetoric channelling across time' (White, 2008:185). Identity in this fourth sense does not mean that persons follow a unique track, rather persons are bundles of disjointed identities, held together by stories. For a rhetorical identity to exist, it must be disjointed from essential categories in order to allow narratives to step in and normalise chaos, an apparent perceived stability, while struggles for control remain ongoing (Seeley 2014).

If identities as categorical attributes are discarded in White's conceptualisation, then how can we make sense of the notion of ageing identities? White argues that social organisation may cluster around categorical attributions, such as age- a type of clustering called 'catnet' or categorical network (White, 2008:52). According to this conceptualisation, ageing identities would not be a result of control struggles, but a residuum of other processes (Seeley 2014). The consequences of having social organisation cluster around categories such as age is weakly developed. However, White does indicate that the position of identities in netdoms is largely defined by systems of valuation called disciplines³⁷. Among disciplines, councils claim 'dominance over resources' and the decisions on how to distribute them, arenas protect the 'purity' of a group by controlling inclusion and exclusion, and inter- faces focus on production and the returns of that production (White, 2008:64). If catnets group people by categories and age, and at the same time there are disciplines dictating the conditions

³⁷ See White (2008), chapter 3, pp 63-111 for details about disciplines: councils, arenas and interfaces.

under which ageing identities can participate in networks, and what types of resources are at their disposal, then it follows that categorical attributes such as age are forces of production of stories and narratives. The association between catnets and disciplines suggests that age related status typifications depend on the disciplines governing social relations across multiple netdoms.

Communication in the form of stories is the main device by which identities find their way to switch in and out of each other, a necessary sequence of coupling and decoupling as

‘an overall identity can only subsist out of interactions among many identities and then only as triggered by the erratic and unexpected (...) Identity relates to a whole, the whole to its insides, and both to the outside context, but all such parts and boundaries remain involved in further control processes’ (White & Godart, 2007:3).

According to Paul Ricoeur (in Lawler 2014:32) stories are emplotted, they are meshed in plots that give them coherence and they call for a comprehensive frame to inform their general sense. This frame is given by narratives, which have the property of suggesting ‘movement from the potential to the actual’. Every time social information is added, narratives are actualised, they naturalise stories and once embedded ‘the subject to the story seems to become who they always were’. This is how struggles for control are apparently normalised in everyday lives.

Stories do not cause social action but they account for it. Because identities are only visible when events lead them to control turbulence within their networks, and due to individuals switching in and out multiple identities, they will repeat story sets to account for the control

efforts of several of these identities, and thus these story sets will run parallel to each other (White, 2008).

At the same time, story sets need to be independent of specific context and require vehicles facilitating meaning to travel across multiple networks. Styles provide identities of a way of doing things, they are purposeless by themselves but they assist in creating and reinforcing identity. A certain sensibility and way of doing things is repeated, trained or discussed and it becomes a steady way of reproducing identity, while it may still be subject to change (Godart & White, 2010). Styles are accepted by the individual's constituent identities as objective constraints that require the mobilization of these identities to maintain control (White, 2008). Narratives organise stories, styles and switching in a coherent strategy aimed to achieve a desired goal. If we go back to the idea of indexicality, it can be said that indexicality provides linguistic context to the ensemble achieved by narratives. The repeated enactment of narratives and styles give way to the routinized practices that are called institutions and when institutions are embedded in a specific context they become rhetoric to that context. Rhetoric then becomes a guideline for switching among identities, helping to organizing practices in styles (Godart & White, 2010).

Before White tackled the problem of the transfer of meanings in a macro scale, Goffman (1959) accounted for the development of styles and rhetoric in interactional contexts. In his theory of symbolic interaction in the presentation of the self, interactions are guided by consensus between the participants as to what their positions are in a situation, based on the information each presented assuming it was the best way to control their position. Modifications in the form of the

interaction may occur, but they require consistency with the information provided at the beginning of the situation. Individuals enact a style and as their positions and forms of interaction become institutionalised, the general consensus becomes the rhetoric that will guide future interactions.

If styles allow the reproduction of story sets in multiple contexts, then narratives allow the stabilisation of situational identities into social understandings. Styles carry within the social relations of multiple identities and in doing so, the resulting networks are connected

‘on the basis of the projections, expectations and memories derived from a multiplicity but ultimately linked repertoire of available social, public and cultural narratives’ (Sommers and Gibson 1994:38 in Lawler 2014:33).

Thus, narratives enable social identities to connect personal stories and styles with social understandings by placing constraints on the stories we produce.

7.3 Bridging ontologies: the co-construction of structure and function

Conceiving identities as sources of control assumes an ontological stance that allows observing interactions between identities operating in macro and micro social levels. In order to bridge both social levels, it is appropriate to use a mid-range approach that stands in the middle of macro social understanding of ageing (social imaginaries), and the micro strategies dealing with the contentions between such understandings. The mid-range approach adopted in this research

conceives social interaction to be the basic structure, and every structure constitutes a network. However, as explained by Azarian (2000), taking structures as the primary unit of organisation does not entail ascribing to paradigmatic structuralism, which tends to accept society as an orchestration of non-problematic structures where action takes place. On the contrary, White's theory proposes to look at organisation, or the regularisation of certain interactions, as the source of emergence of networks. Organisation allows capturing the underlying order of what presents itself as casual.

Instead of conceiving structures as pre-set contexts where action would be a function of pre-fixed cultural norms, leaving agency confined to the selection of topics (Azarian 2000; Baecker 2008), I understand action as the constitutive source of structures. Precisely because social imaginaries renounce universal ontological truths, and understand society as social domains with competing understandings of phenomena, there is no centre, but 'patterns of ties of varying content' (Azarian 2000), that happen recursively until they reach the limit of a particular organisation. Therefore, the question that this variant of structural analysis poses is what leads to self-organisation in society?

Despite the renounce to pre-fixed cultural norms, culture should not be discarded. Culture is not prior to organisation, but cultural stories comprise common sense accounts of regularities (Azarian 2000); culture describes human engagement within the boundaries of society, where these boundaries mean network (Baecker 2008).

The contention between structural and functional perspectives is well illustrated by Giménez's (2000) discussion of the impossibility of the existence of global identities. Giménez defines identity as 'the set of

internalized cultural repertoires (representations, values, symbols ...) through which the (individual or collective) social actors symbolically demarcate their borders and are distinguished from the other actors in a given situation, all in contexts historically specific and socially structured' (Giménez, 2000:28). This definition highlights the function of culture in establishing relationships between actors. However culture can only be enacted against the backdrop of situational structures. Furthermore, Giménez argues that culture is a strong bond that defines our sense of belonging. In this sense, networks as structures where culture is indeed meaningful, cannot stretch infinitely: they find their boundaries within the limits of the purpose of their organisation. Topics may repeat themselves across multiple locations, so more than categorical and globalising identities; human organisation finds its purpose and expression in identities tied to various local contextual situations.

From this perspective, neither structure nor function prevails over the other, but they are co-constructed. If there are unifying cultural repertoires, they are constructed from within local realities, from social imaginaries that stretch from the inside out. The boundaries of structures will move alongside the practices that guide them, which is why neither culture nor structures themselves can be taken for granted.

7.4 The interconnection of identity and resources networks

Purposive organisation forms structures: networks observable in local and context specific situations. According to Wellman & Frank (2001), networks can be understood as the background against which people move alongside their ties. They 'participate in many worlds' and

enact specific ties within varying time frames, from ephemeral to prolonged. Engagement in social participation favours the interconnection between social worlds, thus the networks involved develop 'both within local settings and between them' (Henning and Lieberg 1996).

Interconnection between ties involves flows of resources. Resources move alongside the patterns of ties in networks, therefore their organisation is not necessarily rational, but purposive (Galaskiewicz and Marsden 1978). The relationship between the structure of networks and the network capital conveys resources and confirms identities across a mesh of networks. Identities switch back and forth between networks in response to contingent events (Wellman and Frank 2001). Since resources travel across multiple situational networks, I argue that more than a liquid property of networks, resources are connected in resources networks, and these resources networks are themselves connected to identities. Although it is possible that to resolve a mismatch between identities, individuals may use a singular resource (e.g. money, friends, faith, etc.), I argue that is more likely that resources will be combined. In the introduction to this chapter I presented the idea that combinations of socio-economic resources: developmental influences, cultural influences and psychological resources, affect attitudes and stereotypes about ageing (Diehl et al. 2014). Accordingly, individuals will recurrently draw on a bundle of resources, depending on their usefulness in solving conflicts. These resources can be organised in networks, and resources networks can be drawn upon repeatedly.

In consequence, resource and identity switching are not mere utilitarian operations. Podolny & Baron (1997) found that

‘individuals seek not only resources and information through social networks, but also a sense of belonging and understanding of what is expected of them, and sometimes the very same tie (...) can be a source of both resource-based and identity flows’ (Podolny & Baron, 1997:690).

Furthermore, access to resources within networks relies on the legitimacy and trust attributed to identities in a network and to the perceived quality of the resources (Galaskiewicz and Marsden 1978). It is in virtue of the attributed legitimacy that certain ties remain latent. They are activated when needed, because past interactions render them trustworthy (Hurlbert et al. 2000; Jack 2005). In other words, past flows of resources, especially those routine ones, make future flows of resources within a network more likely. Groups and communities themselves may be counted as resources and people with personal resources are able to recruit and actualise the available collective resources (Anson et al. 1993). As an example, Atchley (1989) explains that during later life, people attempt to preserve social and physical environments as well as types of roles, because they prompt familiar forms of interaction. Ultimately, depending on the types of expectations constructed, identities within a network will be mobilised either through what Lin (1999) refers to as instrumental actions, oriented to gaining resources, or expressive actions are oriented to maintaining possessed resources.

Not every tie in resource networks is positive though: when the context is poor in resources, restrictions on forming ties may lead to rely on the same tie for multiple purposes. These are called ‘multiplex ties’, and despite their strength, they are risky because resources can be withdrawn altogether if a multiplex tie is severed (Podolny and Baron

1997). There are also negative ties and absent ties. Granovetter (1973:1361) defines absent ties as 'both the lack of any relationship and ties without substantial significance'. Negative ties as defined by (Labianca, 2014:240) 'are relatively enduring relationships inducing negative affect, judgements about others and/or behavioural intentions directed towards others'. They may appear in different parts of a network, vary in frequency, in their impact on others and in the trajectories of the individuals. I argue that although there is a clear distinction between absent and negative ties, both the lack of a resource and the negative association between resources may have a detrimental effect on the resource network.

7.5 Resources networks in practice and discourse

Stories unfold consistently with indexical criteria for each context, whilst at the same time they enact particular styles across multiple situations. Ways in which people do things depend on what they deem appropriate use of the resources at their disposal, whilst maintaining both narrative and indexical consistency in various situations. 'These stories create the conditions of our perception and shape our interactions with our social reality' (Seeley, 2014:38). Thus, stories are not only sources of information about the context, but social ties in a network exist vis-à-vis a network of resources deployed to maintain the narrative flow in social networks. Coherent management of resources is more likely to result in different degrees of inclusion of actors in groups with which they share similar styles. In contrast, an actor's lack of competence to switch between contexts can result in disorganisation of

social timing, and therefore in exclusion from groups and netdoms (White 1998).

Styles carry story sets across netdoms. Narratives arrange styles and stories in strategic ways to find better footing for the control of identities, preserving them from other identities that strive to take over. Mohr and White (2008) explain that lives are constituted by a flow of netdoms and control efforts coming from the identities engaged in netdoms. Control depends both on social interaction systems and on discourse systems: participation and understanding of the shared meanings that develop through social interactions. This research understands that netdoms within diverse social systems trigger tensions in the discourses about ageing, placing ageing identities under pressure. In response, ageing identities must develop styles that allow them to take part in social interactions in their own terms, while enduring increasing pressure from external identities as they undergo the transitions from mid-life to older age.

Social interactions are experienced routinely as what Mische & White (1998:697) call problematic situations, 'those problematic, high-stakes episodes that cast our prescribed roles and trajectories into question'. Situations present themselves uncertain, perceived as 'problematic and unresolved'. They involve multiple intersections between set of relations and stories. Stories are organised so that the outcomes of a situation are 'felt to matter to the actors engaged'. Discursive conventions tied to particular crowds are organised in domains, an array of- 'story sets, symbols, idioms, registers, grammatical patternings and accompanying corporeal markers - that characterize a particular specialized field of interaction' (Mische & White, 1998:702). Switchings between netdoms are characterised by

the use of different sets of signals than in the previous domain, even if the person's entire set of signals and ties remains intact. An identity selects, according to the available indexicality, the place, time, objects, roles and networks appropriate to that domain. Such arrays of sets of signals at risk of becoming problematised in social interactions are what, I argue, constitute a resource network.

The repeated use of resource networks, running parallel to story sets from netdom to netdom, coalesces in a style. Resources are not neutral, they are charged with valuations that reflect the status of identities within netdoms. Because statuses are interlaced, changes in the valuation of resources by other identities will affect status configurations. These will trigger control efforts or steering by the ageing identities coupled with those resource networks.

7.6 Summary

The argument I have developed in this chapter is that transitions are ongoing processes triggered by the adjustments of individuals' experiences and expectations to the competing and changing social imaginaries of ageing across multiple social domains. Individuals must resolve these tensions because they interact in networks where social domains overlap, along with their corresponding understandings of what ageing is. In order to resolve these tension, individuals must develop control strategies to cope with changing understandings of ageing, and the consequences those changes have for the typification of ageing identities.

Ageing identities switch on and off netdoms, or networks associated with social domains, establishing dialectic exchanges with their environment. These exchanges allow the organisation of experiences in

stories that must be flexible enough to fit multiple indexical contexts. Categorical networks or catnets may group people by age and may be more or less salient forces in the production of stories that may grant or deny access to multiple netdoms, depending on the age typifications they elicit. Story sets that allow ageing identities certain stability are organised in narratives. The reproduction of story sets in multiple contexts leads to a way of doing things, practices or styles that effectively connect the networks in which people's lives transpire.

Narratives account for strategies. The effective enactment of strategies, or styles, requires resources of diverse types. Familiar and effective bundles of resources result in resources networks that run vis-à-vis situational networks. The flow of resources may have positive or negative outcomes for individuals' strategies to control transitional processes.

In the following chapter I develop the methodological strategy used during this research to elicit stories about ageing transitions by confronting individuals with the tensions about ageing identified in chapter 7. Whilst attempting to resolve the tensions, individuals reveal the resources they draw on to develop strategies to control transitions.

8 Representing and resolving tensions of ageing: discourses and strategies

This chapter explains the strategies individuals use to accept or to reject externally ascribed identities in competing social imaginaries of ageing. In the first section (10.1) I test the tensions between social imaginaries in the political, mass media, and older people's domains that were identified in chapter 7. In the second section (10.2) I articulate how ageing identities trigger strategies to resolve these tensions. I present and discuss the results of 32 visual elicitation interviews with men and women aged 40-90 of high, medium and low socio-economic status who were confronted with the tensions in social imaginaries represented in drawings. This exercise generated public stories - discourse practice - as participants interpreted ageing in general, and ontological stories - discourse **in** practice - that emerged through narratives of personal experiences. I discuss the public stories in the light of political, mass media, and older people's social imaginaries of ageing, and I discuss the ontological stories in terms of discourse and networks, representing practices, hopes and expectations of the ageing process. The resources used are portrayed in resource networks, and ways of using them are illustrated with extracts from the stories. Finally I explore the alignment of the ontological and public stories to identify strategies that can be used to steer transitions between mid-life and later life.

8.1 Representing the tensions in ageing

My purpose in the second empirical stage of this study was to develop understanding of the ways in which ageing identities go through transitional processes. In chapter 8 I argued that transitions constitute the realignment of experiences in contrast with institutionalised representations of ageing. The first step in testing this argument was to see whether the tensions, or oppositions, between personal and institutional representations, as constructed, were recognised by a sample (N=266) of women and men in mid and later life of varied socio-economic status. The construction, and analysis, of the questionnaire designed for this purpose was described in chapter 5. The specific purpose was to measure the distance between opposite sides of each tension. In other words, to identify the strength of contrasts in the attitudes of participants to each side of the eight tensions constructed as binaries:

1. *Being economically dependent vs having dependants*
2. *Information as an intrinsic value vs information as a means to an end*
3. *Predominance of passive social roles vs active social roles*
4. *Sociability in family networks vs wider social networks*
5. *Abandonment of older people vs social and emotional dependency*
6. *Preference for collective vs preference for private spaces*
7. *Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment*
8. *Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness*

The purpose was to distinguish between those tensions that made sense to participants, and those that did not show any statistically significant contrast between the two sides.

8.1.1 Correlations

In the first stage of the quantitative analysis I looked for evidence of association between variables in each side of every tension. The association indicated that pairs of variables could be treated as a part of the same side of a tension.

Table 9.1 shows the paired items in each of the eight tensions with positive correlations. Of the 16 pairs of variables, 14 were significantly correlated³⁸.

Table 8.1 Correlations between items in sides of a each tension

Tension: Economy & Politics		
<i>Being Dependent</i>		r_s
Q.7	When growing older one should avoid being economically dependent on the family	.22***
Q.17	A good economic policy would be giving give benefits and bonuses for older people	
<i>Having Dependants</i>		
Q.20	When growing older the family should avoid being economically dependent on me	.21***
Q.26	A good economic policy would be giving equal job opportunities for all ages	
Tension: Information and Education		
<i>Information as a value</i>		
Q.11	It is motivating to stay informed because one always has a topic of conversation	.55***
Q.23	One must keep updated to learn about things in general	
<i>Information as a means</i>		
Q.18	It is motivating to stay informed because one can help educating other people	.52***
Q.30	One must keep updated to be productive to society	
Tension: Roles & Representations		
<i>Passive Roles</i>		
Q.9	The citizenship role of older people dwindles after retirement and children leaving home	.23***
Q.21	As one grows older, one tends to shut oneself in	
<i>Active Roles</i>		
Q.28	As times goes by my social participation tends to change according to my interests and activities	.30***
Q.22	Older people can organise to look after their interests	
Tensions: Social Environment		
<i>Family Networks</i>		
Q.13	Family is the best emotional support in older age	.42***
Q.29	To live in a tranquil environment in older age family must make sure all is well at home	
<i>Wider Networks</i>		
Q.4	To live in a tranquil environment in older age one must have good neighbours that help keeping an eye on the house	-.07
Q.16	Friends are the biggest support an older person has	
<i>Family abandonment</i>		

³⁸ See Appendix 12 for details.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Q.3	It is normal that families don't visit older people a lot because they are concerned with their own responsibilities	.19**
Q.15	I fear that my family will abandon me as I grow older	
Family (co) dependency		
Q.24	It is typical in the relationship between older people and their families that families meddle in all their decisions	.26**
Q.8	It is normal that families come and visit with nephews/nieces/grandchildren, but leave a mess	
Tensions: Physical Environment		
Private Spaces		
Q.6	I would prefer to spend my time doing things around my own neighbourhood	.15*
Q.12	When I think about my home, I would rather live in my own flat or house	
Collective Spaces		
Q.1	I would prefer to spend my time in places where I can do things with other people	.10
Q.27	When I think about my home, I would rather live in a place with family	
Indoor Risks		
Q.5	I feel that risky environments are frequently caused by living in places without appropriate infrastructure for age limitations	.40***
Q.31	It is important that my home is accident proofed	
Outdoor Risks		
Q.2	People should respect the pace of older people in public spaces	.24***
Q.14	Risky environments are frequently caused by the aggression of pedestrians, cyclist and drivers in the city	
Tension: Body, Health and Well Being		
Vulnerability		
Q.25	When growing old, health depends mostly on being able to afford treatments and medicines	.38***
Q.19	If my health expenses increase as I grow older it will be vital to have more money to pay for my health	
Resourcefulness		
Q.32	When growing old health depends mostly on knowing how to take care of one's health	.20***
Q.10	If my health expenses increase as I grow older it is vital to have good health services for older people	

Sig. p ≤ .05*; p ≤ .01**; p ≤ .001***

The variables in both tensions of the social environment, as well as the tension *collective vs private spaces*, within the physical environment were discarded at this point, because at least one side of each tension did not meet the minimum significance criteria ($p \leq 0.05$) for inclusion.

8.1.2 Principal Component Analysis

Following the correlation stage, I conducted a confirmatory Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with the variables of the five remaining dimensions:

1. *Being economically dependent vs having dependants*
2. *Information as an intrinsic value vs information as a means to an end*

3. *Predominance of passive social roles vs active social roles*
4. *Indoor risks vs the city as a risky environment*
5. *Health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness*

The purpose was to confirm that the variables indeed belonged to their allocated dimensions. The reason was to confirm that I had correctly constructed statements that represented the tensions I intended them to represent.

Principal component analysis requires preliminary tests for which details can be found in Appendix 13. Table 8.2 shows that after these tests, at least three out of four variables in each dimensions were retained, and that in each model, either one or two variables explained over 50% of the variance.

Table 8.2 Retained factors and explained variance

	Nº Variable	Retained Factors	Variance explained
Info. & Edu.	4	4	1 62.3%
Health & WB	4	3	1 53.4%
Econ. & Politics	4	3	1 51.8%
Roles & Rep.	4	4	2 68.7%

With the exception of the dimension *roles & representations*, for which the passive and active roles variables clustered into two components, all the retained variables for each of the dimensions clustered together in one component. The unrotated factor loadings are shown in Table 8.3. At the bottom of the table, Cronbach’s α indicates the reliability of each subscale.

Table 8.3 Factor loadings and Cronbach’s alpha

	Risk	Information	Health	Dependency	Passive Role	Active Roles
Q.5	.74					
Q.31	.75					
Q.2	.68					
Q.14	.66					
Q.30		.57				
Q.23		.69				

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Q.18	.66					
Q.11	.57					
Q.10		.67				
Q.25		.69				
Q.19		.83				
Q.17			.61			
Q.7			.77			
Q.20			.77			
Q.9				.89		
Q.21				.76		
Q.22					.76	
Q.28						.87
α	.67	.80	.56	.53	.57	.50

Despite their relatively low reliability, all subscales were above the accepted limit of .5. These subscales contain only two or three items, and Cronbach's α is affected by the size of the subscale (Field 2005:675). The PCA results suggest that there is a latent variable to each of these subscales. The subscales for passive roles and active roles are particularly encouraging, since they support a distinction between the two sides of the variable. The PCA confirms that the variables included in each model are likely to belong to the same components and should be retained in the analysis of contrasts within dimensions.

8.1.3 Factorial ANOVA

Factorial ANOVA was used to determine if there were significant differences between each side of a tension, and if these differences were associated with background variables of age, gender, SES and education. I constructed new variables to show the ratio or 'distance' between the two sides of a tension. The ratio is a representation of the tensions in the definitions of ageing explored during the analysis of social imaginaries. After correlations and PCA were produced, five of the eight initial tensions were constructed as ratios. These new variables were: ratio between orientations toward *indoor or outdoor risks*; *information as value or as means*; *vulnerability or resourcefulness*

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

in healthcare; being dependent or having dependants and active or passive roles.

For each ratio variable, I tested multiple models. The columns in Table 8.4 show those models in which Levene's test $\geq .05$, meaning that equality of variance could be assumed for that model. The rows show the significant interactions of the ratio at $F \leq .05$.

Table 8.4 Summary of Factorial ANOVA models

	Models: A= Indoor/ Outdoor Risk; B= Information as Value/ Means; C= Health Vulnerability/ Resourcefulness; D= Being/ Having Dependents; E= Active/ Passive Roles							
	Age* Gen	Age*SES	Age* Edu	Edu *SES	Age*Gen* SES	Age*Edu* SES	Age*Gen* Edu	Edu*SES*Gen
Age	D	D E	C D					
SES						C		
Age*SES		E			B			
Age*Education			C				B	
Education*SES				A		C		B
Age*Gender*SES					B			
Age*Edu*SES						C		

Indoor/outdoor risk (model A) showed only one significant relationship with the interaction between education and SES. This indicates that the tension described in the analysis of social imaginaries does not resonate across the groups included in this sample. Moreover, it did not show any significant interaction with age, meaning there is no difference in the scores between those people in middle age and those in later life. Therefore *Indoor/outdoor risk* was dismissed at this stage.

For the other four models, I conducted³⁹ univariate F tests and pairwise comparisons based on the marginal means. All these models showed that when contrasted with background variables, the distance between sides of a tension represented in ratio variables were

³⁹ The univariate effects and pairwise comparisons are only reported for those models where age has an effect.

significant. Statistical details and representations of the Factorial ANOVA models can be found in Appendix 14.

Information as value/ means showed significant interactions between age, SES and gender; as well as between age, gender and education. *Health vulnerability/ resourcefulness* showed significant interactions between age, education and SES. *Being dependent/ having dependants* showed significant interactions between age and gender, age and SES, and age and education. *Active/ passive roles* showed significant interactions between age and SES.

Between age groups, those aged 55-69 years had the lowest tension scores, meaning that participants in middle age tended to have similar attitudes towards both sides of each of the explored tensions. At the same time this age group exhibited greater internal diversity, especially across the SES of their municipality; with the medium and high SES consistently showing greater difference between the sides of the tensions of ageing than the low SES. Conversely, the age group 40-54 showed the overall highest tensions scores. As a group they had the greatest contrast in attitudes in most tensions, with the exception of *passive vs active roles*. In all other tensions, individuals aged 40-54 had the highest tensions, but those of medium and high SES and those with higher education also tended to have higher scores. The 70+ age group showed higher tensions scores than those aged 50-64, but lower than the 40-54 age group. However, in the tension *passive vs active roles* those aged 70+ with low SES had the highest scores.

Although it is not possible to explain what causes the differences in the scores when contrasted with the background variables, the presence of significant differences provides evidence that participants had differences in their attitudes towards the tensions, large enough to

justify further exploration of the tensions themselves. This is the focus of the sections that follow.

8.2 Resolving the tensions

Having identified clearly recognisable tensions of ageing the following sections focus on understanding how these tensions are resolved in visual elicitation interviews with 32 women and men aged 40-90. Participants also revealed the strategies and resources they draw on to accept or reject identities of ageing constructed in the political, mass media and older people's domain. The importance of managing resources in managing change and continuity in later life had been argued by Hill, Sutton, and Cox (2009) in their analysis of two waves of interviews with older people in the UK.

Transitions are triggered by adjustments of individuals' experiences and expectations to competing and changing social imaginaries of ageing. By seeking participant's solutions to the tensions of ageing in social imaginaries, and their strategies to accept or reject the imaginaries of ageing, I created an entry point to observe transitions from mid to later life and throughout later life.

Strategies to control transitions demanded that individuals constructed frames of interpretation that synthesized and made sense of the multiple and competing understandings of ageing. Public stories account for these frames of interpretation. They are indexical (Fontdevila et al. 2011) discourse practices because they translate understandings of ageing at a macro level into what these understandings may entail for ageing individuals' lives. They do not necessarily represent what individuals actually do to steer their ageing processes, but they reconcile multiple understandings of ageing

stemming from social imaginaries. Public stories are an expression of reconciling mismatches or conflicts between identities (Mohr and White 2008; White 2008). The framework created by public stories acts as a reference for action. When individuals devise strategies for steering transitions, they do so against the background of public stories.

In contrast to public stories, strategies represent everyday practices. These are narrated in ontological stories, or discourse **in** practice (institutional conditions, resources and related discourses mediating interactions with each other) (Holstein & Gubrium 2013:264). Ontological stories are accounts of personal experiences, of how individuals resolve or imagine they would resolve tensions using the resources at their disposal. For example: *“My sister and my niece taught me to use WhatsApp. Now my sister and I WhatsApp every evening so I can practice. When I am older, there will be new technology and my niece will teach me how to use it”*. This is an ontological story. The story comprises a bundle of resources: the sister, the niece, the software, and knowledge of how to use the technology. But it also shows the meaning of these resources in everyday situations, and as expectations for the future. Throughout the chapter I provide some illustrations of resource networks that represent typical solutions to tensions in ontological stories.

I compare public stories with the social imaginaries of ageing, and ontological stories with public stories to highlight how transitions play out in multiple situational contexts. These comparisons provide insights into which social imaginaries are most influential in individuals' discourses and practices. While solutions to tensions may align with public and ontological stories, they may also expose new tensions in situations where solutions diverge.

8.2.1 Being dependent vs having dependants

Parliamentary debates construct an imaginary of physical and financial vulnerability in older age. Financial vulnerability, in both the political and mass media domains, should be cushioned by family support and welfare payments provided by the State. However, these imaginaries of vulnerability do not articulate the dependency of others on older people. In order to understand how the dynamics of financial dependency are constructed we need to know how the role of the State is perceived in terms of securing financial stability. To what degree are individuals seen as responsible for their current and future income? What types of dependency are found within families? What circumstances make it more or less acceptable for older people to become dependent on their family or younger family members on older relatives?

7.2.1.1 *The crisis of the privatisation of pensions*

It was the common view in both public and ontological stories that the risk of economic dependence in later life was associated with the decrease in the value of pensions over the past three decades, leaving many older people with an income below the poverty line. The crisis in the pension system is traced to the early 1980's when Chile changed from a redistributive pension system to a personal savings base, administrated by private companies (AFP)⁴⁰. Since then the government has attempted corrective measures such as establishing a minimum pension. However, this is less than the minimum wage and

⁴⁰ Pension Fund Administrators

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

study participants, regardless of their age, gender or SES believed that AFPs must be further regulated to improve the benefits accruing to savers.

Participants aged 40-49 and 70+ of medium and high SES held similar views in their public stories on government responsibility for securing pensions sufficient for dignified living. As Remigio explained, although people have a role in contributing towards their pensions responsibility should not be solely in the hands of individuals because:

“Nobody can say that the way to avoiding being short of money is to be successful in life, that doesn’t make any sense, no, people are what they are, each one reaches whatever they can reach, I believe there must be a State concerned with older people having everything they need...screening the real needs of each socioeconomic stratum obviously” (Remigio, 45-49, SESM)

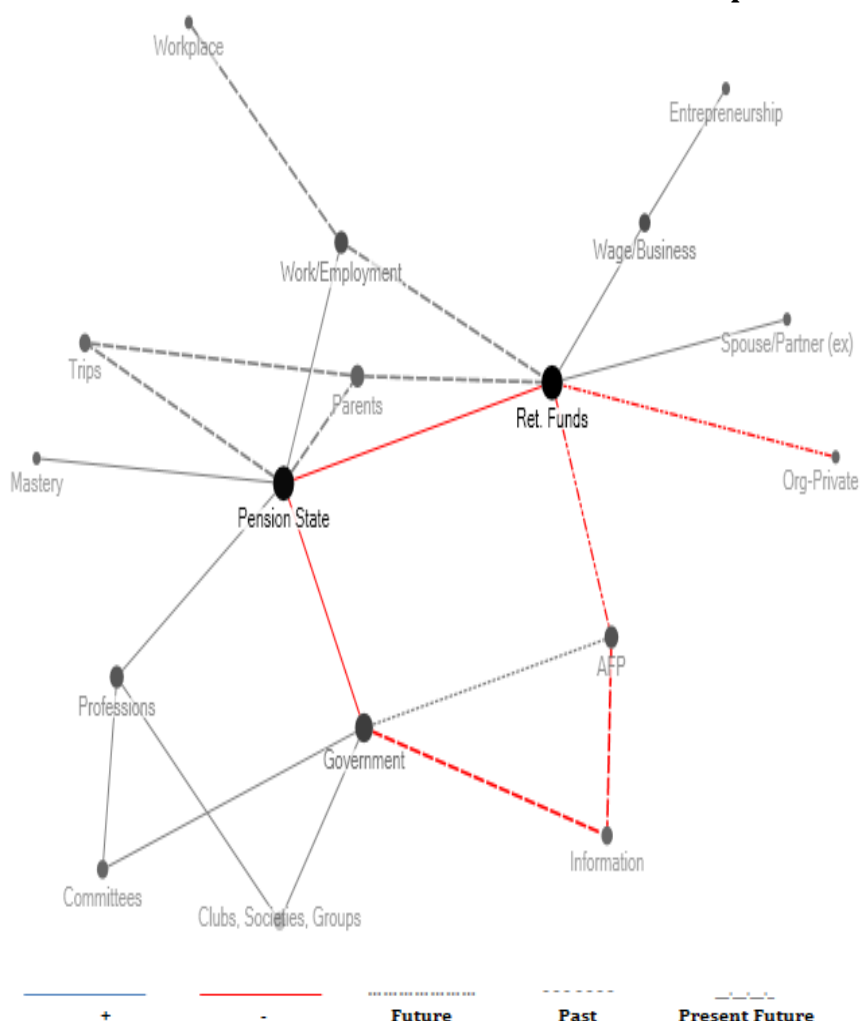
Figure 8.1 shows how AFPs were expected to have a continued negative effect on retirement funds⁴¹. As a result, resources such as owning a business or belonging to a professional body, are recognized as important in avoiding financial dependency in later life. Individuals’ strategies can be divided into reactive and preventive. Reactive strategies sought to ameliorate the irreversible effect of the privatisation of pensions on financial security. For instance, participants like Samuel (70-74, SESH), Nicolás (65-69 SESH) and Irene (60-64 SESM) had adopted reactive strategies to improve the terms of their retirement through schemes that make the most of their savings (e.g. supplementary savings scheme⁴²). However, they accepted that

⁴¹ Key: continuous lines, show indicate present ties between resources, dots expected ties in the future, dashes ties in the past, and dot-dash lines represent ties that exist in the present and are expected to continue in the future. Grey lines represent positive ties, and red lines potentially negative ties.

⁴² APV: Voluntary Care Saving

their pensions will be low. In contrast, preventive strategies aimed to substantially improve individuals' pensions in relation to what they would receive through AFP's alone. For example, Alejo (70-74, SESH) and Gustavo (40-44, SESM), both businessmen, have never trusted AFPs. They generated their own income through business, and only contributed the minimum required payment to the AFP system. This had enabled them to avoid the losses experienced by those who suffered the falling value of AFP's pension funds. Collective preventive strategies had been adopted by Óscar (60-64 SESM), Delia (55-59, SESM) and Irene (60-64 SESM) who were affiliated to the Teacher's Union and Professional Society that gave them greater negotiating power even after retirement.

Figure 8.1 Financial status in later life related to State policies



Indignation and mistrust towards AFPs expressed in both public and ontological stories were also portrayed in the social imaginaries of the mass media while social imaginaries of the political domain showed that organisations of pensioners had reached out to parliamentarians to express their concerns about the sustained decrease in pensions. Although parliamentarians identified reforms to the pension system in order to secure a minimum State pension for older adults, the stories

emerging from visual elicitation interviews suggested that the public considered these reforms insufficient. The same critique was expressed in the social imaginaries of older people, indicating that the implemented reforms only benefit the poorest pensioners. The similarity between visually elicited stories and the views expressed in the social imaginaries of older people provides clear evidence that perceptions of financial vulnerability had not improved and confirms findings from the survey of quality of life in older age in Chile (SENAMA et al. 2013) that 78% of older people were living with income below the minimum wage.

Impoverishment due to dwindling pensions has been reported in previous studies of social imaginaries and representations of ageing in Chile. Social imaginaries in school textbooks (Jorquera 2010) attributed this phenomenon to the abrupt ageing of the population, as well as to conservatism of older people resisting changes to economic policies. While Green (2010), and Hockey & James (2003) have discussed how, in societies with strong welfare systems, older people may become subject to constant surveillance of individual lifestyle choices by State agencies administering welfare payments, in Chile, mandatory compliance with rules from AFPs, and State reforms are perceived as abrupt and arbitrary, stripping individuals of opportunities to plan desired strategies for retirement.

7.2.1.2 *Guidelines and difficulties for achieving post-retirement economic independence*

Despite criticism of the pension system, participants of medium and high SES expressed, in their public stories, the belief that there are ways of preparing for retirement to prevent extreme economic fragility in later life. Continued working after retirement, or having a business

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

plan to provide supplementary income were two suggestions. However, multiple forms of saving were the most common route to financial security visualised by participants. This involved accepting that work is no longer a possibility, and putting money aside:

“Buying a flat, buying a house that belongs to you so you do not have to think about paying rent when you are old, to have all the kids educated if possible, precisely so they are not a burden or having them living at home because they do not have a job, you see, I believe how one reaches older age goes a bit within the planning one does when younger” (Iris, 40-44, SESM)

Ontological stories confirmed the public stories of finding ways of ameliorating financial frailty. But ontological stories added motivations and misgivings about possible strategies .

Financial independence was connected with a desire to remain self-reliant in all areas of life. Independently of SES, the notion that a person should be able to fend for themselves was rooted in individual histories, particularly in values that had been passed on to participants by their parents, and that they have tried to pass on to their children.

“when growing up my mother taught me how to do laundry, there were no washing machines then, the clothes had to be very clean, the whites with the whites and the colours with colours (...)it has served me well (...) you need to learn life, because it is quite hard, but what are you going to do? It’s hard but you must anyway” (Catalina, 60-64, SESL)

The view that achieving independency in later life requires planning for the future was ubiquitous in ontological stories. Three main pillars sustained the strategies for future financial independence: i) home ownership; ii) sources of income; and iii) an ethics of austerity.

Home ownership was considered the baseline for future financial security by women and men of diverse age and SES. Being free of rent or mortgage payments alleviated concerns about budgets. In addition,

home represented a bulwark against future uncertainties. For some, homes were testimony of their life achievements, and a few participants of medium and high SES indicated they saw home ownership as an investment.

“I hope health accompanies me, and that nothing happens to me, but something may happen ... so I have talked with my older daughters that they have to support their siblings. Anyway I think that you have to reach this age with your house already paid for” (Dominga (45-49 SESH)

The second pillar of financial independence in later life consisted of strategies to secure a steady income. Marital status and SES were important factors in the detail of these strategies. When both spouses had been waged, they had more freedom to plan a secure retirement, or even when the income was low, they found relief in the prospect of receiving two pensions, instead of one. For instance, Benjamín (65-69, SESH), talking about his wife, referred to:

“tweaking things (...)because I carried the expenses of things she was able to capitalise her income (...) she improved her pension a lot, so with both pensions we shouldn't have a very hard time making ends meet” (Benjamín,65-69, SESH)

Single individuals or those with an unwaged partner found it difficult to achieve future financial stability. These concerns were expressed by participants of high and medium SES. Ulises (55-59, SESM), for instance was worried that despite his intentions of planning and saving, he had not managed to save consistently.

Knowing that pensions are frequently an unreliable income, entrepreneurship and second jobs were strategies adopted by some to improve their financial independence. Second jobs were more common among individuals 50-64 years old and of low and medium SES, that is among those worse off approaching retirement age. Businesses were

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

regarded as an attractive strategy to secure financial independence, but for some individuals, their lack of business acumen made them sceptical about acting on their wishes. Businesses and investments were made according to the SES of participants, and participants in their 40's spoke of how they combined their jobs with business and investment projects, giving them peace of mind about the future. As Rodolfo, aged 42, explained his business was a backup plan in case he found himself unemployed.

"I started a business three months ago thinking that if I leave here it will be harder for me to find a job, they will pay me less than they do here, things start winding down" (Rodolfo, 40-44, SESL)

Overall, ontological stories showed that some individuals started preparing to achieve economic independence in later life from early in their middle years. But there were cases of later preparation such as Delia (55-59 SESM) and Nicolás (65-69 SESH). Delia's strategy was to reach retirement debt free, while Nicolás followed the property investment path.

The third pillar of self-reliance was an ethic of austerity. This involved drawing on a combination of savings and leaving ones affairs in order, whilst progressively lowering one's expenses and finally accepting and normalising austerity.

"With the little and nothing that I have, with what God gives me I'm content, I have never aspired to have more, not less either" (Irma, 55-59 SESL)

Failure to save or at least attempt to save for the future was regarded as a breach of the ethics of austerity, resulting in self and peer criticism, regardless of whether this guideline was not being met due to personal choices or due to extreme material constraints. Catalina explained the dilemmas faced by those unable to save:

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

“Save, but you can’t save (...) perhaps it is that one really doesn’t come through, but one should say ok, I’m going to put in this much and it should be that much (...) because I should be saving, sometimes you can, but there’re not enough money” (Catalina, 60-64, SESL)

Earlier studies in Chile (Jorquera 2010; SENAMA and MaSS 2011; Abusleme et al. 2014) suggest that older people are financially vulnerable and cannot be truly independent. And surveys of quality of life and inclusion in later life (SENAMA et al. 2010; Abusleme et al. 2014) reveal public concern about the willingness and ability of individuals to plan their future financial independence, and about increasing reliance on State support. The ontological stories in this study show, on the contrary, that despite obstacles to financial independence, individuals are concerned with self-dependency in later life and are aware of strategies (property, income, austerity) to achieve this goal. This awareness does not, however, equate to an ability to adopt those strategies, so that the ability to achieve financial independence in later life remains a source of concern for many.

Although the guidelines for post-retirement security recurred across public stories, some of those interviewed felt that most people did not implement them. Reasons included carelessness with money despite having a stable income, having too many children, and lack of anticipation. In addition to poor financial planning, the social imaginaries of older people included financial illiteracy and gender as factors influencing dependency with older women being more vulnerable to financial dependency.

Income is a strong symbol of autonomy, and deficiencies in income can hinder self-efficacy in later life (Osorio Parraguez, et al., 2011; SENAMA et al., 2010). In ontological stories this was presented as failure to exercise austerity. Discussion of the capacity to maintain

financial independence in later life can be related to perceptions of decline (Morganroth Gullette 2004; Laceulle 2013). With few exceptions, the prevailing narrative is that there is limited time for preparation, and few opportunities for building up resources to secure financial independence in later life. Although timetables for preparation are flexible (Toothman and Barrett 2011; Wohlmann 2012) due to some individuals developing strategies sooner than others, as individuals grow older they express some distress, because to them, the flexibility soon reaches its limit. As Krainitzki (2014) puts it, as time passes, the period for assembling resources become more rigid, leaving little room for manoeuvre.

Post-retirement employment is visible in the political and mass media domains, as a plausible way of expanding the time frame to prepare for financial independence in later life. The political domain, confronted with the vulnerability associated with low pensions, argues the need for flexible employment for older people, and the media report novel schemes to re-integrate retirees into the workforce. However, the social imaginaries of older people themselves suggest continuing discrimination in the job market.

7.2.1.3 *Multigenerational cohabitation as dependency*

Dependency in later life was viewed, in public stories, as something to be avoided if possible. Participants of medium and high SES understood that complete self-reliance is not always feasible, even when measures have been taken to enable economic independence in older age. Public stories focused on degrees of dependency, and how younger relatives support older people. Financial dependency was understood not merely as requiring transfer of money but was frequently connected with cohabitation, and redistribution of resources

within families in response to the financial, social and practical needs of each generation. Cohabitation represented mutual benefits, and generational interdependency was deemed to be more feasible among families of high and medium SES, while for families of lower SES, time, space and financial obstacles were seen as obstacles to adult children supporting their parents through cohabitation⁴³.

In contrast, ontological stories that tell us about individuals' practices and expectations for their own ageing, presented a different outlook on dependency. For some of low and medium SES 50+, and women of high SES in the 40-49 band, it was natural that children should take care of their parents and support them financially in their older age. This also included cohabitation in families of all SES, contradicting the views expressed by some participants in public stories. As Priscilla and Luz explained:

"One has to sow in order to harvest, so I give a lot to my children and they will give me back when I'm old (...) a room with a shower in the back (...) my mom still lives, she is 82 and my dad passed away a year ago, and they had a good older age, we are ten siblings and we gave them as much as we could" (Priscilla, 50-54, SESL)

"Showing children that one can support their parents and there is no disgust in that, we do it with a lot of dignity, without reproaches or demanding anything in return" (Luz, 40-44, SESH)

Despite these accounts supporting strategies of intergenerational dependency, for other group of participants of medium and high SES, dependency, especially cohabitation, could be experienced as a

⁴³ The views expressed in public stories tend to present less nuanced scenarios than ontological stories. Therefore, social mobility was not considered by participants in their public stories intergenerational dependency.

personal failure. When dependency appeared inevitable, resignation was accentuated by fear of curtailed independence. Delia (55-59 SESM) expressed this fear, but was adamant about retaining her emotional independence. For Delia, avoiding cohabitation was to create a resource that would allow her to maintain control over her decisions and cope with the unease caused by the prospect of financial dependency.

“They [children] are clear in that I’m going to live alone in a flat (...) as a retired teacher I won’t have enough, so one will pay my rent and another one the groceries and my pension is for me. The flat is mine, so they don’t really have to pay anything, just the bills (...) It is a shame that it is this way, but I know I won’t have enough, but I don’t want my daughter or my son moving me in with them”
(Delia, 55-59, SESM)

Representations and imaginaries of ageing in Chile have suggested that social class and gender influence the resources individuals amass during their life. (SENAMA et al. 2010; Abusleme et al. 2014). In contrast to public stories ontological stories showed that older women and people of low SES, although not exclusively, were more frequently dependent on family members. However, in the middle and high SES, although children may support their parents, both men and women resisted the idea of becoming financially dependent on younger generations. Cohabitation was particularly resisted as a future prospect, despite the data showing over half of the population over 60 was living with their children (SENAMA et al. 2010). Although dependency was accepted for the older generations, participants in middle age were striving to find ways to depend on their families as little as possible, even when some degree of dependency seemed inevitable.

Multigenerational cohabitation was mentioned frequently in the social imaginaries of the political and mass media domains but was

presented as a question of social and physical environments, and associated with care needs in cases of poor health. In contrast to some of the participants' negative views about economic dependency in later life, expressed in both public and ontological stories, none of the social imaginaries articulated cohabitation as an undesired form of dependency.

Public stories connected, more explicitly than ontological stories, the impoverishment resulting from the pension crisis and its material and social implications. The social imaginaries of the mass media and political domains, by contrast, tended to polarise family relationships by portraying multigenerational households either as the ideal to be incentivised through social care and housing policy; or as environments carrying a risk of domestic abuse.

7.2.1.4 *The economic ties of parenting and grand parenting*

In the political domain, the older generation is commonly conceptualised as dependent on the younger, a conclusion consistent with the decline in material conditions experienced by those who leave regular employment. But older people themselves told a different story. In the best case scenario, the older generation was solvent and willing to help the younger to develop economic stability. In the worst case scenario, resources and opportunities were scarce for both generations leading to intergenerational competition in which tensions arising from each generation's demands and broader cultures of blame created a state of constant strain.

Exploring these tensions in greater detail during the visual elicitation interviews revealed a gender bias in that most participants in favour of parents continuing economic help to their children and grandchildren were men, while most participants opposing this type of

dependency were women. The interviews also revealed that arguments in favour of cutting support were more usual in public stories than in ontological stories, where cutting support was unusual, even in those cases when dependency was not free from conflict. This showed that in practice, familial duties prevailed over discourses about limiting intergenerational dependency.

While providing economic help was seen as desirable, public stories differed from the social imaginaries of older people, in the way in which resources should be allocated. While the social imaginaries of older people emphasised that parents should help their children start out in life, just as they received help from their own parents, in public stories the acceptable tenets for helping out younger generations were mostly connected to grandparenting. Participants aged 40-59 and of low and medium SES, spoke of the relevance of time and monetary resources in supporting grandchildren's development, as well as building up emotional bonds with them.

"Money and time must be invested in children so they can develop (...) one needs to give children all the strength, all that one has so they may study"
(Osvaldo, 55-59, SESL)

Funding grandchildren's education, facilitating access to certain experiences (e.g. piano lessons, buying football shoes), as well as child minding, and helping with homework were all identified as forms of economic contribution. This suggests that participants valued both material help and the associated affective bonds. Economic contributions channelled through grandchildren were more positively assessed than helping out adult children, whose economic dependency on older parents was viewed less leniently. In contrast, in ontological stories, participants aged 55+ offered help to both children and grandchildren, and their contributions included not only those

described in public stories but also housing and financial help, with older parents receiving younger relatives in their homes over periods that could extend for years. An example was Arturo (75+ SESM), who owned a house built in a modular style, with multiple independent flats. While three of his children and a granddaughter with her baby son lived in the house, none paid rent, only contributions to the house bills.

Despite reluctance among participants of medium and high SES to help adult children, there was greater understanding that older people help their children in exceptional circumstances beyond their control. However, a few were opposed to any economic dependency of adult children. The prevailing view was that they should be able to fend for themselves and not take advantage of their parents' good will.

"The thread between the emotional and the practical, the cold and cerebral is very fine (...) the limit is given by the situation, (...) you mom and your dad are never going to look the other way (...) as cold as it may seem there are limits that one needs to overcome" (Delia, 55-59, SESM)

The most extreme positions reflected a perspective that parents have limited responsibility towards their children, usually ending with college education. Beyond that point, any major economic support can be considered an imposition and abuse of older people's sense of duty.

The more understanding, as well as the more extreme, views in public stories had their counterparts in ontological stories. Despite good will to help their families, participants explained that support was not exempt from conflict. Some people felt burdened by the strain on their financial resources. Figure 8.2 shows how that intergenerational flows of resources are normally seen as positive, but can also reveal conflict under strained situations. Participants aged 45-59 found special challenges in building up their own financial security for the future, while they were still engaged in the education of their children or

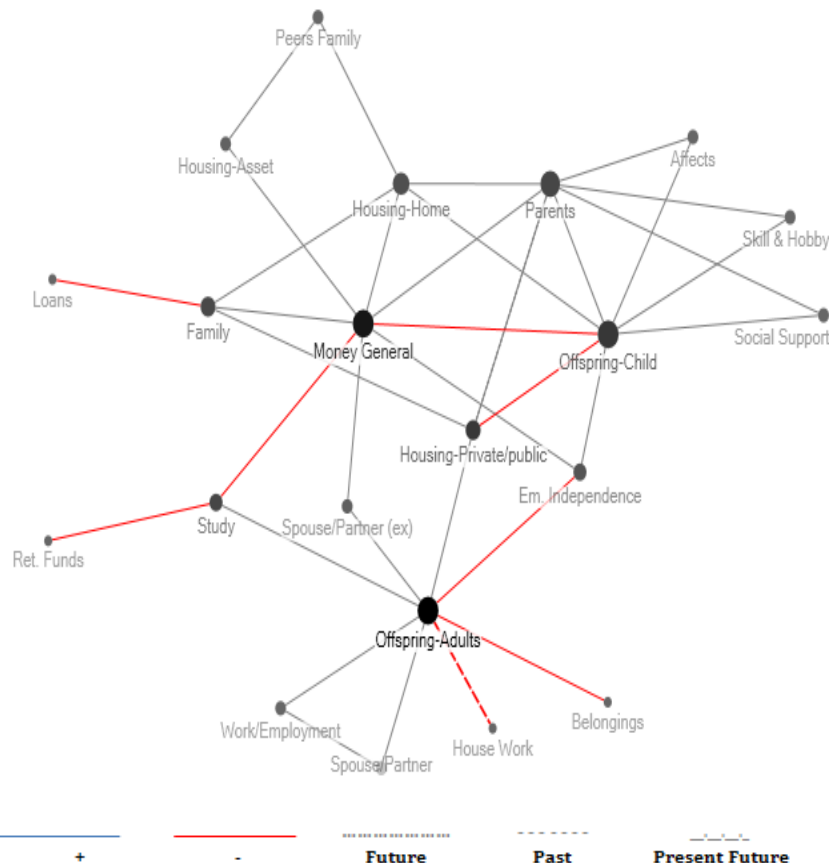
Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

grandchildren. Despite their concerns, participants perceived that if younger relatives were struggling, they could not leave them to fend entirely for themselves.

“Even if you don’t want to, you are always going to be helping your grandchildren, your family, if they lack anything then you get in debt (...) even if you don’t want to, it is born from within, it is something positive for one (...) in reality one cannot say no I’m not doing it, or that’s not me” (Eva, 65-69, SESM)

Setting limits for support to the family was difficult. However, some women aged 60+ of medium and low SES, who had previously helped their children and grandchildren had come to the conclusion that after a certain age their priority was looking after themselves, enjoying their free time and being cautious with their money.

Figure 8.2 Resource network when having dependants



The value of older people's economic contributions was addressed in a study of families in strenuous economic situations in India (Vera-Sanso et al., 2014). This showed that despite the generalised view of older people as a burden, most families could not do without the seniors' contributions in the form of income, caring or domestic work (Vera-Sanso et al., 2014:193). The ontological stories of Chilean participants have shown that individuals fear becoming a burden, and that there are implicit rules to avoid such a stigmatised situation. At the same time, just as the study in India shows, older people's economic contributions are crucial to supporting their families during short and long term periods of scarcity. The contributions of older people to the household economy have been mostly ignored by the mass media and political domains. I argue this is related to the pervasiveness of the narrative of decline (Morganroth Gullette 2004) that accommodates the description of older people as financially dependent. Studies adopting developmental perspectives, without necessarily addressing finances, challenge the triviality of older people's economic contributions by focusing on older people's social capital, and on their disposition to nurture younger generations starting from mid-life (Ranzijn and Grbich 2001; Perrig-Chiello and Perren 2005).

7.2.1.5 *Who depends on whom? Resolving the tension*

How was the tension of intergenerational dependency resolved by participants? Were they financially vulnerable and dependent on their families as portrayed in the social imaginaries of the mass media and political domains? Were they a source of financial stability for their families as presented in the social imaginaries of older people?

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Public stories were congruent with the social imaginaries of the political domain, the mass media and older people in identifying the privatised pension system as the main culprit for age related inequalities. Proposals to reduce older people's dependency on the privatised protection network were very tenuous within social imaginaries, yet public stories demanded improvements in information about the workings of the pension system, guaranteed basic pensions, and the overall redistribution of revenue of AFPs to achieve pensions that offer a decent standard of living.

Ontological stories were consistent with public stories in pointing to the privatised pension system as the root of financial frailty in later life. However, whilst public stories focused on demands and expectations of reforms to the pension system, ontological stories depicted hopelessness among individuals. Those who had already retired were facing the consequences of the policy changes of the last decades. They accepted that their hands were tied and there was not much they could do to change their circumstances. Individuals who were still working anticipated that if policies remained unchanged they would also face financial vulnerability in the future, but they were powerless to change the conditions imposed by the status quo. In response, some individuals adopted palliative or preventive strategies, aimed to protect their future economic stability.

In the face of structural constraints caused by detrimental policies to sufficient pensions, views on self-reliance and personal responsibility for securing an income in later life were aligned in public stories and the social imaginaries of older people. Planning and saving during the years of active work were the most visible strategies. Employment and entrepreneurship in later life, salient in the social imaginaries of politics

and mass media, were secondary strategies. Failure to meet minimum standards for financial security in later life were seen in both public stories and the social imaginaries of older people as a result of insufficient personal planning.

Despite studies in Chile that showed individuals are increasingly placing more responsibilities for their future well-being on State support, given their poor disposition to plan ahead and the structural obstacles presented by the pension system; ontological stories matched public stories in emphasising the role of individuals in securing their financial stability. Such dispositions were expressed in strategies seeking home ownership, income and an ethic of austerity. Although stable and sufficient income is a symbol of self-efficacy in later life, constraints related to narrow time frames to adequately prepare and build up savings made it increasingly difficult for individuals to meet the standards for independence. The ethic of austerity was then reinforced, and failure to comply strongly criticised, especially amongst those individuals who had already reached retirement age.

Dependency of older people on their families in public stories differed from those in the social imaginaries of the mass media, which presented a need for welfare policies to reduce the financial stress on families associated with caring for a frail older member. Public stories however saw dependency, particularly cohabitation, as a result of deficiencies in the State protection network, and insufficient preparation of individuals for their own retirement.

Although self-reliance was as important in ontological stories as it was in public stories, strategies associated with seeking family support when economic independence was not possible were still accepted among individuals of low and medium SES 50+, and women of high SES

aged 40-49. But younger participants and those of medium and high SES were adamant in avoiding stigmatisation and surveillance stemming from future prospects of financial dependency. Cohabitation was particularly feared, due to its connotation of regression on their individual achievements, and thus their perspectives matched those in public stories.

Privatisation of pensions unleashed a chain of strategies. Faced with the prospect of pensions below 50% of their income at retirement, individuals had tried to ameliorate the loss, and adopted guidelines for maintaining financial independence, in the hope of avoiding depending on their families. How did this scenario affect the views and practices of individuals who have or may potentially have younger dependants? This is a side of intergenerational dependency that was invisible to the social imaginaries of the mass media and political domains.

As with social imaginaries of older people, public stories acknowledged dependency of families on their older members. In social imaginaries of older people this support was justified as a way of helping adult children solidify their financial position, whereas public stories saw support as being linked to bonding with grandchildren, and male gender roles as family providers. Public stories largely described dependency of adult children as highly undesirable and even abusive. However, as described in the social imaginaries of older people, negative attitudes to supporting adult children conflict with cultural obligations of parents towards their children. The conflict was replicated in public stories, but the prevailing narrative was that both generations should establish limits to the support given by the older generation to the younger.

Ontological stories embraced the perspectives of both public stories and social imaginaries of older people. Most individuals with adult children spoke of supporting them, as well as grandchildren, as unproblematic. Among participants of low SES, these strategies appeared as an expectation early in mid-life. However, amongst other participants, especially those of medium and high SES in later mid-life, with teenage or young adult children, the pressure of complying with the tenets of financial independence in later life at the same time as having financial obligations towards their children appeared almost impossible to reconcile. Boundaries to financial support for younger relatives also appeared in ontological stories. Frequently these limits were established after extended periods in which dependency was accepted, therefore, situations that at one moment seemed unproblematic, may be problematized later in life when the financial pressure caused by these forms of dependency have been extended for too long.

8.2.2 Information as value vs information as means

The strategies that deal with the tensions of information as value or information as means relate to the access and use of information, education and technology resources. The following sections are devoted to understanding the identities that participants gave to older people as a part of informational networks, and how they positioned themselves in those contexts. What were the motivations to engage with information? What were the most valued sources of information? In which contexts did exchanges of information and knowledge take place? What were the purposes that information, knowledge and technology serve?

7.2.2.1 *Informational inclusion and exclusion in later life*

The social imaginaries of information, education and technology showed that dynamics of inclusion of older people through these media depended on their access and strategic use of new technologies.

In public stories the idea of staying informed was associated with the potential of older people to stay active. Most importantly, it was a way of battling false dichotomies between younger and older users. This notion was particularly apparent among men over 60, and it aligned with the social imaginaries of the political domain about extended productivity in later life, with the progressive demolition of stereotypes on mental decline, and with the hope of a future in which informational inclusion will create better conditions for equality between age groups. These views were supported in ontological stories. Work and business opportunities had influenced the need for individuals to learn new technologies. In particular men aged 50-74, of medium and high SES had acquired technological knowledge and skills (i.e. computers, software, internet) during the last decade as part of workplace demands.

"I use the Internet all the time, I'm in front of the computer with the Internet I think some four, five hours a day, and a great deal of business, the buying and selling of land, is done through the Internet, leasing, whatever it is, nowadays even payments are done through the Internet, bank accounts, everything" (Alejo, 70-74 SESH)

However, other participants, mostly individuals over 70 years old, or women of low SES, explained in their ontological stories that due to lack of interest, or limited access to education, their relationship with IT was a difficult one. For instance, although Priscilla (50-54, SESL) did not use

the internet, she was aware of its potential. As a micro entrepreneur, she would have liked a website advertising her 'sopaipillas'⁴⁴ business. She studied some computer skills but did not make much progress. As with other women of low and medium SES aged 50-69, Priscilla had turned to her grandchildren to teach her how to use the internet, but progress was slow:

"They [grandchildren] try to teach me a bit, but sometimes they are naughty and I have to punish them (...) so I lose my teachers, but I would like very much to learn the internet" (Priscilla, 50-54, SESL)

The ways in which people relate to the mass media are crucial in achieving future technological inclusion. The social imaginaries of older people showed that quality of information, preference for certain media, and access to that media do not necessarily go together. Public stories, especially those of participants in their 40's and early 50's, pointed unequivocally to the advantages of accessing information via the internet in relation to television and the press. Information-related practices in ontological stories revealed that the distinction between information and leisure was crucial to attributing value to one or other media. The internet was highlighted by those who found it more reliable than newspapers and television due to the advantage of being able to choose and compare multiple sources of information, instead of being limited by editorial decisions. But when the intended use of mass media was leisure, then television, radio and books were valued by participants of different ages. Despite the increase in the use of the internet, individuals over 70 of low and medium SES mostly preferred

⁴⁴ Deep fried pumpkin pastry.

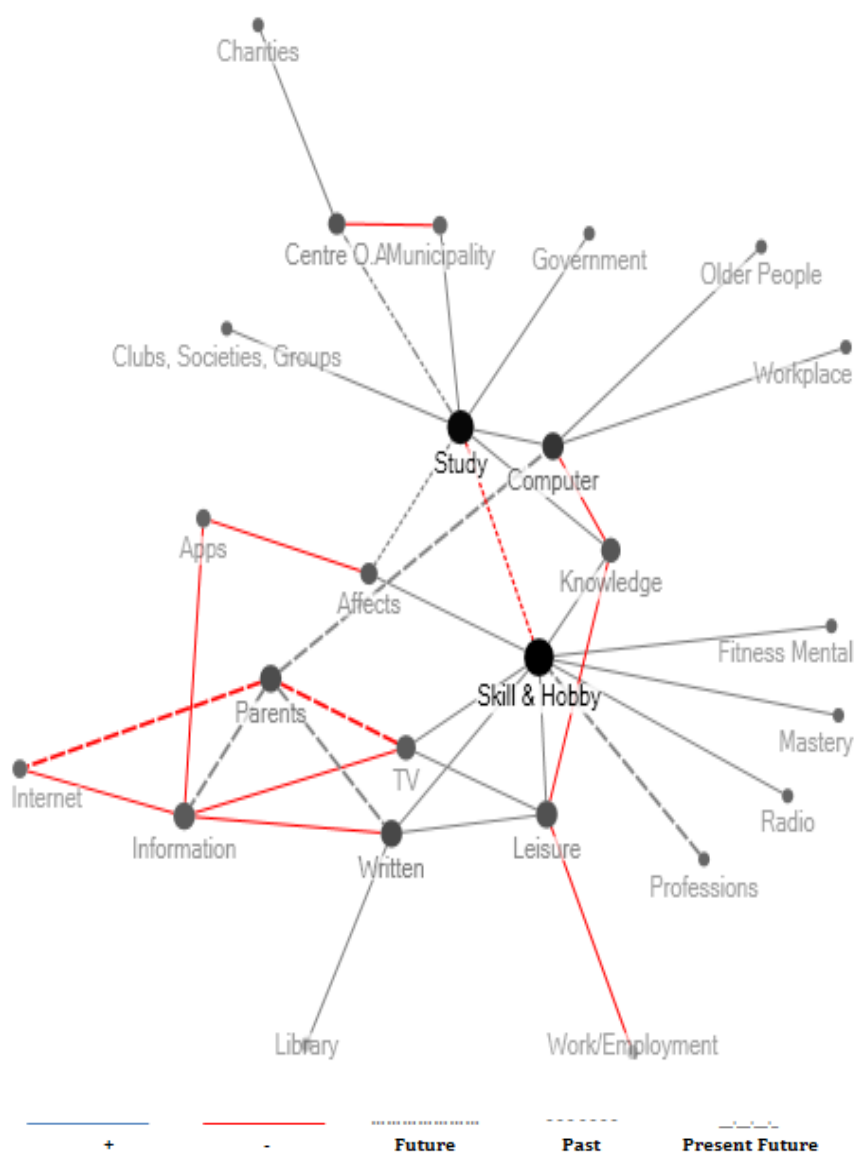
television, newspapers and magazines for both information and entertainment purposes.

The power to access diverse sources of information through the internet was acknowledged in both public and ontological stories as a means to reducing unequal access to work and business opportunities. With the exception of one participant, who believed that the internet and IT in general had reached almost everyone, discourses about unequal access to the internet were seen in public stories as a result of differences in SES, particularly in income, area of residence and cultural capital. The internet was regarded as a powerful tool to access information, promoting self-education, and thus reducing older people's vulnerability.

Views about the responsibility for closing the digital gap were diverse. The social imaginaries of older people indicated that most users were excited about the possibilities offered by IT, but indicated varying levels of proficiency, and the continuing exclusion of many older individuals. The political domain was silent in proposing concrete channels for closing the digital gap, although it recognised that training older people would facilitate the provision of services and the design of policies. The mass media and older people's domains privileged self-learning, assuming the availability of a public infrastructure including computers, books, newspapers and magazines in public libraries and community centres. A suggested alternative to self-learning was guided study through courses and workshops. However, there was a lack of confidence in government programmes as an effective answer to achieve digital inclusion, explained by the experiences in ontological stories. Those, especially women, who had participated or imagined themselves participating in courses aimed at older people, found that

municipalities of low SES offered fewer courses, and those visualised by participants were related to manual skills such as knitting and embroidery. Figure 8.3 shows that although there was wide interest in studying computer skills, and that Centres for older Adults were a preferred location for studying, access to these Centres was uneven across municipalities.

Figure 8.3 Resource network in situations of studying and learning



Public stories showed instead that participants of high and medium SES and younger than 65 understood that full digital inclusion requires having a personal computer and permanent access to the internet. The message was that public infrastructure would be insufficient for achieving inclusion, and low income in later life constituted an obstacle to maintaining access at home. Participants in early midlife believed that despite the existing financial obstacles, there was potential for immediate transformation in intergenerational solidarity. If people took time to teach their older relatives to use computers and internet, and if there was willingness to ease the financial cost of IT services, older people's possibilities of autonomy, self-management and broadening their universe of knowledge would be rapidly increased. However, as ontological stories showed, children and grandchildren do not necessarily make the learning process more effective, and those individuals who had acquired IT skills recently had done so because it was instrumental to daily life activities.

In Chile, the turn from television and newspapers to the internet for accessing information, especially among individuals with higher levels of education, was identified in the survey of quality of life in older age (SENAMA et al. 2010). However, access to the internet is still incipient among older people, whilst individuals in middle age seem to have embraced this medium as their preferred source of information. Osorio Parraguez & Meersohn (2012) found that in Chile, although the internet is the medium least used by older people, it is the most information oriented, While television offers patchy information, but it is still widely used among older people. Ontological stories confirmed these findings, and provided the added explanation that media, other than the internet are mostly preferred for their entertainment value.

The ontological stories about technological inclusion confirmed the findings of Torrejón (2007), in her study of social imaginaries of ageing in Chilean mass media, that keeping up with technologies is becoming a social expectation for older people. Yet Jorquera (2010) found that Chilean school books portrayed older people as technologically illiterate. The public and ontological stories in this study, however, showed increasing awareness of: i) the instrumental value of technologies; ii) that exclusion from IT is more related to SES than to age. The ontological stories suggested an ongoing shift, with individuals having easier access to learning opportunities engaging with new technologies while those without easy access had become technologically 'stuck'. As Damodaran (see Vera-Sanso et al., 2014:186) argued, older people want to deepen their knowledge of digital technologies, yet there is insufficient support to enable them to do so. I found the same to be the case for individuals in mid-life with few learning opportunities.

7.2.2.2 *Uses of information*

The three main functions of information and technologies in later life, described in public stories, were preventing illness, passing on expertise, and enhancing communication.

Women, particularly those under 55 years of middle and high SES, were enthusiastic about how older people could harness the beneficial effects of information about their health. Older people, they said, have enough time to seek information about conditions related to the ageing process. This interest in biomedical information justifies the emphasis that the social imaginaries of the mass media put on the importance of producing biomedical information for lay audiences. Despite the de-personalised tone of news when referring to older people, optimism of

the preventive potential of scientific discoveries had been instilled in the readers of these articles. This helped to make sense of the social imaginaries of older people that included expectations of having a wider range of courses tailored to their interests. Here, according to the political domain, the responsibility for producing and disseminating specialised information should fall on academics in universities.

Besides the information about healthy lifestyles that can be drawn from multiple media, learning was understood as an important form of preventing mental decline. Learning new skills and keeping an active mind were seen as lifestyle choices that could reduce dependency on the public health system in the future. An emergent idea in public stories not previously visible in any of the three explored social imaginaries was that digital technologies could potentially have a negative effect on socialising and mental health:

“So one can have mental health and to keep things clear one needs to be disciplined, disciplined and to dedicate time to each thing, that is, not to let..., I’m on the Internet, but I also have to attend courses, I also have to socialise, I also have to go shopping, I also have to exercise, my diary needs to be full” (Marietta, 50-54, SESM)⁴⁵.

Given the recurring presence of information as an effective strategy to learn and to prevent illness in later life in the social imaginaries of ageing and in public stories, it was a surprise that participants did not mention this in their ontological stories. This suggests that purposefully learning about health and the ageing process is an ideal strategy, but one that was not necessarily incorporated to participants’ habits.

⁴⁵ The use of ‘I’ does not refer to the participant, but to a hypothetical person.

Participants did however make associations between technology and mental decline. Ontological stories attributed impediments to learning to loss of cognitive agility, and thus showed that participants had to cope with stereotypes about ageing affecting their capacity to acquire new skills. Alejo (70-74, SESH), Consuelo (60-64, SESL) and Amalia (75+, SESM) all expressed difficulties in retaining new knowledge. Despite these difficulties, Alejo had become a frequent user of the internet and Amalia owned a *'mobile phone, but I only know how to answer and how to call, because technology is now beyond one'*. Although her grandchildren had tried to teach her to use the internet, the phone represented the limit of her knowledge of IT and a cognitive boundary as well. Both Alejo and Amalia attributed barriers to learning to the ageing process. However, Consuelo believed her difficulties were associated with exhaustion from overworking and did not see them as irreversible. Learning how to use the internet remained a possibility for her in the future, when working fewer hours, when her mind is more at rest and mental fitness restored.

"It's wasting my time and my money studying because I forget things, so I found that it was not going to be any good, that's why I didn't go and study. There was a school for adults nearby my house, yes and I never attended because of this thing with my memory" (Consuelo, 60-64, SESL)

Studies of social imaginaries of ageing in Chile (Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010) suggest that older people are perceived to be technologically challenged and battle stereotypes about cognitive performance. Green (2010) and Cox et al. (2014) argue that an undesired consequence of biomedical knowledge has been reinforcing stereotypes about ageing and decline that are easily internalised by older people. While the ontological stories suggest that individuals do sometimes relate their difficulties in learning to ageing, the outcomes

are not the same for everyone. Some resist the commonly perceived consequences of ageing while others accept the notion that cognitive decline is an insurmountable barrier to learning.

The other two potential uses of information and knowledge mentioned in public stories were related to social interaction. Although the social imaginaries of the political and the mass media domains offer a positive outlook on older people's capability of learning and transferring new skills, public stories emphasised how older people can teach according to their experience and expertise. There was, therefore, a mismatch between expectations of the political and mass media domains and those expressed in public stories. The social imaginaries present programmes that are meant to channel capacity building in communities through older people, but interview participants perceive that older people's most valuable potential is transferring skills they already have.

Passing on knowledge and skills to others, whether formally or informally, was a recurrent topic in ontological stories. However, the meaning given to teaching in these stories went beyond capacity building, and was valued as a powerful bond between individuals and their communities. The content taught was less important than the experience of teaching. Teaching in formal settings, such as schools appealed to individuals in the teaching profession, and to individuals from other backgrounds. And although this appealed to participants from ages 45 and upward, it was more common among those over 60 . Benjamín, for example, explained that if he joined a centre for older adults he could volunteer to teach other older adults

“who didn't have the opportunity to go to University, or to travel to different places, I have something that one can share” (Benjamín, 65-69, SESH)

Despite the emphasis on formal teaching, other participants aged 50-74 of low and medium SES looked at teaching as a form of passing on values and skills to younger generations and maintaining social cohesion. For instance, Priscilla (50-54 SESL) taught her daughters skills such as knitting and baking, and Óscar (60-64 SESM) explained that teachers and parents need to foster in children the value of older age and of integrating older people in the family.

While Chilean studies of social imaginaries and representations of older age portray older people as potential learners (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002; Pintos 2007; SENAMA et al. 2010; SENAMA et al. 2013), potential as teachers is encompassed within roles as advisors to younger generations (Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010; Abusleme et al. 2014). According to Vera-Sanso et al. (2014:181) this could be explained due to older people being placed outside the mainstream of participation and connectivity because they are defined primarily by their age, instead of other attributes. The strategies of learning and teaching portrayed in ontological stories showed that despite participants' enthusiasm at the prospect of connecting with their communities, especially contributing to the development of younger generations, participants did not imagine themselves generating innovation in later life. This hinders the possibilities of using information as a tool for achieving intergenerational equality, an expectation declared in public stories.

Besides the use of information and technology as a means of assessing health, of demonstrating cognitive performance, and as a form of inclusion through passing on knowledge and skills to others, command of information and technology also serves to indicate strategies in managing social interactions.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

In public stories the importance of learning to use computers, as well as having access to the internet, was valued not as a transferable skill, but as a form of maintaining autonomy and preventing isolation. Staying informed maintains connections to society as a whole, and acts as a topic of conversation when interacting with others. Other benefits of access to the internet were its potential as a form of entertainment, and thus a way of ameliorating feelings of loneliness. The internet was also perceived as an aid to older people in gaining autonomy, especially when living with their family, by enabling the creation of virtual worlds of their own.

"(...) the elderly are lacking cybernetic culture, to be given the opportunity to use a computer, to keep informed about what is going on in the world, to have their amusements, their space, but not so imbued with the family group" (Óscar, 60-64 SESM)

Despite the importance given to the internet as a tool with such a broad impact on people's lives, both public stories and the social imaginaries of older people coincide in portraying access as still being limited. One aspect to be taken into consideration is that while older people in their social imaginaries see the relevance of technologies in creating bridges with younger generations, public stories offer the new insight that technologies serve older people's independence from children and grandchildren, as they become more skilled in the use of these technologies.

Despite the emergence of discourses in public stories that anticipate a future where older people would use technologies to battle loneliness, ontological stories, especially among individuals of medium and high SES, emphasise how internet based communication tools such as Facebook, Skype or WhatsApp, are being rapidly incorporated as a way of staying in touch with family and friends. Women in the 40-49 band,

who are already users of these technologies, explained that children and grandchildren they may have in the future motivate them to keep up with technological advances, so they can remain connected with them now and in the future. Those participants who already have incorporated communicational tools expect that their younger relatives will help them stay updated, and in the process their ties with them are strengthened. In contrast with participants who are technologically illiterate, learning here was considered unproblematic.

“When I’m older, I will have this same niece that is going to be thirty, and that same niece will tell me ‘auntie I downloaded for you...’ I don’t know some program, I don’t know what” (Fernanda, 45-49, SESM)

Knowledge can be a powerful tool in strengthening social connectivity. In ontological stories, technological literacy was not the only strategy to achieve connectedness. Especially among women, staying in touch with family and friends, as well as interacting with other people in general, motivated individuals to study and learn. Courses where individuals experience face-to-face interaction served the purpose of learning and sharing learning activities with friends. Appreciation of these experiences among individuals in their 60’s and 70’s who were already engaged in courses for older adults, was reflected by women in their 40’s, who expressed a desire to join a Centre of Older Adults, so they can have an active social life in later life, while they also learn skills.

“I’m a reveller, I like going out, I will linger there [Centre for Older Adults], making the most of it, I look at courses for older adults today and I’m jealous. They are so awesome” (Luz, 40-44, SESH)

One of older people’s motivations to keep up with technological change is to stay in touch with their social network (see Vera-Sanso et al., 2014). Ontological stories showed that this was a motivation for

women and men of different ages and SES, although they also showed caution in the use of technologies that might be too invasive of their personal lives. Machielse & Hortulanus (2013:122-123) have argued similarly that new technologies influence modern relationships, offering more possibilities for participation and inclusion, but at the same time rendering communication more impersonal, with reductions in face to face relationships. Ontological stories showed that, particularly among women, face to face interactions were still valued and this contributed to their anticipation of engaging in courses for older adults.

The importance of grandchildren in assisting with learning technologies in Chile has already been discussed by Jorquera (2010). Children and grandchildren can teach their older relatives in what is perceived to be a more supportive environment. Ontological stories partially confirmed this perception, with users of technology harnessing the potential of younger relatives to stay updated. But they also revealed tales of disappointment when individuals who had not yet incorporated these tools needed more structured learning environments for longer periods.

7.2.2.3 Is information a value or is it instrumental? Resolving the tension

In their stories, participants illustrated how they resolved the tension between information as a value in its own right, and as an aid to social interaction as described in the social imaginaries of older people. This contrast with perceptions in the political domain that saw information as instrumental for older people's inclusion in employment and other productive activities, as well enabling their use of modern services.

The notion of 'keeping up to date' appeared in both public stories and social imaginaries of older people about information, education and technology. However, the meaning of keeping up to date had shifted from personal gratification to a means of avoiding social exclusion in later life. In close alignment with the social imaginaries of the political domain, inclusion through technologies can be understood as staying productive or as reaching out to people and services through information technologies. In the perspectives of the political domain and public stories, older people should therefore be trained in the use of IT to achieve higher levels of social inclusion. Ontological stories replicated this shift towards an increased value of information technologies. However, they also addressed the unequal access of older people to technological literacy. Older participants and individuals of lower SES had limited access to these tools, despite acknowledging their value. Among individuals of high SES, even the oldest participants used technological tools to some degree, and thus responded to contemporary social expectations of technological literacy. Also, despite the increased value of information technologies in ontological stories, the value of information was not necessarily connected to re-training and serving as productive human capital in later life. Although technological inclusion had that connotation, there were a number of interests that individuals wished to pursue for their own interest, as well as socialising. Women particularly valued spaces where education led to shared activities with face-to face interaction.

Technological literacy and effective use of information was considered central to avoiding social exclusion in later life by: i) maintaining cognitive agility, by ii) learning **and** teaching knowledge and skills to aid the development of their communities, iii) using

technology and information as a vehicle for their personal development, and iv) maintaining lively social interactions with friends and family.

The use of information and IT as a way of learning about health and ageing, as well as boosting cognitive agility, was similar in public stories and in social imaginaries of ageing although public stories focused on the use of resources offered by the mass media to maintain good health and avoid cognitive decline. However, ontological stories barely referred to strategies of using information to improve health. The relationship with cognitive decline was related to whether individuals accepted stereotypes of ageing that limit older people's capability to learn new skills, namely technologies.

Technological literacy was not the only path for inclusion. Passing on multiple forms of knowledge formed part of ontological stories, starting in their 40's and becoming more frequent in the 50's and 60's, regardless of gender or SES. While the social imaginaries of older people emphasised the value of sharing knowledge with peers, families and communities, public stories attributed less importance to information as a route to social inclusion. Sharing information was understood in public stories mainly as transferring useful knowledge and skills to others. Conversely, ontological stories concurred with the meanings given to teaching in the social imaginaries of older people. Despite argument that older people in Chile are seen more as potential learners than as teachers, ontological stories revealed initiatives in contributing to the improvement of their communities and family members by passing on knowledge and life experiences. However, in both public and ontological stories, while individuals envisaged passing on knowledge there was no sense of older people as sources of innovation.

The relationships between learning processes and the social environment differed in public and ontological stories. Ontological stories emphasised gregariousness more than public stories. Although younger relatives featured in both as an important resource in improving access to information technologies in later life, public stories placed greater emphasis on autonomous learning and entertainment, as well as use of technologies for tackling isolation. Conversely, ontological stories emphasised the value of technology for staying in touch with friends and family.

8.2.3 Passive roles vs active roles

The social imaginaries of roles and representations of ageing presented a pronounced contrast. They portrayed both images of emerging citizen movements, and a picture of isolation and virtual invisibility outside family boundaries. In this section I explore the opposition between imaginaries of activity and passivity to consider the following questions: are citizen action and citizens' rights a concern for present and future ageing identities? What is the perceived degree of political involvement of older people? What are the types of organisations that bring together people in later life? What are the social domains that promote the integration of older people and which are identified as obstacles to integration? Do families facilitate or hinder active participation in later life? And do current models of active participation in Chile allow for the expression of personal preferences?

7.2.3.1 *Understandings of activity*

Active ageing was assimilated in public stories in terms of community engagement and an active social life. Activities such as volunteering and teaching that involve applying accumulated skills and

experience were especially valued by men because these activities were seen as proxies to jobs, and broadened the definition of work beyond employment. These understandings of community engagement incorporated i) the expectation of increasing the visibility of local organisations from the political domain, and the view that older people's participation can extend beyond the family sphere from the mass media domain, and iii) the view from the older people's domain that through community engagement older people maintain a sense of mastery, and renew their motivation to engage in new projects. Indeed, public stories described a series of benefits of staying active in later life, such as positive effects on older people's outlook, meeting people of all ages, and taking their minds off illnesses threatening their well-being.

Intergenerational solidarity was an aspect older people highlighted in their social imaginaries as meaningful and motivating in their lives, and public and ontological stories confirmed that participants took pride in being a part of a family network whose members could rely on each other. For women in their 40's, peer support was gaining importance as potential sources of support in later life.

I want now to pay closer attention to the development of the understanding of active and passive roles in other domains of older people's social activities. The beneficial effect of engaging in different types of volunteering projects was confirmed in ontological stories. For instance, Gustavo conveyed the associations between activity and positive ageing from the experience of his mother:

"My mother works in a group of older adults, she contributes, she is the treasurer, she holds an executive position and she participates, she goes to trips and she takes courses, she loves that, it keeps her alive" (Gustavo, 40-44, SESM)

Among individuals over 65, volunteering was a common form of contributing to the community. Some were formal volunteers at churches, charities, or community projects. Another form of volunteering was undertaking leadership roles in committees, neighbourhood councils, centres for older adults, and other clubs and societies, where participants put their skills at the disposal of these organisations. Despite the beneficial effects of undertaking leadership roles, this form of volunteering entailed complications for individuals. Leadership roles demanded a level of commitment that created conflict with other priorities, like employment, income generation and family time. Another source of conflict was negotiating the level of responsibility volunteers were willing to assume. Both Arturo (75+, SESM) and Eva (65-69, SESM) stepped down from leadership roles in community organisations because they felt overloaded with responsibility. Figure 8.4 shows that although participants identified multiple forms of contributions in later life, and that network resources associated with those contributions normally received a positive assessment, volunteering may be a source of conflict for individuals.

representations of ageing matched the social imaginaries of the mass media in which older people had expanded their scope of participation beyond the family sphere, and were even portrayed as engaging in political action, collaborating in the design of policies. They were, however, mainly typified as people with spare time, participating in leisure activities. In contrast, ontological stories showed that although community engagement was more common in participants over 65, this group experienced some conflict between these commitments and other roles, challenging polarised views about individuals being either too busy or having nothing to do at all. Moreover, ontological stories showed that an active life starts by harnessing internal resources, such as motivation and emotional independence, and pouring those resources into other activities (i.e. travelling, developing skills, studying). Therefore, many participants conceived pluralistic life projects, combining personal development in multiple areas. Those over 70, however concentrated efforts in fewer areas. An illustration was given by Iris' story about her aunt, which highlighted the freedom that allowed her to cultivate interests in multiple aspects of life.

"She wore high heels, she was out and about and she gave injections, she went to see sick person here and then another one there, very perky she was and she remarried in older age" (Iris, 40-44, SESM)

In addition to inner mastery translating to concrete activities, institutional support facilitating community engagement was seen as a crucial element for active ageing in both public and ontological stories. The role of central and local government in implementing and supporting the development of centres for older adults, friendly societies and holiday programmes for older adults was acknowledged as a triumph in providing opportunities for participation. Institutional support opened spaces of action for people who like going out and

trying new things. Centres for older adults in particular provided a safe environment, where the presence of peers offered encouragement to older people who wanted to participate but lacked confidence.. In ontological stories, participants expressed their personal motivations to participate in the activities offered by Centres of Older Adults, and other programmes aimed for older people. Women highlighted their use of Centres for Older Adults to enhance their social life, meet friends, distract themselves from other responsibilities (e.g. household chores), and learn new skills. Women of low SES explained that skills such as knitting, embroidery, and baking could also be practised at home for entertainment or profit.

“...friends that go to the Older Adults’ as well, yes, we have a good time, we laugh, it’s a real good time, one forgets about the house, even if only for a little while (...) it’s recreation, a different environment, at least I am knitting, the others are talking and I’m listening, knitting” (Estela, 70-74, SESL)

“There are very good things [courses] there [Centre for Older Adults], they learn to knit, they learn embroidery, they make very pretty things there (...) so I’d like to go at least once a week” (Catalina, 60-64, SESL)

However, individuals like Ismael (65-69 SESH) and Alejo (70-74 SESH), although attracted by the activities, had misgivings about being associated with groups they perceived as passive and excluded from wider participation:

“One day I saw one of those groups and I didn’t want to go any more (...) they were the same age as I am or even younger, but they were ancient, I don’t feel like them, they held on to one another, they helped each other on and off the bus” (Alejo, 70-74, SESH)

The internalised ageism showed in ontological stories is reproduced in public stories where reluctance to participate in social activities was perceived to be a destructive attitude. The attributed reasons for self-

marginalisation were diverse, and they sometimes point out to characteristics of ageing itself, or to personality traits.

“This is typical of older people, they do not want to go out of the cave when all the education and all the propaganda is that they should go out, not at midnight of course, but that they go out during the day and do things” (Samuel, 70-74, SESH)

Cultural reasons associated with gender were also present in participants’ public and ontological stories. Women were thought to be more open to participation in group activities than men, more inclined to explore new experiences and occupations. Men, on the contrary appeared to be constrained by the strong macho culture that had a stronger grip on older generations. Traditional gender roles were still ingrained, women taking greatest responsibility for homemaking, and men still regarded as the main providers. Martín (50-54 SESM) explained that he and his wife might move to a flat when they grow older, because it would be easier for **her** to run than a house. The divide between female and male spaces was reflected in participation in organised groups. Centres for Older Adults were seen as female spaces and men tended to refuse engagement in group activities preferring to stay at home, finding individual entertainment such as watching television.

Interestingly, women’s ontological stories revealed resentment, from an early age, of the restrictions imposed on their social lives by their spouses by refusing to accompany them to group activities, social gatherings, or to meet friends. This seemed to become more acute as couples grew older.

“Whilst my dad worked my mother could do a lot of things, now that my dad is at home, my mum’s wings are cut off. She doesn’t go anywhere because he doesn’t (...) I don’t like that dependency and lack of autonomy, and sexism,

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

because my dad is very macho, so he neither does nor leaves her do" (Delia, 55-59, SESM)

Non-engagement in communal activities was replicated in social imaginaries of older people that also mirrored the normalisation of gender differences, their consequences on community engagement and men and women's understanding of active ageing.

Thinking about the contributions of individuals in later life steers the discussion of roles and representations towards what Hepworth (2000:3) called the cultural co-constructions of ageing. The word 'contribution' elicits the notion of activity, of openness to change in the representations of roles in later life. Ontological stories showed that contributions occur in multiple domains, sometimes simultaneously. Work, entrepreneurship, volunteering, peer and family support were all identified as contributions, some coexisting harmoniously, others clashing. Conflicts stemming from assuming leadership roles in local organisations (e.g. anxiety about lack of support or possible conflicts with neighbours) were also found in the CALL-ME study conducted in Manchester by Murray, and were identified as barriers to participation (Murray et al. 2014; Vera-Sanso et al. 2014). The multiple forms of activity and community engagement described by participants, especially those over 65, challenge social imaginaries found in the media by Pintos (2007) and Torrejón (2007) portraying activities and contributions in later life outside the family as exotic, exceptional and anecdotal. The ontological stories in this study suggest something rather different; with individuals' valued contributions extending well beyond the family sphere. However, discourses in public stories showed that community engagement in later life was still regarded as a by-product of having free time.

It is encouraging that, in contrast to discourses characterising older people as essentially passive, participants in mid-life imagined future projects involving engagement in multiple activities, not only those reserved for older individuals. Studies in Chile have shown that prevailing images of ageing among young adults, and in the general population, are infantilising, and encompass traits such as passivity and marginalisation (Comité Nacional Para el Adulto Mayor 2002; Urquiza Gómez et al. 2008). Life projects imagined by participants, including those over 70, who envisioned a narrower range of activities, defy the stereotypes constructed by younger people and confirmed what international studies have found: that people in later life feel motivated to learn and to achieve goals, generating future possible selves well into older age (Arber et al., 2014).

The achievement of imagined projects was mediated by gender roles, women associated with social and family roles, while men are represented as decision makers (Guzmán et al., 2012). Women feel burdened from early in middle age by the lifestyle preferences of their partners. After retirement men may experience disorientation as some of their decision making roles disappear and seek ways of regaining a sense of control within the household. The masculine search for spaces of decision making contrasts with women's search for lifestyles that fit their interests, and their desire to socialise.

7.2.3.2 *Organisation in later life*

The political domain was explicit about changes to the organisational structure of the National Service of Older Adults having the purpose of facilitating engagement of local organisations of older adults with instances of political representation and with projects of their own design. Public stories of people over 65, particularly men,

conveyed older people's potential for organisation for political and citizen action. Local organisations such as neighbourhood councils or committees were seen as the best options for older people to reach local authorities and gain support for projects to improve daily living conditions.

The envisioned scope of action of these organisations was mainly limited to small scale projects. However, pensions generated expectations of larger citizen movements. The mass media consistently considered collaboration in the design and implementation of policies amongst the emerging political roles of older citizens

"If only groups were organised, so they design a pensions' reform more befitting the needs of older adults" (Arturo, 75+, SESM)

Although organisation among older people was also a part of ontological stories, the difference from public stories was that organized citizen action could bring people together in mid or later life without an explicit mission to do so. Although their causes did not necessarily advocate the rights of an age group, they were characterised by demands for social justice. Collective action could be organised within existing organisations such as neighbourhoods, or branches of Trades Unions or Professional Associations, to negotiate better life conditions for working and retired members. For instance, Óscar (60-64, SESM) and Irene (60-64, SESM) undertook leadership roles in the Teacher's Association and Teacher's Union. They had both been able to negotiate improvements in the pensions and retirement payments for their colleagues. Advocacy did not require previous membership of an organisation as exemplified by Ismael (65-69, SESH). He joined the increasing number of people who take legal action every year against

the rise of tariffs by the ISAPRES, cluttering the legal system with their demands.

Optimism about the feasibility and potential benefits of organisation in later life was not shared by all participants. In public stories, despite recognizing the potential of local organisation to channel older people's demands, some men over 55 felt that organisation in later life was futile. A possible explanation for these seemingly contradictory stances is that participants differentiated broader organisations in which older people may participate, from those created for and by older individuals. Pessimism about the potential for social action by older people was linked to internalised stereotypes of older people as losing vitality leading to a state of hopelessness about the future. As Osvaldo put explained:

“reality is a different one, to meet with the neighbours and solve our problems, we are old, no (...) no, because they don't pay any attention to us any more” (Osvaldo, 55-59, SESL)

Public stories also conveyed a view that older peoples' organisations did not offer valid voices in matters of policy, so that older people themselves lose validity in the face of younger people's opinions and actions. Differences in social class were also thought to hinder possibilities of organisation, because class differences disrupted notions of intra-generational solidarity.

Just as Phillipson & Walker (1986) found over thirty years ago,, public stories referred to class barriers restricting organised citizen action in later life. And ontological stories showed that some individuals saw participation in local organisations as futile and better left to younger generations. In this way some older people allowed themselves to be dispossessed from their status as active citizens

(Segal, 2013). However, other obstacles were directly related to politics themselves. In public stories, some discourses questioned the validity of organisations of older adults as stakeholders in matters of national policy, whereas in ontological stories interference of government agencies in local affairs was met with mistrust. Despite efforts made in the political domain to create bridges between older people and local citizen organisations, obstacles to political engagement in later life stemmed from disbelief in the potential for political action of local organisations.

In ontological stories, the workplace and neighbourhoods were the 'communities' that facilitated citizen action. Organisations such as professional associations and neighbourhood councils stimulated continuous involvement in action to better individual and collective living conditions. This concurs with Ranzijn & Grbich's (2001) views that meso social environments foster capacity building in later life. They offer spaces that preserve face to face interactions, which protect older people from isolation and individualisation stemming from the dissolution of traditional communities (Phillipson 2007; Machielse and Hortulanus 2013). An additional advantage of citizen action that brings together individuals with similar concerns, but not necessarily on the grounds of belonging to an age group, is that fear of being stereotyped (Phillipson & Walker, 1986) can be circumvented. When organisation is mobilised by causes that can be potentially supported by individuals of any age, it opens participation for older people without denying their ageing identities (Biggs, 1999).

Chilean studies of social imaginaries of roles and representations of ageing suggest that older people are presented as passive recipient of policies, and rarely in positions of power. This is thought to limit the

chances of empowerment and the proliferation of images of active societal engagement (Torrejón 2007; Jorquera 2010; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2010b). Another study articulates a gender divide in the distribution of power, with men being more associated with decision making, and women with family concerns (Guzmán et al. 2012). Yet the ontological stories of citizen action challenged images of passivity that have prevailed in the social imaginaries of ageing. Although men did seem to be more engaged in leadership roles and citizen action, women showed that they had also undertaken active leadership roles throughout their lives.

The strategies of citizen advocacy informed by ontological stories show that there are multiple ways in which individuals can mobilise public and private agencies to restore social justice for older people. Pre-existing organisations are helpful in channelling people's demands, but leaders normally have a history of engagement in collective action throughout their lives. However, legal strategies do not require formal association with others, but only large numbers of individuals willing to take action in response to injustices that affect them all.

7.2.3.3 *Resisting exclusion*

Men tend to associate social inclusion with work. Even those who are sceptical about the capacity and the benefits of older people's engagement in communal activities and in organisation at any level are enthusiastic about the capacity of seniors to apply their creativity, skill and intellectual contribution to work. To them, work in later life boost personal resources such as self-esteem, motivation and a sense of mastery over pursuing new challenges. It also allows older people to maintain a living income.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

“One can stay active and be in contact with people that are not necessarily of the same age. One can make intellectual contributions, I do not see why not” (Ismael, 65-69, SESM)

Individuals with a profession explained in ontological stories that their knowledge and experience can be used as resources for the benefit of the community. Their wish to continue practising their professions was channelled mainly through teaching. For instance, Nicolás (65-69, SESH) and Samuel (70-74, SESH), an architect and a doctor, were both engaged in university education. Working at the university allowed them to interact with people of diverse backgrounds, and to get a grasp of their potential contributions in their respective fields.

“One still has a lot to give at the level of the theory, of one’s speciality” (Nicolás, 65-69, SESH)

Inclusion through work also extends to entrepreneurs. Regardless of gender, age and SES entrepreneurship was regarded as a creative force that enabled individuals to spot opportunities and strive for their own financial stability, as well as their families’. Gustavo (40-44 SESM) imagined that as he grows older, his children may take over the business, and Catalina explained that working on her pastry stall was:

“a recreation and it makes you feel that you are still worth something and that you can do it” (Catalina, 60-64 SESL)

Centres and leisure programmes for older adults were criticised by some participants in public stories precisely because they divert energy that could be used in productive activities, either paid or unpaid. Furthermore, programmes and organisations for older people were not characterised by these participants as spaces of inclusion; rather they represented reservations for people excluded from productive activities

due to ageism in society without alternatives ways of spending their time.

this criticism was replicated in ontological stories of some participants of high and medium SES over 65. Individuals like Ismael (65-69, SESH) and Alejo (70-74, SESH) had developed strategies to avoid being associated with stereotypes of passivity and decrepitude in later life, so they avoid participating in groups of older adults, and instead tried to be involved in activities with younger people. Amalia (75+, SESM), on the other hand, had participated in Centres of Older Adults but found they did not offer opportunities to develop skills and be productive, making her feel she was wasting her time when she considered *'I'm still good enough to do stuff'*.

The social imaginaries of the political, mass media and older people's domain did not show the association between Centres of Older Adults and images of passivity that influence older people's exclusion from desired domains of action. However, the political and mass media domains conveyed concerns over the exclusion of older people, not only from work, but from daily activities such as driving, due to unfounded doubts over their capacities. The social imaginaries of the mass media and of older people both featured the distance and miscommunication between generations that stems from mutual stereotyping. In public stories men and women of diverse ages, of medium and high SES consistently reflected on intergenerational conflict as a cause of exclusion in Chilean society. Consequently, drive and innovation were claimed by youth and seldom associated with later life. Ageism also featured in everyday attitudes in the family, in older people's struggles to maintain independence in deciding mundane issues such as going out, or pursuing romantic interests. In this way the effects of

intergenerational conflict stretched beyond difficulties in reaching out to the younger generation. Highly prescriptive stereotypes were seen to have an immobilising effect on older people, where younger generations exercised power in monitoring their decisions.

The wish to and engaged in activities on par with younger generations during later life was combined with the expectation of freedom to cease engagement. Withdrawal from public active roles in such situations was not understood as a form of exclusion, but as a relief from responsibilities and burdens. These ontological stories showed that individuals who have been very active in their communities, have willingly stepped aside from these roles:.

"We come here [Centre for Older Adults] to have a good time, to laugh, tell jokes, but not to work because we are no longer here to be working" (Estela, 70-74, SESL)

Younger participants who shared these views imagined themselves enjoying freedom after retirement, and leaving productive and family responsibilities to their children. Some participants who defended the right of withdrawal from active roles also defended the right of older individuals to have their contributions recognised, and not be excluded from any domain of action. These positions are not mutually exclusive, but a matter of choice and recognize that individuals wish both to maintain control of their activities, to reserve the freedom to step aside and pursue other sources of gratification.

In Chile, there has been increasing awareness during the last decade of the need to construct positive images of ageing, mainly through promoting notions of maturity and balance between detachment and projecting the future (SENAMA 2009b; Jorquera 2010). The ontological stories support this notion by illustrating that individuals in later life

can remain active and assume different roles within familiar domains. The wish to redirect work and life experiences to new projects, such as teaching, is consistent with the notions of transition defined by George (1996:50 in Grenier, 2012) and Roer (2009), in which change and risk are dealt with by maintaining consistency and a recognizable style of doing things.

Resistance to being confined to spaces of participation for older people, and concerns about the prescriptive stereotypes imposed by younger people did not represent a desire to deny ageing. Rather this signalled resistance to exclusion from active roles on the basis of chronological age and assumption about capabilities. The goal was to be able to define active ageing in their own terms.

7.2.3.4 *Active or passive? Resolving the tension*

The tension between active and passive roles confronted views in the political and mass media domains about older people as visibly emergent political and economic actors in society; with views, in the social imaginaries of older people, of social participation mostly restricted to the family sphere, and in lesser measure to groups of older adults, mostly associated with hobbies and leisure activities.

Public stories identified major constraints to open participation and choice of activities in later life, mainly due to the restricted tenets of ageing and spaces for participation in later life, as well as the association between youth and vitality that counter possible images of activity in later life. Despite these limitations, ontological stories of individuals imagined multiple projects to be pursued in forthcoming years. Some of these projects were related to leisure and participation in groups for older adults while others included developing new skills, entrepreneurship, studying, working and teaching.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Constructions of activity were common but least so among individuals in their 70's and older. Of two principal seams of activity one was associated with productivity and involved intergenerational contact while the second was not tied to productivity and was usually associated with locations exclusive to older people, such as centres for older adults. As a result, some individuals perceived that participation in groups of older adults could lead to becoming stereotyped as passive actors, restricting their opportunities of engaging in productive activities. This was a strategy of resistance to the inevitability of decline and withdrawal from social roles in later life. Other individuals, despite disliking these stereotypes, had internalised them, even from their early 50's, and planned their strategies of participation and withdrawal accordingly. However, there was a third strategy where withdrawal was embraced and gladly accepted. This strategy was visible among individuals in early mid-life and later life alike who felt that as long as there was a next generation to take care of productive and reproductive roles, they would be able to gradually disengage from the responsibilities associated with those roles.

Despite limited choice of activities in later life found in public stories, these stories also challenged the social imaginaries of ageing that depicted older people's participation almost exclusively in the family sphere. Ontological stories confirmed that despite the existence of stereotypes that dichotomise participation in later life as productive and non-productive, individuals were gradually imagining pluralistic projects for the future. Although among older participants projects stretched across fewer domains of participation, the imagined roles in later life indicated that individuals (especially those of medium and high SES) anticipated flexible timetables, where combining income generation, volunteering and leisure would be neither exceptional nor

exotic. This did not entail abandonment of roles in more intimate spheres of life. Family and increasingly peer support were still regarded as important contributions to social cohesion. As a result, it was anticipated that some individuals may begin to experience competing commitments, particularly between volunteering, family and work.

In terms of citizen and political organisation, public stories imagined later life as less politically active than portrayed in the social imaginaries of the mass media, but still as a group with a big potential for citizen and political action that may have a positive impact in their communities and for older people in general. Impediments to participation in public stories included age-related stereotypes and lack of solidarity between social classes. Ontological stories of citizen action were highly concentrated among middle SES individuals 60 years old and upward, whereas public stories were narrated by the same age group but were spread across SES. In ontological stories, participation in organisations working towards collective goals (e.g. Trades Unions, Councils) was highlighted but the causes they pursued were not necessarily oriented to the ageing population. Individuals participated in local organisations, seeking solutions for small groups of stakeholders (e.g. housing committees). Although citizen action was mainly understood as organisation in which members know each other, anonymous forms of collectivism were also possible, such retired individuals seeking legal action en masse to protect themselves from ageist practices in the healthcare system. Impediments to organisation in ontological stories were based on pessimism that actions at municipal level would reach central government, and some individuals' pessimism about the possibility and overall purpose of older people organising for their rights.

Types and styles of participation varied among men and women. Ontological stories for example showed that men were more likely than women to engage in citizen action, whereas women were more likely to participate in social activities and charitable organisations. In this sense, they matched public stories and social imaginaries of older people that suggest women are more likely to participate in group activities. Ontological stories however presented an additional perspective. Not only do men and women's participation in groups and social activities differ, but women, including some in their 40's and 50's, experienced constraints to their own activities as a result of men's reluctance to engage.

8.2.4 Health vulnerability vs health resourcefulness

The social imaginaries of the body, health, well-being and quality of life contrasted views of older people as inevitably frail and ill with the deployment of strategies to prevent and manage risk. This tension raises the following questions: are older people seen as a group that is distinctly more vulnerable than the rest of the population? If so, to what degree are they more vulnerable and why? What is the role of the State in providing healthcare for the older people? Is abuse a concern for ageing individuals? What are the perceived benefits and risks of care homes? How is the scarcity of economic resources managed in relation to healthcare? To what extent do people rely on medical knowledge and treatments for maintaining health? What other types of knowledge and strategies have been developed by individuals to prevent illness?

7.2.4.1 *Healthcare systems*

Men and women, mostly from low and medium SES and predominantly between 45 and 59, were most concerned with the outlook that should guide the approach to healthcare.

The debate within the political domain and replicated by the mass media turned on questions of entitlement and privilege in healthcare. The prevailing view was that economic vulnerability should inform public policies of access to healthcare. Public stories, however, narrated the crisis of healthcare as a symptom of a moral conundrum for Chilean society. They did not describe a problem of mere health or economic vulnerability, but a problem linked to Chilean cultures of support for older people.

“Society, everyone should meet this basic need that is healthcare, because they (older people) also contributed, also paid, also chipped in for the government to do this and that” (Dominga, 45-49, SESH)

As expressed in the imaginaries of the mass media, older people are increasing their expectations of the healthcare system. The cost of medication was a sensitive topic in the social imaginaries of older people, as it was in public stories, noticeably among participants in their 40's and 50's. Opinions were divided. Whereas some said that the State should provide more coverage for medication and treatments, others believed that individuals were responsible for anticipating increases in health expenses associated with ageing, planning accordingly, and finding the best value for medical prescriptions.

Regardless of the different views on the allocation of responsibilities for the healthcare of older people and the population in general, there was overall criticism of both private and the public healthcare systems.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Private healthcare was mainly criticised in public stories for the neoliberal approach adopted by ISAPRES⁴⁶. Companies raised the tariffs of their older members at a time when their financial and health risks were increasing. These ageist practices by ISAPRES were barely discussed in parliamentary debates, and the mass media only showed debates of the coalition opposition about whether modifications to healthcare payments from pensioners would deepen existing differences between private and State healthcare services. The imaginaries of older people were more concerned with the exclusion of users of public healthcare, from private insurance than with ISAPRES. This made sense given that ISAPRES is likely to have dropped many of its older clients, maintaining only wealthier individuals.

Consistent with criticism in public stories, ontological stories revealed that in practice, individuals of working age of high SES and some of medium SES paid steep sums to ISAPRES to secure swift treatment in healthcare facilities of their choosing. Among those participants ages 65 and over, only those of high SES were able to stay in private healthcare, but at a great cost. Responding to this injustice, Ismael (65-69, SESH) explained how he and hundreds of others in the same situation had taken legal action through specialist lawyers, to prevent the rise of their tariffs.

FONASA, the National Health Fund, was criticised in public stories for long waiting lists and associated costs of specialist consultations and

⁴⁶ Health Provision Institute. Private companies administrating private healthcare provision.

treatment in public hospitals. Even the AUGE⁴⁷ scheme provides only partial coverage of the cost of treating illnesses, and thus could appear an unsurmountable obstacle to maintaining health. Such vulnerability was also addressed in the social imaginaries of older people where the weaknesses of the system focused on hospital services and financial coverage of chronic or severe illness. Due to the higher prevalence of chronic illness in later life, anxiety over being able to cope with the costs of illness is likely to be heightened.

Positive views of services in local health care centres featured in social imaginaries of older people and in ontological stories, especially among participants of low and medium SES, aged 55 and over. The overall narrative was of positive experiences and personalised attention. These surgeries took a special interest in older people. They provided information about national programmes such as AUGE, called older people to follow up on routine checks, coordinated with social workers, and provided medical treatment such as dental care and eyesight consultations that could be accessed with ease. They also provided medication for specific ailments.

“I am willing to be taken care of and for them to take an interest in me, having hit a certain age” (Eva, 65-59, SESM)

However, as anticipated in public stories, when patients were referred to hospitals for specialists’ consultations, they struggled with bureaucracy and the limited coverage of Chile’s national health system. After contributing to the system for over 50 years, Arturo (75+, SESM)

⁴⁷ Universal Access to Explicit Guarantees. State healthcare scheme that guarantees treatment of 80 severe conditions to everyone affiliated to the public or private healthcare system.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

said: *'it helps a little, but it should be a lot more'*, as he only received 10% discount for his medications and 30% discount for the cost of X-rays. The prospect of growing older with little health protection instigated fear and uncertainty among users of public healthcare. Priscilla (50-54, SESL) hoped that when she reaches older age, the system would cover her medication. In the meantime she was health conscious *'so I don't suffer when I'm older'*.

To control the uncertainty instigated by the public system, individuals must find the resources to pay for private medical treatment and medication. Sometimes participants relied on their children to pay for private consultations and treatment, or asked for loans.

"FONASA is good, but is has not worked for me recently. My kids have paid for all my tests, because they are an MRI, they are those test against the bones and they are all expensive, so they have paid, because FONASA didn't cover any of that, all needs to be done private" (Amalia, 75+, SESM)

However, in there are more extreme views on coping with health related financial vulnerabilities. An example is Benjamín who said if he suffered a catastrophic illness he did not:

"intend on spending it all on one thing so... I don't have a wish to be a living dead" (Benjamín, 65-69, SESH)

The national survey of Quality of Life and Ageing in Chile (SENAMA et al. 2010) revealed that older people in general do not feel discriminated against by institutions, except for those related with health care. This is consistent with ontological stories, particularly about private healthcare, where individuals are pressurised to leave the system as they grow older unless they can afford the increasing fees. Ageism in private healthcare stems from assumptions that create a

connection between health and ageing, without thorough assessment of individual health conditions. This promotes popular images of frailty in later life (Green 2010; Gilleard and Higgs 2011). However, the public health system also contributes to ageist practices. Despite schemes such as AUGE, chronic or severe ailments associated with higher costs are often met with insufficient coverage or structural problems stemming from shortage of medical specialists. Individuals meet these barriers with disappointment, due to the unfairness of having contributed throughout their lives to a system that now makes them physically and financially vulnerable. As individuals face more pressing needs in health care they become better acquainted with the benefits the system offers. Local surgeries play an important role in helping patients find their way through the bureaucracy, providing information on healthy lifestyles, and they have a friendly approach to healthcare, as recommended by Cox et al. (2014). Thus individuals still hope for improvements to public health care that may have a positive impact on their quality of life (SENAMA 2009b; SENAMA et al. 2010). In order to cover the gaps produced by inequalities in healthcare in Chile, individuals are forced to seek financial aid from their children, to use their savings and pensions, or to submit to dying rather than fighting against the existing inequalities. In short, health care systems are not providing the necessary opportunities for ageing well (Cox et al., 2014:74), when access to treatment depends on their wealth.

7.2.4.2 *Responsibility for staying fit*

Consistent with the social imaginaries of older people, public stories suggested that older people were capable of maintaining control over their psychological well-being. It was also believed that psychological well-being could help ameliorate the effects of physical illness. These

views were stronger among women of medium SES and ages 40-64, and less frequent in participants over 60, suggesting that age and gender may mediate perceptions of the association between psychological and physical health.

Women participants believed that as they age they are more likely than men to engage in activities that help to maintain a sense of control and motivation in their lives, even when physical health is not optimal. Conversely, men were perceived to become disoriented in post-retirement life, to have increased morbidity and shorter life expectancy due to progressive decline with their life satisfaction.

“Health, physical activity, taking care of oneself, interact, not losing contact with people, yes, I believe the more you lock yourself in with your problems or within your squared inch, that limits you physically, spiritually and psychologically” (Iris, 40-44, SESM)

Although ontological stories paid little attention to gender differences in approaches to health, the strategies to maintain good health, and the obstacles to achieving them placed as much attention on the interactions between physical and psychological well-being as public stories, but stressed that the interactions were mediated by environmental factors.

In relation to physical and mental health, public stories of participants of medium and high SES were optimistic in the belief that if people maintained a healthy lifestyle from an early age, watching their diet and exercise could prevent future health problems. Mental health could be preserved through manual labour and exercises for mental agility, as well as going for regular medical checks. These relationships between ageing and health ascribed to social imaginaries of empowered health in later life. Those imaginaries envisaged health practices including ‘being better informed’ in order to know how to stay healthy.

The political domain also saw in this approach an opportunity to optimise the resources of the healthcare system, by investing in disseminating information that people could progressively translate into everyday practices.

A puzzling aspect about practices to maintain health in ontological stories was that for all their emphasis on physical and psychological health, strategies to boost cognitive agility were barely mentioned, although potential strategies were frequently mentioned in public stories.

Social and physical environments played an important role in implementing strategies for maintaining health. Participants considered spouses could motivate each other to exercise (e.g. dancing, walking around the neighbourhood) and maintain a healthy diet. Grandchildren motivated individuals to stay in good health, and to pass on healthy practices. Among women, healthy recipes and natural remedies were shared with friends. Overall harmonious family environments promoted virtuous circles and enhanced psychological well-being. Climbing stairs and walking several blocks between the bus stop and the workplace, as well as recreational physical activities outdoors combined leisure with exercise and spiritual contemplation of nature.

In contrast with those elements that facilitated health related strategies, there were others that hindered them. Participants associated these obstacles directly with time and age. During mid-life, external pressures on individuals' time created obstacles to exercising regularly, and looking after psychological well-being. Women aged 45-64 of medium and high SES looked forward to retirement, so they could have more time to take care of themselves. However, the future also held risks for health maintenance. For instance Irene (60-64 SESM),

who had recently retired, acknowledged she was in a risk zone, because she had seen colleagues her same age physically deteriorate very fast because *'they let themselves go'*.

Even when people were physically active, fear of injury was a permanent concern, especially for participants over 50 and predominantly for men. Although some of these participants had changed high intensity exercises (e.g. martial arts) for milder ones (e.g. walking, yoga), they compared their current level of fitness with what their bodies had been able to do, and grieved the loss of physical fitness as well as the loss of enjoyable activities.

"Do you know what I like to do? Skipping rope, but with problem with the meniscus of my knees now I can't, so there I stopped. Until I was sixty years old I would go in the house, because my house is large and I didn't have as many things as I do now, so I skipped rope inside the house and I entertained myself a lot" (Consuelo, 60-64, SESL)

A UK study showed that older people developed multiple strategies to maintain their physical, mental and psychological health. '..... getting out of the house as regularly as possible, watching their diets, taking supplements and promoting their mental agility through puzzles and word games. They also took responsibility for monitoring their health through regular tests' (Arber et al., 2014:153). These strategies had a positive effect on maintaining self-respect. These findings closely resemble the strategies adopted by Chilean individuals, although they placed less emphasis on mental health and more on the social aspects of health maintenance, such as the value of relationships with family and friends. Chilean individuals also emphasised the role of environmental factors in health maintenance. Younger participants looked to work and its associated time constraints as a hindrance to their health, whereas older individuals, particularly men, appreciated the benefits of the

neighbourhood and natural landscapes in enhancing their physical health and psychological well-being. The relationship between life satisfaction and quality of life has been addressed by Diener & Suh (1997) and Cummins (2000, 2005). Perceived health can improve if people engage in controlling their life satisfaction, although prolonged deficits in health are likely to undermine subjective quality of life. Some individuals in the ontological stories were aware of the need for balance in maintaining health, and that in order to maintain health in later life; strategies need to be developed in earlier years. This is consistent with argument that the starting conditions of health are more important than age, and that those conditions may have multiple expressions and outcomes depending on the aspects individuals focus on (Zaninotto et al. 2009; Osorio Parraguez et al. 2011).

Alongside strategies for maintaining health, signs of decline in vitality and the limitations of the body caused concern among individuals. According to Abusleme et al. (2014) these signs are interpreted as warnings of future states of dependency. In the interviews, even those individuals who remained physically active experienced fear of reaching the limit of their bodily capacities. Consistent with the finding of Osorio Parraguez et al. (2011), these fears became more acute among those who distinguished between enjoyable activities they could, and could no longer, perform.

7.2.4.3 *Autonomy and Care*

In the political domain, the relationship between ageing, health and autonomy was seen as relevant because of the relationship between degrees of dependency and programmes of care. The mass media had gradually incorporated the social elements that affect the relationship between health and ageing into its social imaginaries.. In this sense, it

has expanded perspectives that focused exclusively on the association between age and performance. It was, however, only in the domain of older people that social valuations of frailty appear. Thoughts about the appropriate way of dealing with loss of autonomy in later life were also present in public stories of health and ageing. Frailty was portrayed as a state to be feared, but not because of declines in health alone. Frailty was feared mainly because it is associated with losing the respect of others, and therefore losing independence. One suggested response was for carers to be tactful in their approach to frail older people:

“They will never think that they need to walk with someone, they are always going to think they can do everything, it is you that needs to tell them ‘I’ll go with you because I’m going to that same place’, not making them feel that they are not able” (Yolanda, 45-49, SESH)

When health deteriorates to a point where individuals start losing functional independence, systems of social support need to be set in place. However, in ontological stories the timing and form of these support systems followed different strategies. Iris (40-44, SESM) and Fernanda (45-49, SESM) were aware that in order to delay health deterioration and avoid dependency in the future, they needed to prepare and stay fit. Experiencing early signs of frailty can be overwhelming: Arturo (75+ SESM) fell for the first time while doing some housework. He felt giddy, and there was nothing to hold on to, so he fell and shouted for his son in law to come and pick him up. However, outside of the family circle, things may be quite different; Arturo is now afraid to go out by himself, fearing he may lose his balance and that people around will not assist him.

Even when individuals had not yet experienced any disability, they were likely to have seen the process with older relatives. Despite appreciating the value of support under such circumstances, accepting

that support was interpreted by some as loss of control over their lives. Fear of dependency on younger relatives instigated strategies of resistance. Among women aged 60 and over, of medium and low SES, those strategies consisted of hiding their health problems from their children to avoid having their freedom curtailed, and being infantilised. For some participants aged 45-69 of medium and high SES, decision making about potential disability intersected with plans to ensure economic independence. Then, they could hire home care services, and avoid direct dependency on, or monitoring by, relatives.

“been lost, you see, my mind goes blank so I don’t manage to call anyone, I’m lost completely lost, until after a while it hits me, then I orientate myself and I turn back. But no, I don’t like to phone my children when I’m ill, I don’t like bothering anyone” (Amalia, 75+, SESM)

Notwithstanding resistance of some individuals to any increase of surveillance, other participants from diverse backgrounds explained that their families had strong systems of support in place. For instance, Rodolfo’s family maintained tight intergenerational bonds.

“You [daughter] are not going to support me like that [money], but you will be by my side, at least concerned with how I am doing, this is how we have always done it. And my daughter, she tells me she will take care of me until I die and I tell her “you need to take care of your own family, and love your parents”, because parents are all right when their children love them, the same way I loved my dad, that very same way” (Rodolfo’s, 40-44, SESL)

Peer support was also an important part of maintaining psychological well-being. Ulises (55-59, SESM), referred to a major disagreement with his father over the isolation that, in Ulises’ opinion, exacerbated his father’s physical and mental rigidity. In contrast Samuel (70-74, SESH) and Delia (55-59, SESM) had an active social life with friends and other groups:

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

“There I get together with more people and we share opinions, I don’t stay locked in with my own opinion and pontificating, because we old people have a tendency to say that things are like this or like that, that’s a part of...one becomes more rigid” (Samuel, 70-74, SESH)

Public stories also presented discussions about how much agency frail older people can have in deciding their own care arrangements. People over 50 and of medium and high SES engaged the most with this topic. It was considered essential to exercising agency that people anticipated their choices for future care arrangements. One of the fears expressed in older people’s imaginaries was precisely the loss of control over what they wanted in terms of care if they lost their functional autonomy.

In this sense, vulnerabilities in later life have been mostly dichotomised. The social imaginaries of the mass media and political domains associated well-being in later life with being cared for by the family. Care homes were meant to be a last resort, and they have a negative connotation of neglect and abandonment. Although this perspective was partially replicated in the social imaginaries of older people and in public stories, perspectives on care and agency in later life included a larger and more complex set of alternatives. Children are seen as a crucial part of the decision making process, because they hold the responsibility of setting the plan in motion. This suggests that the logistic and financial feasibility of any plan should be discussed with them in advance. Some participants saw care homes as a place where people should only be when they are heavily dependent, and the family cannot take care of them, whereas others saw care homes as a comfortable alternative to living with children. Some families have the choice of deciding if around-the-clock medical care will be provided at home or not. Others simply cannot afford either of these alternatives,

and a family member needs to become a full time care of its frail older member.

Recent policies in Chile have started taking into account more diverse situations, specifically different degrees of dependency, and the availability of time and physical space of families. Alongside these measures, the political and mass media domains showed awareness and concern about older people as potential victims of domestic violence. Public stories, however, gave equivalent importance to the role of carers and to the capacity of older people to anticipate and plan for the future, contributing to their own well-being even if they reached high levels of dependency.

Care or nursing homes were ubiquitous in ontological stories about care arrangements in later life in. Figure 8.5 shows how aspects related to planning and the advantages of having round the clock medical care are viewed positively, but aspects related to emotional ties and family support can be problematic. Several individuals explained that they wanted to live independently, or with their families as long as possible, but if their health was so diminished that they were no longer self-sufficient they would rather live in a care home than burden their children and families.

“The strategy is to live here as long as one can in order to remain independent, but figure in older age you have trouble moving around, difficulties preparing your own meals, illnesses, all those consequences, well then it is better to go to a care home where you will have a house, food, clean clothes” (Samuel, 70-74, SESH)

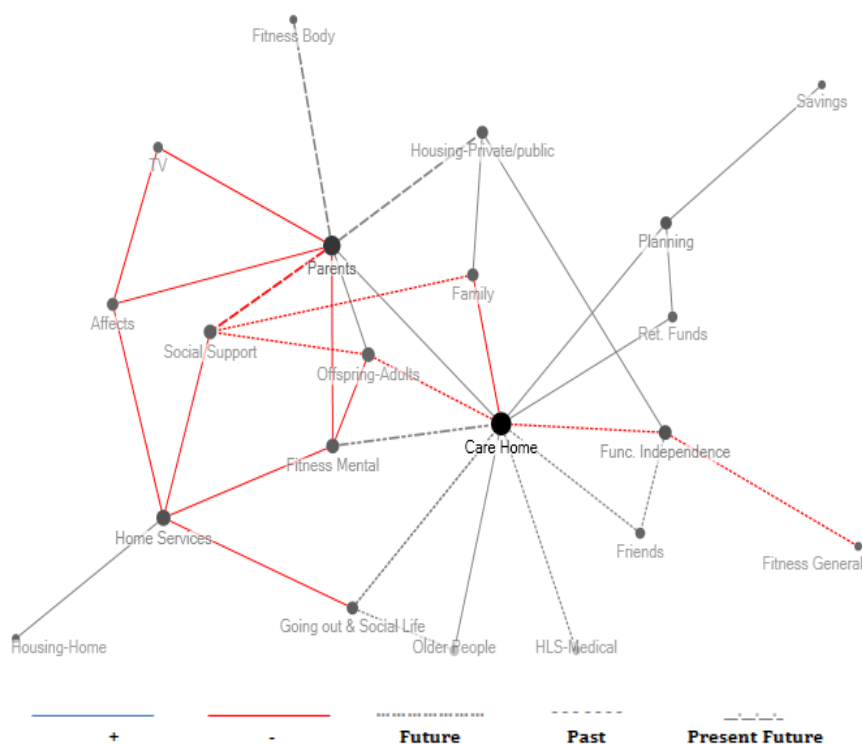
Concern about putting the younger family through the stress of caring was particularly emphasised by those who had experienced such stress themselves.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Notwithstanding the preference of some individuals for care homes, these institutions were also stigmatised. For Arturo (75+, SESM) and Yolanda (45-49, SESH), if their children *left* them there, especially when at their most frail it would feel like abandonment. An alternative was domiciliary care. However, abuse and neglect are also a risk in these circumstances especially when there is severe loss of mental faculties, and remaining at home can bring an increased risk of isolation. This is something Benjamín (65-69 SESH) experienced with his mother in law, and that changed his views on care homes.

“I used to see it as abandonment, now looking more into it, I see it as a solution, especially with the interaction that takes place, which is something that we have seen now with my mother in law, who is in a good economic situation, but we have a carer at home, that costs a fortune, and she has withdrawn, she doesn’t interact with people, which is a basic thing, she has no connection with the world, she is just there in front of the tele” (Benjamín, 65-69, SESH)

Figure 8.5 Resource network of care homes



Arber et al. (2014:153) argue that supportive relationships with family and friends can be helpful in overcoming psychological effects of long term illness. Although this was the case for many individuals in this study, ontological stories showed that for some, particularly those experiencing the first signs of loss of physical capabilities, it was difficult to accept they may need to rely on others. Fear of dependency and surveillance by younger relatives may initiate strategies of resistance to social support.

Murray et al. (2014) explained that older individuals are often torn between two competing narratives: the 'vital, self-sufficient individual, who resists the kind of fragility, vulnerability and dependency' and 'inexorable decline' (Freeman 2011:15 in Murray et al., 2014:110). Murray et al. argue that older people are often aware of the narratives of decline, and in order to develop alternative narratives of capability, and imagining worthy lives for themselves and for all, they need to become engaged in the production of their own representations. Chilean families with strong support systems, particularly those that can be traced back to previous generations, fostered symbolic capital that could be used by individuals in imagining themselves as a link of a chain of social support and reciprocity. But awareness of the limitations of the body can produce ambivalent feeling towards life and emotional ties (Abusleme et al. 2014), which in some of the ontological stories led to denial of such limitations, or thinking of financial resources as a security blanket in the transition from autonomy to dependency. These strategies of resistance were also linked with the assessment of health related quality of life. Both when family and peer support was welcomed and when it was resisted, the ability to take control over the body and its care (Osorio Parraguez et al. 2013) was essential to a positive assessment of the management of illness and frailty.

In ontological stories, peer support was depicted as an effective tool to manage the ageing process, as it allowed individuals to choose social environments that have a beneficial effect on their health, particularly mental fitness and psychological well-being. These strategies mirrored the perspective of Laz (2003), who argued that management of corporeal resources allows freer performances of age. Peer social support in ontological stories was detached from fears of surveillance, and from power negotiations that are more frequent within systems of family support.

Stories about care arrangements, particularly about care homes were associated with anticipation of the end of individuals' lives. These stories had ambiguous meanings. They understood anticipation of care arrangements as a desirable strategy because individuals could have a say in the handling of their bodies at the end of their lives. But they also responded to what Murray et al. (2014:78) described as institutional exclusion as a result of narrative foreclosure of lives. In other words, the act of anticipating scenarios of frailty serves to instigate images of dependency. Thus, the prospect of frailty and the desire to receive dignified care precludes individuals from participation in decision making about care arrangements.

Another aspect of care arrangements was related to the effects of care homes or alternative forms of care on individuals' well-being. In this sense, Arber et al., (2014:153) argued that bureaucracy, neglect and bad treatment in care services are a psychological hindrance to seeking help. However, services that are responsive to individual preferences and delivered courteously have positive effects on health and general well-being. This evidence reflects the expectations and fears illustrated in ontological stories. Individuals who believed that care homes are

preferable to staying at home when experiencing acute illness were also aware that their preference may leave them subject to the quality of the service provided. Fear of neglect and abandonment were not restricted to care homes, with domiciliary care also carrying similar risks.

7.2.4.4 *Vulnerable or resourceful? Resolving the tension*

In this section I showed how participants resolved the tension between vulnerability associated with increased health risks, abuse and insufficient financial resources to protect themselves from such risks, against views that proposed older people as resourceful in finding strategies to cope with ailments and discrimination in healthcare institutions. The findings showed that ultimately, despite the efforts for maintaining good health, these resources only delay vulnerabilities caused by the commoditisation of health and ageist practices that tend to infantilise older people.

Public stories about health vulnerability and resourcefulness in later life question the social imaginaries of the political domain that base their conceptions of frailty on economic criteria. They propose instead that welfare policies should be steered by social justice. They also criticise the commoditisation of health in the private system, as well as the gaps in the public healthcare system, which deepen health inequalities, by forcing individuals with severe ailments to seek expensive treatment in private care. Ontological stories replicated these criticisms of both healthcare systems, but they also praised primary healthcare in local surgeries, where older people received respectful treatment from staff, as well as information and guidance through bureaucratic processes. Despite criticism of health provision, individuals in general did not seek strategies to circumvent ageist policies, and they were either resigned to receiving what little support

they could get, or found financial resources to pay for treatment from savings, bank loans or through their children paying for tests and consultations.

Ontological stories reinforced public stories in stressing the connections between psychological well-being and physical health. Such interactions were mediated by environmental factors that could facilitate or hinder maintenance of healthy habits. Among participants between 45 and 64 time was identified as a major obstacle in keeping exercise routines, but for older participants, the main obstacle was awareness of bodily limitations or increasing fear of injury that prevented them from performing desired activities. Among positive environmental effects, individuals identified good relationships with family and friends as a protective factor to their psychological well-being. Spouses and friends could also motivate individuals to engage in healthy practices. Physical environments facilitated routines such as climbing stairs, walking to and from the workplace, or going on outdoor expeditions.

Interaction with social networks, particularly family and adult children was understood in public stories as a pool of resources for maintaining psychological well-being, but mostly as protection against future states of frailty. The relationship between family and frailty in ontological stories also entailed support from the family group, particularly families with a long history of caring for their older members. However, as in public stories, frailty was also feared, suggesting that individuals may try to hide early signs of bodily decline in order to avoid losing their autonomy, and ultimately having their routines monitored by their children. Peer support allowed individuals

to feel more comfortable with their ageing process, and less burdened by the implications of the narratives of decline.

Frailty was widely associated with care arrangements for the future. In public stories, children were an essential part of future planning and joint decision making about staying at home or moving to a nursing home. The main concern identified in public stories was whether the decisions made at earlier stages would be respected once older people lose their faculties and negotiation power. Ontological stories underlined the necessity of planning care arrangements ahead, but showed that discussing those arrangements can instigate fear of foreclosure of their lives, and premature loss of autonomy.

Although nursing homes are still stigmatised among families where caring for their older members is embedded in their system of values, the pros and cons of nursing homes were discussed in ontological stories. Individuals willing to consider these arrangements did not give care homes connotations of abandonment, but whether they stayed at home or moved to a nursing home was more dependent on how they might be treated, and if they thought their families would continue to visit them. Thus, the idea of abandonment changed from not being cared by family in their own homes, to fear of neglect and oblivion.

8.3 Summary

In this chapter I have discussed survey and interview results to discover i) whether the tensions of ageing as analytical constructs made sense to 266 women and men aged 40-90 who participated in a survey and ii) how 32 women and men aged 40-90 of varying socio-economic status resolved these tensions and the resources they drew on in negotiating their ageing identities.

Representing and resolving tensions of ageing

Here I summarise the findings of the survey and visual elicitation interviews and their interpretation in the light of the social imaginaries in the political, mass media and older people's domains, and in the broader context of the literature. This has enabled me to identify strategies of control, and threats to those strategies, as people move from mid-life to later life.

I tested the tensions of ageing constructed in chapter 7 by measuring the distance between sides of each tension and contrasting that distance against background variables. The findings revealed that of the eight initial tensions only four were significant to the participants of the study: i) being dependent vs having dependants; ii) information as value vs information as means; iii) passive roles vs active roles; iv) health vulnerability vs health resourcefulness.

State policies on pensions were perceived as obstacles to building financial independence in later life. However, individuals anticipated dwindling pensions and were mindful of strategies to ameliorate the effects of these policies, although some believed that despite the existing guidelines for financial independency, their implementation is not as effective as it could be. Institutional timetables were seen as too rigid, leaving individuals very limited time to prepare for financial independence in later life. Despite acknowledging these policy constraints, individuals seemed to be adopting increasingly individualistic strategies to control their transitions into and through later life. Whilst intergenerational inter-dependency is still accepted, discourses about ageing and expectations for the future are moving towards lives in which each generation should look after its own interests, and offer help only when difficulties are insurmountable.

Individuals of all ages were expected to use information technologies, but individuals over 50 and those of lower SES had fewer opportunities for learning. Keeping informed was associated with social inclusion, both in terms of paid employment and in terms of aiding social interaction with families, friends and communities. While recognizing that social interactions can be aided by technology, face-to-face interactions in teaching and learning environments was still valued.

Despite active roles outside the family sphere in later life, these were treated in discourses as a by-product of having free time. Participants' stories revealed that individuals increasingly imagine multiple activities, in public and private spheres, depending on personal preferences. In this way, expectations showed the progressive dissolution of dichotomies between activity and passivity. Obstacles to accomplishing this ideal included persisting exclusion in work and healthcare institutions, clashes between competing preferences, and constraints associated with long held and long practised gender roles.

Perceptions of growing older were characterised by encounters with ageism by healthcare institutions associated with higher fees, shortage of specialised medical staff and insufficient insurance cover for chronic illness. Some of these disadvantages were ameliorated by high quality service in local health surgeries. Participants also showed that starting from their 40's they recognize and start to harness the benefits of their social and physical environments to maintain their physical and psychological health, although time constraints, fear induced by minor ailments, and loss of confidence in ability to control the body presented obstacles to maintaining desired health strategies. Supportive relationships with family were seen as having the potential to instil a

sense of safety when coping with illness. But family support could also foster fear of surveillance and dependency. Friends were beneficial in improving psychological well-being as well as ameliorating fears about bodily decline. When thinking about future scenarios of frailty, participants were torn between a positive feeling about actively planning their future care arrangements, and fear that in anticipating such scenarios they may be generating images of dependency. Consideration of future care arrangements, whether in care homes, with younger family members or in one's own home were assessed in terms of convenience, avoiding isolation, avoidance of burdening younger family members, risks of neglect or abuse.

9 Conclusions

In this final chapter I present the overall development of my thesis in the light of the research questions that guided my investigations. How do individuals deal with stereotypes and contradictory messages about ageing? What strategies do they develop to control transitions whilst coping with ageing processes? Which external messages do they accept, which do they reject and how? I begin by summarising the main findings to address each of these questions. Next, I discuss aspects of Chilean policy in relation to my findings, and outline implications for future policy design. I then present the principal theoretical empirical, and methodological contributions of the study, reflect on the conduct of the research including its limitations, and end the chapter by proposing recommendations for future research.

9.1 Summary of findings

9.1.1 Social imaginaries of ageing in Chile

I set myself the task of constructing social imaginaries of ageing in the political, mass media and older people's social domains. This addressed the question of what were the most salient understandings of ageing in Chile. The question was based upon the premise that ageing individuals need to steer transitions through a complexity of multiple meanings of ageing. The social imaginaries were constructed through documentary analysis of three social domains: parliamentary debates, newspaper articles and transcripts of focus groups with older people. The focus

was on the intersection of control and desirability of the situations described in each social domain.

9.1.1.1 *Political domain*

The political domain had started to visualise areas where collaboration and empowerment of older people could be useful in designing more effective policies. Perceptions of greater control by older people began with organisations of older adults reaching out to political representatives to improve their living conditions, particularly in the areas of pensions and healthcare, and with increased visibility of the concerns and capabilities of older people through local consulting committees coordinated by the National Service of Older Adults. This increased visibility led to increased awareness of the potential of older people to i) learn and apply new skills in everyday life as well as formal institutional settings; ii) contribute to the design of public and private spaces to prolong independent living; iii) harness their health awareness to promote programmes in preventative health.

The social imaginaries of the political domain identified the need to modernise existing policy frameworks to keep up with population ageing. Most policies, and identified needs, were discussed from a top-down approach, informed by reports of State organisations, without mention of older people's perspectives. Modernisation of policies involved more research about ageing, more trained professionals in social services in general, and geriatricians in particular to meet the needs of older users. Major reforms to pensions and healthcare payments were intended to improve older people's quality of life and material living conditions. However, the reforms were disputed in terms of their coverage. Should they benefit all the older population or only the most deprived? Although the family was described as the

primary source of care, protection and affection, transformations in family structure and the roles of older people demanded that the State take responsibility for i) tackling negative images of ageing, particularly through the inclusion of older people in productive activities, ii) improving infrastructure in terms of community centres, inspection of potentially hazardous living spaces, and transportation to improve connectivity to essential services, and iii) improving legal and organisational structures to effectively enforce the law on domestic violence, promote reporting of elder abuse, protect victims and restore their quality of life.

9.1.1.2 *Mass media domain*

In the social imaginaries of the mass media, most instances of control in later life were related to increased access to education and information. Engagement in education in later life was connected with skill acquisition and increased health awareness among the older population. Opportunities for community engagement, and combatting isolation could be found in families, educational settings and government programmes. Taking action to protect older people's interests was also seen as a form of control in the mass media. These actions included participation of older citizens in the design and implementation of policies, seeking strategies to protect retirement funds from mismanagement by AFPs, and in deciding whether subsidies for house extensions could be used in older people's own homes and/or those of their relatives.

In relation to government policy, the mass media presented ongoing debates about whether economic and healthcare policies affecting older people should continue on the path of privatisation combined with subsidiary policies, or if these policies should shift towards an extended

welfare approach. Well-being in later life was associated with both family and institutional care. Housing and care policies were oriented to maintaining people living with their families, however, increasing individualism and geographical distances weakened family ties putting older people at risk of isolation and neglect. Living spaces were regarded as potentially hazardous for older people who could be victims of crime or accidents. The mass media also emphasised biomedical research, its potential to cure age-related illnesses, and to serve as the basis for making information available to older individuals who should be responsible for leading healthy lifestyles.

9.1.1.3 *Older people's domain*

Older people's social imaginaries of ageing, when older people themselves are in control of events, were articulated by personal growth and fulfilling social environments. Freedom to choose the activities they engaged with were valued over income, and satisfaction with life boosted a sense of command during good and difficult times. In this context, bereavement could be understood as an opportunity to learn and grow, and illness coped with better. Loss of mastery and autonomy were consistently feared. Familiar physical environments (home, neighbourhoods) promoted independent living as they provided safety and support networks, facilitated routines and physical activities. Families and friends were sources of pride and affection. Individuals took pride in having raised families and in supporting their children to start out in life. Friends were important in combatting isolation and loneliness. Their company was greatly enjoyed even among those individuals who did not feel particularly inclined to participate in group activities.

At a macro level, external control was expressed as symbolic and material exclusion resulting from low pensions, lack of opportunities in the job market, and poor urban infrastructure and transportation hindering freedom to move in the city. At a micro level, stereotypes and tensions in the family resulted in obstacles to intergenerational solidarity, created competition for resources, generated struggles to maintain control over life decisions, increased risk of weakened networks of support during illness and fear of abandonment.

9.1.2 Tensions of ageing

Description of the social imaginaries of ageing was followed by the identification of conflict in the imaginaries of the three domains representing tensions or disputes about ageing in Chile. The validity of eight identified tensions was then tested in a survey conducted with a sample of the general population.

Of eight initial tensions, four were found to retain significance: i) being economically dependent vs having dependants, ii) information as an intrinsic value vs information as a means to an end, iii) passive social roles vs active social roles, and iv) health vulnerability vs health related resourcefulness. In these areas, the social imaginaries of the political, mass media and older people's domains exposed clear contradictions between:

1. views of older people as dependent on families and the State, and older people as self-sufficient individuals, an asset to domestic economies.
2. valuing information as a facilitator of daily routines and interactions, and considering information as a means to productivity.

3. perceptions of older people as active, creative and organised, and older people as passive, prone to isolation and inhibited in fulfilling desired roles in their families.
4. imagining older people as vulnerable and acknowledging older people's resourcefulness in developing health-related strategies.

9.1.3 Resolving tensions, controlling transitions

These contradictions, or tensions defined the following, research questions: i) how do individuals in mid and later life resolve the tensions of ageing in Chile, and ii) what are the main strategies that diverse groups use to accept or resist external ageing identities and the resource networks that shape the situational identities engaging in these control efforts?

Visual elicitation interviews generated two types of stories about these tensions. Public stories were understood as indexical discourses in which conceptions of ageing are organised in a coherent narrative, and used as guidelines for action. By contrast, ontological stories were based on participants' personal experiences, the actual resources and strategies they used to accept or reject external ageing identities. These two sets of stories revealed further tensions to offer a more nuanced understanding surrounding beliefs and expectations of ageing, and the strategies that can be developed by people in mid and later life to maintain, or assume greater, control over the ageing process making best use of available resources.

1. The tension surrounding older people's position as economically dependent or an asset to domestic economies was seen as being heavily influenced by the shift from intergenerational solidarity to individualism. Underpinned by neoliberal policies of privatisation,

the implications of this shift were already emerging, driving individualistic behaviours in pursuit of individual independence that were changing forms of, and weakening, intergenerational solidarity.

2. Discussion of the tension surrounding the value of information as a means to productivity or as a facilitator of daily routines and interactions showed consensus about the important role of technologies for social inclusion either as a route to productivity or/and in maintaining social contacts to avoid social isolation. What also emerged was: i) the exclusionary impact on people of lower SES whose financial and educational status left them less able to take advantage of technological advances and ii) the positive role of educational initiatives to support older people's learning about new technologies as well other skills and interests since, for women particularly, these offered valuable opportunities for face to face interaction.
3. The tension surrounding perceptions of older people as active, creative and organised, and older people as passive, prone to isolation and inhibited in fulfilling desired roles in their families was explained in terms of changing conceptions of activity that were moving away from simple alignments between activity as productivity and passivity as non-productivity. These challenged current stereotypes of activity as youthful. The interviews also offered useful insights into understandings of possibilities for, and barriers to, individual and collective action by women and men at different stages of ageing.

4. Imagining older people as vulnerable and acknowledging older people's resourcefulness in developing health-related strategies generated further insights into understandings of ageist practices by health care institutions but also by families through surveillance, infantilisation or neglect of older members. Interestingly this contrasted with positive, enabling, experiences of local, community-based, health care services. The need for a social justice approach to the provision of healthcare was tempered by a sense of individual powerlessness in achieving the necessary changes. An overall picture of individuals taking greater responsibility for maintaining healthy lifestyles was complemented by stories revealing opportunities and challenges in doing so. And despite agreement that planning for later life was a good idea, fear of confronting the end of life, commonly associated with institutional care, was accompanied by fear of losing family support.

9.1.4 Understanding lifecourse transitions

How individuals from mid-life to later life imagine their own ageing process? And how this is influenced by multiple external voices competing for their understandings of ageing?

In seeking answers to these questions I committed to a lifecourse perspective. To begin with, the thesis kept an eye on the political-historical processes that shaped the Chilean lifecourse: i) it is evident that rapid modernisation has had a profound effect in accelerating population ageing; ii) that nearly two decades of dictatorship, followed by other two decades of reestablishment of democracy has scared the social weave of Chilean society, but that new forms of social

participation are re-emerging, especially among younger generations; and iii) that abrupt changes from a moderate socialist political-economic project to a strong enforcement of neoliberal principles, at the same time that personal liberties were curtailed, resulted in policies that remained uncontested until their hindrance to individual's financial stability became widespread and irreversible (at least for those in later mid-life and later life).

The thesis also committed to articulating micro and macro social processes, and to paying attention to more nuanced aspects of lifecourse transitions that may escape more institution oriented approaches. The richness of the stories in the documents I explored to construct multiple social imaginaries of ageing, as well as the stories narrated by the participants of this study presented me with the challenge of producing distilled yet detailed accounts of subtle variations in lifecourse transitions.

The study of social imaginaries framed the cultural structures in which ageing transitions happen. And within each social domain the contrast between imaginaries of control by older individuals versus those of external control by external identities anticipated possibilities for challenging the status quo during ageing transitions. The political domain, for instance, saw in education and in organised social and political participation responses to discourses of vulnerability and frailty in later life. The mass media showed that whilst demand of information by individuals and the offer available, as well as the expectation of what older people should do with it complemented each other; there were also stark contrasts between imaginaries of individuals defending their financial stability against views presenting populations as burdensome to the network of social protection. Older

people's social imaginaries internal contrasts were represented by harmonious self-development, supportive social environments and the ability to master the physical environment as resources that could potentially temper the effects of sustained material and symbolic exclusion.

But then, lives transpire in the intersection of multiple social domains, and their discourses can also be in competition with each other. The construction of tensions between the social imaginaries across social domains not only added breadth and depth to the landscape of cultural references, but it also provided an entry point to the fundamental contradictions individuals navigate during ageing transitions. Visual elicitation interviews allowed a sense making exercise aimed to re-interpret the tensions. The reinterpretation was crucial to completing the lifecourse sequence in this study, because it infused macro-understandings of ageing with the personal circumstances of individuals in mid-life and later life, as well life decisions and expectations that go along with those circumstances. As a result, some tensions were rearticulated, whereas others remained stable. For instance, the tension between imagining older people as vulnerable and acknowledging older people's resourcefulness in developing health-related strategies, remained surprisingly stable. The accounts of participants added detail and provided novel examples of this tension, but overall the possibilities and hindrances of formal and informal health systems were the same in the social imaginaries and in the interviews. In contrast, the tension between perceptions of older people as active, creative and organised, and older people as passive, prone to isolation and inhibited in fulfilling desired roles in their families showed that indeed there were differences in personal attitudes towards social participation, it was activities themselves that

had become re-signified as the polarisation between productive and non-productive is blurred, and it signals the beginning of a major cultural shift. Finally, the rearticulation of the tensions about uses of information and intergenerational financial dependency illustrate that changes in the lifecourse can be sensitive to socio-economic status. Older participants of higher SES could share views about intergenerational dependency with younger participants of low SES. And practices surrounding information and technology among those of higher SES where frequently an unfulfilled expectation among those that don't have an easy access to resources.

9.2 Policy implications

Expert recommendations for ageing policy emphasise the need for approaches that encompass all stages of the life course, especially in terms of knowledge generation and dissemination, as well as inclusive education, design and services. Kalache (2014), is explicit in arguing that understanding the future of ageing depends on an understanding of the experiences of today's youth; their access to social and health services, their lifestyles, their personal and environmental circumstances, and social and economic conditions. Although the focus of my study is an integrated outlook of mid-life and later life, it has been conducted in the spirit of the approach proposed by Kalache. I have researched how individuals use their personal, material, organisational and psychological resources to develop strategies to steer their ageing processes. The findings lead to the following set of implications for policy makers. While these have greatest significance for policy makers in Chile, they have resonance for policy makers in the wider region and beyond.

9.2.1 Addressing contradictions to achieve equilibrium between self-reliance and intergenerational reciprocity

Given contemporary emphasis on policies of 'ageing in place', explicit consideration needs to be given to the role of intergenerational economies. Intergenerational reciprocity needs to be protected in order to maximise networks of support for people as they age. And as has also been proposed in a Western European context by Cann (2009) future policy shaping should facilitate advisory systems to promote financial and role stability from mid-life onwards. Such systems should encompass the promotion of social inclusion through the maintenance and diversification of activities of interest avoiding over-emphasis on paid employment as the only form of social inclusion.

9.2.2 Promoting social interaction through learning and challenging stereotypes of cognitive decline in later life

Current policies to promote learning are largely geared to the promotion of productivity. Yet for those contemplating learning in later life, stereotypes of cognitive decline can have a strong impact on motivation to engage in further learning. The design of learning environments should take into consideration three findings from this study that have the potential to mobilise individuals to engage in life-long learning: First, women are strongly motivated by the social interaction opportunities of face to face learning environments. Second, friends and peers have distinct and important roles to play in achieving psychological well-being in learning environments since their support and encouragement is less likely to be based on a deficit model as can easily happen in the presence of younger family members. And third, it is important to recognize and take account of the reluctance of some

individuals, especially men, to participate in activities designed exclusively for older adults while older-age itself continues to be subject to negative stereotypes.

9.2.3 Active citizenship

Despite restrictions to the adoption of active roles in later life identified in public stories about ageing, the imagined roles of older individuals transcended the family sphere. Indeed, ontological stories showed that individuals participated, or expected to participate in multiple productive and recreational activities. However, participation appeared to decrease when people approach 'old' old age and non-productive participation was unattractive to those wishing to avoid association with locations exclusive to older adults precisely because of the negative stereotypes of old age. Limits to participation were also thought to stem from divergent mechanisms adopted by men and women for coping with role changes. In terms of organisation to advocate for older people's rights, there was belief in the potential for further development; however, contemporary participation in citizen action was occurring mostly at a local level, and was not necessarily associated with promoting social justice for older people. Although the Policy for Positive Ageing includes communication campaigns to improve perceptions of later life, complete cultural change requires long term measures, and it is thought likely to take three generations to overcome negative stereotypes of ageing (M.T. Abusleme, personal communication). Chilean policy makers are taking steps to address gender biases in participation. In problematizing these differences, they have become concerned with whether men are intrinsically less participative than women, or whether existing organisations do not provide opportunities for participation that align with men's needs and

interests. A pilot project has recently been started to increase motivation and participation among non-organised older adults (C.L. Belloni, personal communication). However, encounters of organised citizen action in Chile resemble those identified by Phillipson & Walker (1986) in the UK 30 years ago. The key issue is that leaders and participants in organised action tend to have a lifelong history of participation. Schools for older leaders are then more likely to harness the potential of older people who have been involved in organised action before. The current political scenario in Chile is auspicious with students and other citizen groups involved in political debate, as well as efforts to revitalise trades unions that had been nearly eradicated during years of the dictatorship. Policies that encourage and provide guidance for effective association throughout the lifecourse are therefore recommended as a means of changing perceptions of passivity and encouraging active citizenship in later life.

9.2.4 Addressing social transformations in healthcare

Although there has been some advances towards a healthcare system based on social justice (i.e. total or partial exemption from health contributions, the AUGE program), the perception is that healthcare in Chile is essentially ageist. This is likely to continue as long as the divide between private and State healthcare exists, because individuals exiting the private system put pressure on a public system that does not receive the contributions from the wealthier sectors of society. Also, the findings indicate individuals' ambivalence when reflecting about their expectations of care in later life. Individuals are aware of the risks and benefits of both nursing homes, and being cared by their families. Chilean policy has already started considering transformations in the family structure, such as the rise of women's

participation in the work force and the reduction of the size of families. However, other transformations that will affect care systems in the future, such as divorce rates and the introduction of civil partnerships have not yet been explicitly addressed. Finally, the potential of communities and friends in care systems also seems to be underexplored.

9.3 Original contributions to knowledge

9.3.1 Theoretical contributions

In this thesis I have attempted to develop new perspectives to extend existing frameworks for the study of age transitions. I have done so by embedding lifecourse, (past and present contexts affecting individuals trajectories), institutional (expected trajectories) and humanistic (reflections about chronology and spiritual development) perspectives of ageing in a theoretical framework connecting social imaginaries and the control of situational identities. A central argument is that transitional processes should be understood in the context of a longer time frame to include anticipation of transition, which is why I have included perspectives of people in mid-life as well as later life. The framework I have developed for studying transitions contributes to the study of ageing because it allows for the anticipation of ongoing transformations in the understandings of ageing as well as changes in the ways individuals cope with these transformations whilst they are experiencing transitions in their own lives. By paying attention to contextual situations the study also contributes to the identification, of the more profound impact of societal changes on ageing transitions and where strategies for steering ageing transitions remain stable.

By using a framework that can be applied to multiple contexts in ageing studies, the empirical focus on Chile contributes to the growing body of international perspectives on ageing. International perspectives not only help to develop understanding of the sociocultural diversity of ageing but assist in strengthening critical views of ageing in specific cultures, and inspire novel approaches to research.

9.3.2 Methodological contributions

Combining multiple theoretical perspectives demanded a methodological design that operationalised the concepts and maintained the coherence of the study by holding these concepts together. To accomplish this objective, I have employed a wide array of methods, each of them with a specific function, but combined with others to meet the singular challenges posed by my research questions.

The production of social imaginaries allowed me to characterise and compare multiple understandings of ageing in Chilean society in the political, mass media and older people's social domains. The production of these social imaginaries was the first empirical stage of the thesis and it entailed a complex design in several stages in which I i) conducted a literature review of Chilean studies of social imaginaries and representation of ageing to identify the most salient themes; ii) constructed a dictionary of key words associated with ageing to search for relevant parliamentary debates and newspaper articles representing the political and mass media social domains; iii) attained authorisation to perform secondary analysis on transcripts of focus groups with individuals 60+ representing the older people's domain; iv) performed thematic analysis of the parliamentary debates according to the literature derived themes to create areas for comparison between

social domains; v) confirmed the reliability of my coding through an independent coder vi) performed cluster analysis of the documents for each theme to narrow and select the relevant semantic content in a corpus of information of over 3,000 pages; vii) analysed the themes in each social domain to create categories combining control and desirability that fixed a perspective of observation of the social imaginaries; viii) compared the social imaginaries across the three social domains to identify tensions that could be used as entry points to study strategies to control unresolved, or contradictory, understandings of ageing in Chile; and ix) used word clouds to present my findings in a way that made it easier to visualise the different understandings of ageing in the political, mass media and older people's domain.

The second empirical stage was designed to answer the questions of how individuals resolved the tensions of ageing, and which strategies they used in resolving these tensions. The findings of the first empirical stage were reintroduced in the second empirical stage. This was an opportunity to test the validity of the analytical constructs, and to identify emergent topics invisible during the prior stage. Although the selection of analytical constructs could have benefited from a larger pilot study between stages one and two, the reintroduction of findings of one stage in the next enhanced the consistency of the research design as well as emphasising the co-constructive nature of the findings between myself as researcher and the participants.

To test the validity of the analytical constructs I i) constructed a questionnaire completed by 266 participants aged 40-90 that measured their attitudes towards opposing sides of each tension; ii) used correlations, principal component analysis and Cronbach's α reliability

measures to identify, and the discard, tensions that were not robust; iii) performed factorial ANOVA to measure the significance of the tensions to participants.

I used visual elicitation interviews with 32 participants aged 40-90 to understand how they resolved these significant tensions. To do so I i) created a unique set of drawings representing the tensions of ageing; ii) designed an interview dynamic to emphasise the contrast between desired and undesired ageing identities; iii) conducted situational analysis to understand how participants drew on multiple resources to resolve the tensions in specific situations; iv) used the stories stemming from the situational analysis to construct resource networks from the combination of resources to resolve tensions. These aided in visualising my findings.

Although the methodological of the thesis was rich and complex by itself, the use of cluster analysis as a way of narrowing the semantically relevant content of a large corpus of information, the development of analytical categories from tensions as an entry point to transitions, the use of ratio variables to measure the significance of the tensions, the classification system used during interviews to accentuate contrast between meaningful stories presented in the images, and the visualisation of resources through reversed network analysis were methodological innovations particular to this thesis.

9.3.3 Empirical contributions

Although this is not the first study of social imaginaries of older age and ageing in Chile, it is the first to compare social imaginaries from different social domains. The comparative perspective provides a wider

view of the understandings of ageing in Chilean society, particularly of the competing messages individuals must navigate as they age.

This analysis of social imaginaries has exposed tensions in the understandings of ageing in Chile and my aim was to observe how ageing individuals resolved these tensions. However, I also wanted to confirm that the tensions as analytical constructs made sense to the population of interest. This intermediate step was not only a methodological development, but facilitated the identification of the conflicting messages that ageing individuals of different backgrounds receive with more or less intensity.

The use of tensions about ageing as an entry point to reveal strategies for steering age transitions was a novel approach to connecting problems of ageing at a macro and micro social levels. Taking competing understandings of ageing at a macro level, with the power to influence the views of most of Chilean society, and observing how these tensions affected the discourses and practices of individuals at a micro level, participants were able to select which tensions resonated with them, and infuse them with their own meanings. Drawn images representing diverse aspects of ageing facilitated the construction of narratives that i) revealed attempts to reconcile conflicting circumstances, and ii) allowed for differences and unresolved conundrums to emerge.

By differentiating public and ontological stories I was able to demonstrate that prevailing narratives of what ageing ought to be sometimes diverged from the strategies individuals use in their daily lives to conform to, reject, or anticipate novel ways to interpret externally ascribed identities. Building these narratives through the relationships between resources was a structural approach that

allowed the identification of relevant situational contexts where individuals engage in control efforts. The interpretation of the interconnection between resources was constructivist, because the meaning given to resource networks in different situations was open to emergence of new competing understandings of ageing. This approach contributes to the identification of mismatches between desired paths for ageing, and circumstances that prevent individuals from following these paths. It also contributes to the design of interventions tailored for the needs of specific groups of the population.

The connection of micro and macro social environments both by connecting stories with wider social imaginaries, and by establishing a network that included inner resources, as well as people, organisation and the physical environment allowed articulating some particular features of the Chilean life-course. Dramatic changes to fertility rates and life expectancy during the 1960's and 1970's, followed by a *coup* and a military dictatorship which steered Chilean policies from socialism to neoliberalism, instigated accelerated process of demographic ageing and reduction in the sizes of families paired with a weakening of the network of social protection and of social movements. These dramatic structural transformations pose a challenge to ageing populations because the expectations are fuzzy, and leading to contradictions. Thinning community and family networks in many cases cannot be tempered by formal organisations, such as clubs or societies due to generalised loss of social capital capacity building. Sustained material scarcity and stagnation of social mobility can transform intergenerational solidarity into intergenerational competition. Romanticised views of filial love are met with fear of mistreatment, or fear of loss of independence. Conceptions about drive and capabilities to start new endeavours clash with misgivings about

physical and mental fitness. The Chilean life-course is undergoing a particularly turbulent moment, with traditional value systems are being shaken as society receives now the full effect of abrupt transformations set in motion in the second half of the 20th century.

9.4 Limitations of the study

Despite the benefits of focusing my research in Chile, the findings of this research are generated from the metropolitan area of Santiago. Chile is a centralised country, with most services and decision making institutions concentrated in Santiago, therefore there are aspects of ageing in other regions, particularly in rural areas, that have been left unexplored, and may show different strategies for ageing than those presented in this thesis.

The cross-sectional research design is a further limitation, but one that was insurmountable given the time and resources available for a time limited doctoral study. Although approaching transitions through the experiences and expectations of individuals across a broad age range provides insights into the changing understandings and strategies to navigate transitions from mid-life to later life, longitudinal research would provide information on the dynamic transformation of expectations about the future in actual strategies, but would suffer from shifts in political and economic contexts that would affect strategies for ageing.

At the same time, the cross-sectional approach calls for some caution when interpreting findings indicating changes in the dynamics of ageing in Chile. Although we can presume that changes in expectations about later life would translate into changes in societal attitudes towards later life, and that structural transformations in

multiple social domains should follow these changes in attitudes, this research cannot determine the influence of developmental processes in the attitudes towards ageing. In other words, it is difficult to say how much individuals' strategies and expectations will change as a result of accumulated experiences whilst growing older.

9.5 Recommendations for research

Stemming from the findings about strategies to controlling ageing transitions, recommendations arise for future studies. The first is to broaden the empirical focus to include other areas within and beyond Chile, to consider rural perspectives of ageing which tend to become invisible in relation to urban dynamics, and also those of rural and urban indigenous people; and to allow greater depth in relation to same sex couples, single people as well as childless individuals.

In conversations with policy makers in Chile, as well as reading the policy framework for positive ageing, I became aware that rapid societal transformations combined with rapid ageing of the population creates scenarios of tremendous uncertainty for policy design. This thesis has forwarded the understanding of how Chilean individuals in early mid-life imagine their strategies to cope with the challenges of growing older. Deeper discussion on the needs and expectations about ageing of this group, as well as assessing how policies facilitate or hinder access to crucial resources are essential to closing the gaps between academic research and policy design.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Construction of themes from the literature review

Demographic Change and Economical and Political Challenges

Sources of income. Work and retirement as a matter of personal circumstances. Economical support that older people give to others. Strategies to manage their personal finances (includes debt). Needs, desires and attitude toward consumption.

Older people and private or community entrepreneurship. Preference and access to goods and leisure. Common places for consumption. Concessions and discounts. Unpaid productive activities.

Government policies responding to the pension system, economical vulnerability. Facts, expectations and consequences related to the ageing of the population. Work and retirement as a matter of political concern. Effect of the national and international economic scenario on lives of older people. Older people as a target group of consumers.

Information, Education and Technology

Use of technologies. Use of mass media and access to information. Informal training and self-taught skills.

Formal education and training. Dissemination of information about older people and ageing.

Academic and scientific development on age and ageing.
Technological development for inclusion of older people.

Social representations, social roles and social policy

Older people's routines. Values and opinions of older people. Roles of older people. Sentiments about death.

Options available for older peoples' social participation. Empowerment and disempowerment. Allocation of responsibilities. Intergenerational images.

Social policy for the inclusion of older people diverse domains of society. Representations of older age and older people in the media and the arts. Death and older age in society.

Family, Community and Social Environment

Loneliness and its determinants. Contact with family and friends. People they live with. Preferred and actual place of residence. Love and affection. Widowhood.

Neighbours. Daily social interactions and wider social networks. Isolation and its determinants. Organizations that promote community ties.

Physical Environment and Environmental Benefits and Risks

Decisions on housing. Home modifications. Sentiments of safety/fear of the immediate environment.

The neighbourhood as a physical environment. Access to public and private transportation. Accessibility to shops, services and amenities. Green areas and parks. Crime/aggression against older people.

Urban planning and older people. Transportation infrastructure.

Body, Health, Well-being and Quality of Life

Presence and absence of Physical illness. Mental illness. Frailty. Performance of age. Life satisfaction. Experiences of the ageing process as physical change. Health related choices. Abuse

Carers and health practitioners. Available options for a healthy life style.

Access to Healthcare. Social expectations about the biological ageing process. Policies surrounding health and ageing. The cosmetic industry.

Appendix 2 Dictionary of search terms associated with
age and ageing

**abuela abuelo abuelas abuelos abuelito abuelitos abuelita
abuelitas tatarabuelo tatarabuela tatarabuelos tatarabuelas
bisabuelo bisabuela bisabuelos bisabuelas**

anciano anciana ancianos ancianas ancianita

longevo longevos longeva longevas longevidad

centenario centenarios centenaria centenarias

**vejez viejo vieja viejos viejas viejita viejito viejitas viejitos
viejecillo viejecilla**

veterano veteranos veterana veteranas

**persona mayor personas mayores gente mayor adulto
mayor adulta mayor adultos mayores mayores población
mayor población adulta mayor**

**jubilado jubilados jubilada jubiladas pensionados población
pasiva**

senior seniors tercera edad cuarta edad edad avanzada

Appendix 3 Reliability of coding

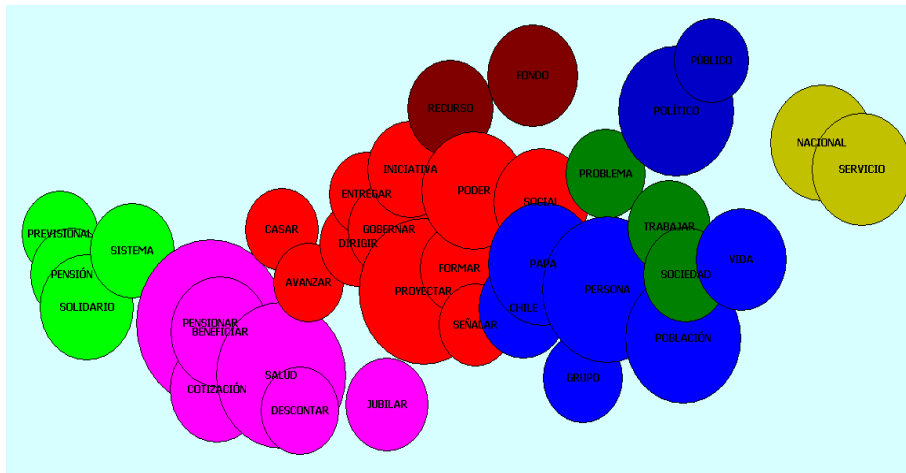
A sample of 3 out of 17 parliamentary debates and 29 out of 197 newspapers articles was coded by and independent coder using the codebook.

Table A.1 Percentages of agreement and disagreement weighted by source size

	Parliamentary Debates		Newspaper Articles	
	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
Body, Health, Well-being and Quality of Life	97.0	3.0	94.4	5.6
Demographic Change and Economic and Political Challenges	90.0	10.0	94.7	5.3
Family, Community & Social Environment	97.4	2.6	96.0	4.0
Information, Education & Technology	99.3	0.7	98.3	1.7
Physical Environment, Benefits & Risks	98.8	1.2	95.4	4.6
Social Representations, Social Roles	82.5	17.5	94.1	5.9
Average for all codes & sources	94.2	5.8	95.5	4.5

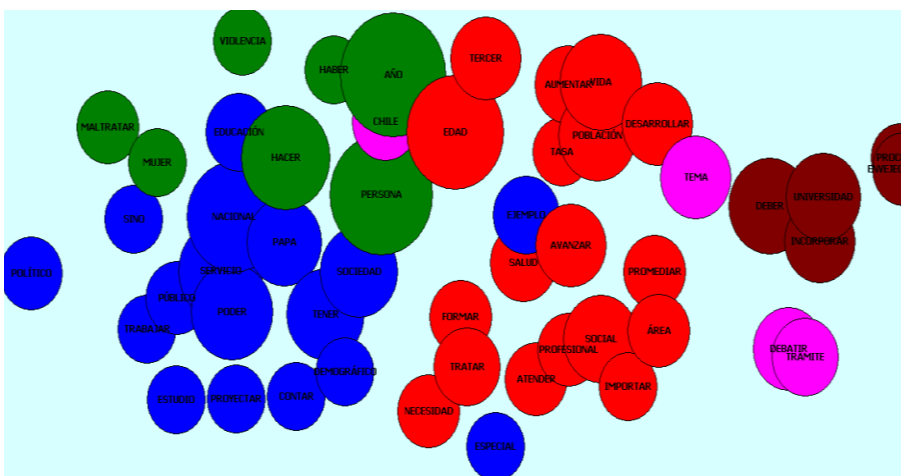
Appendix 4 Cluster analysis of documents

Figure A.1 Political domain 'demographic change, economic and political challenges'



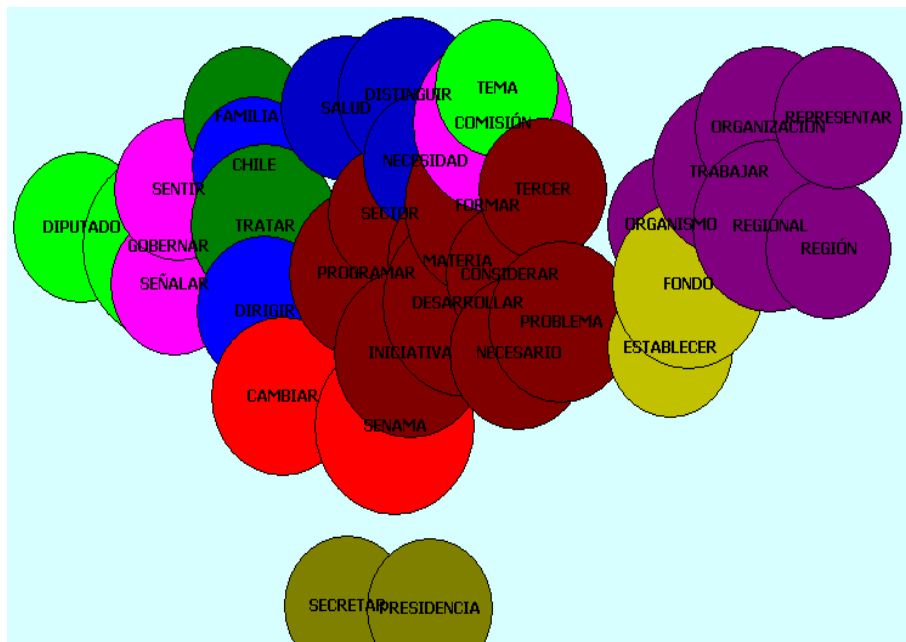
Retained clusters: red, blue, pink, light green

Figure A.2 Political domain 'information, education and technology'



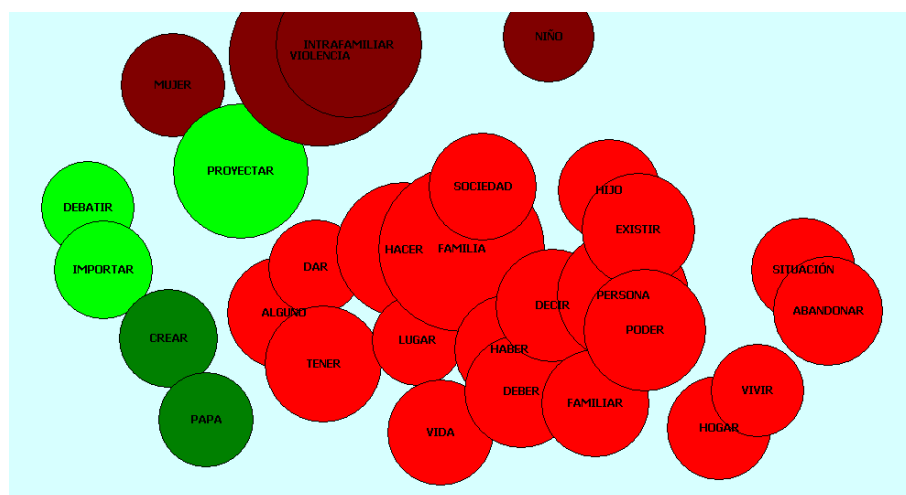
Retained clusters: Red, blue

Figure A.3 Political domain 'social representations and social roles'



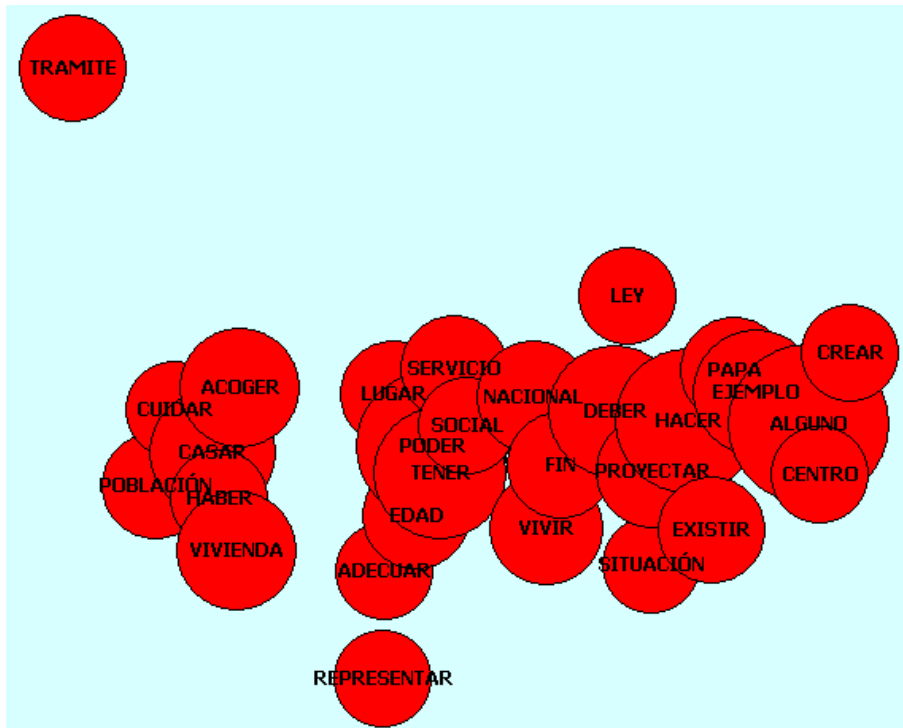
Retained clusters: red, brown, purple

Figure A.4 Political domain 'family, community and social environment'



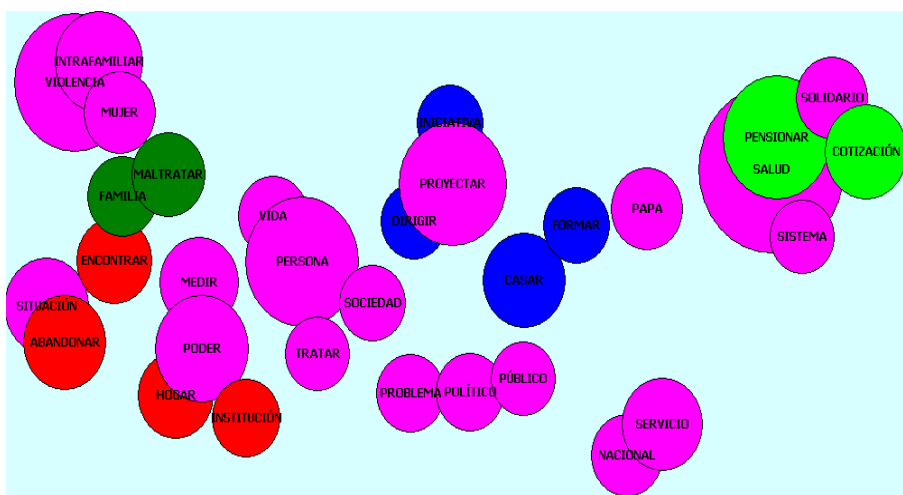
Retained clusters: red, brown

Figure A.5 Political domain 'physical environment and environmental risks'



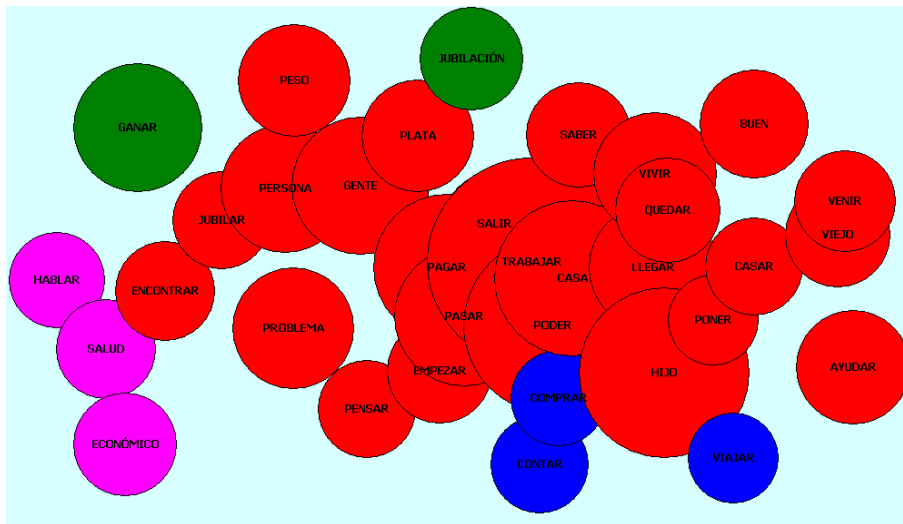
Retained clusters: red

Figure A.6 political domain 'body, health, well-being and quality of life'



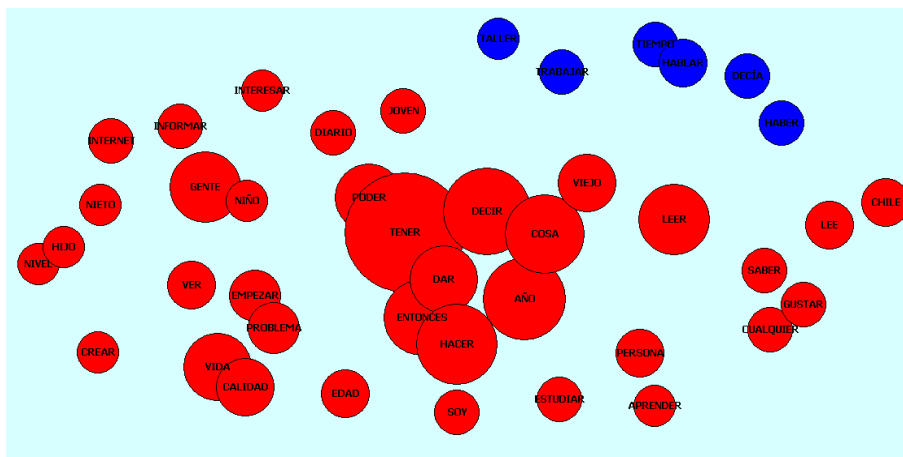
Retained clusters: red, pink

Figure A.13 Older people domain 'demographic change, economic and political challenges'



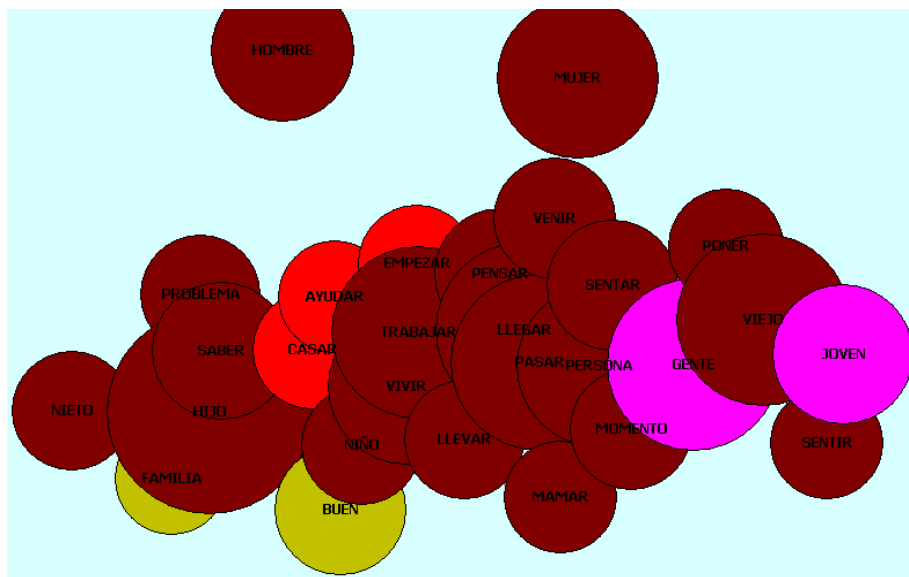
Retained clusters: Red

Figure A.14 Older people domain 'information, education and technology'



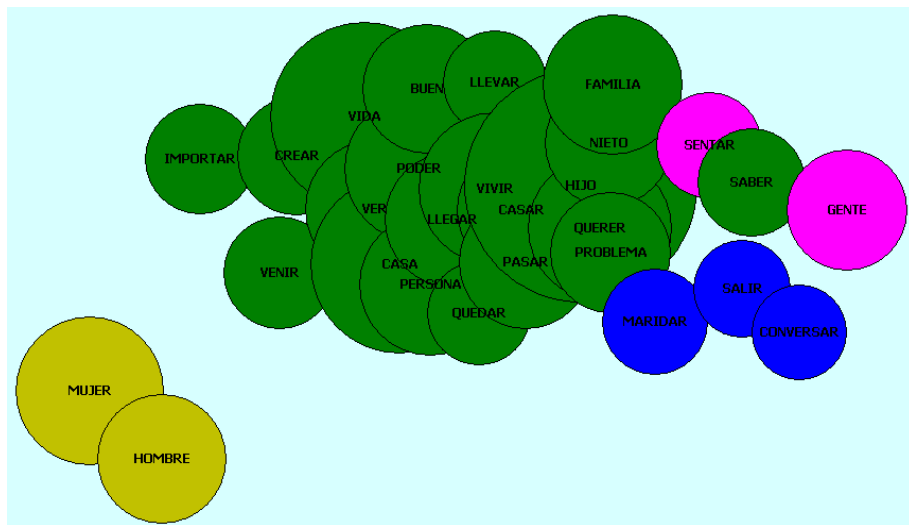
Retained clusters: Red

Figure A.15 Older people domain 'social representations and social roles'



Retained clusters: Brown, pink

Figure A.16 Older people domain 'family, community and social environment'



Retained clusters: Green, blue, yellow

Appendix 5 Stop words for word clouds

a	aquellas	ciertos	cuánta	diferentes
aca	aquello	cinco	cuántas	dijeron
acá	aquellos	cincuenta	cuánto	dijo
actualmente	aquí	coded	cuántos	dio
adelante	aquí	comentó	cuenta	doce
además	arriba	como	da	document
afirmó	aseguró	con	dado	donde
against	asi	conmigo	dan	dos
agregó	así	conocer	dar	durante
ahí	atras	conseguimos	de	e
ahora	aun	conseguir	debates	ejemplo
ajena	aunque	considera	debe	el
ajenas	aún	consideró	deben	ella
ajeno	ayer	consigo	debido	ellas
ajenos	bajo	consigue	decir	ello
al	bastante	consiguen	dejar	ellos
algo	be	consigues	dejó	embargo
alguna	before	contigo	del	empleais
algunas	bien	contra	demas	emplean
alguno	billón	cosas	demasiada	emplear
algunos	buen	coverage	demasiadas	empleas
algún	buena	cómo	demasiado	empleo
allá	buenas	creo	demasiados	en
alli	bueno	cual	demás	encima
allí	buenos	cuales	dentro	encuentra
alrededor	cabe	cualquier	desde	entonces
ambos	cada	cualquiera	después	entre
empleamos	casi	cualquieras	dice	era
and	caso	cuan	dicen	erais
ante	catorce	cuando	dicho	eramos
anterior	cerca	cuanta	diecinueve	eran
antes	cero	cuantas	dieciocho	eras
añadió	cien	cuanto	dieciséis	eres
apenas	ciento	cuantos	diecisiete	es
aproximadamente	cierta	cuarenta	dieron	esa
aquel	ciertas	cuatro	diez	esas
aquella	cierto	cuán	diferente	ese

Appendices

eso	esto	fueron	hace	hubisteis
esos	estos	fuese	haceis	hubo
esta	estoy	fueseis	hacemos	i
estaba	estuve	fuesen	hacen	igual
estabais	estuviera	fueses	hacer	incluso
estaban	estuvierais	fuéramos	hacerlo	indicó
estabas	estuvieran	fuésemos	haces	informó
estad	estuvieras	fui	hacia	intenta
estada	estuvieron	fuimos	haciendo	intentais
estadas	estuviese	fuiste	hago	intentamos
estado	estuvieseis	fuisteis	han	intentan
estados	estuviesen	gran	has	intentar
estais	estuvieses	grandes	hasta	intentas
estamos	estuviéramos	groups	hay	intento
estan	estuviésemos	gueno	haya	ir
estando	estuvimos	h	hayamos	jamás
estar	estuviste	ha	hayan	junto
estará	estuvisteis	haber	hayas	juntos
estarán	estuvo	habéis	hayáis	l
estarás	etc	habida	he	la
estaremos	ex	habidas	health	lado
estaré	existe	habido	hecho	largo
estaréis	existen	habidos	hemos	las
estaría	explicó	habiendo	hicieron	le
estaríais	expresó	había	hizo	les
estaríamos	él	habíais	hoy	life
estarían	éramos	habíamos	hube	llegó
estarías	ésta	habían	hubiera	lleva
estas	ésta	habías	hubierais	llevar
está	éste	habrá	hubieran	lo
estábamos	éstos	habrán	hubieras	los
estáis	few	habrás	hubieron	luego
están	fin	habremos	hubiese	lugar
estás	focus	habré	hubieseis	m
este	from	habréis	hubiesen	manera
estemos	fue	habría	hubieses	manifestó
esté	fuera	habríais	hubiéramos	many
estéis	fuerais	habríamos	hubiésemos	mas
estén	fueran	habrían	hubimos	más
estés	fueras	habrías	hubiste	me

Appendices

mediante	ninguna	pasada	puedo	ser
mejor	ningunas	pasado	pues	será
mencionó	ninguno	párrafo	quality	serán
menos	ningunos	párrafos	que	serás
mi	ningún	pero	quedó	seremos
mia	no	pesar	queremos	seré
mias	nor	poca	querer	seréis
mientras	nos	pocas	qué	sería
mil	nosotras	poco	quien	seríais
miles	nosotros	pocos	quienes	seríamos
millones	nothing	podeis	quienesquiera	serían
millón	noventa	podemos	quienquiera	serías
mio	nuestra	poder	quiere	sesenta
mios	nuestras	podrá	quién	setenta
mis	nuestro	podrán	quince	she
misma	nuestros	podria	quiza	si
mismas	nueva	podriais	quizas	sido
mismo	nuevas	podriamos	realizado	siempre
misimos	nueve	podrian	realizar	siendo
mí	nuevo	podrias	realizó	siete
mía	nuevos	podría	reference	sigue
mías	nunca	podrían	respecto	siguiente
mío	o	poner	sabe	sin
míos	ochenta	por	sabeis	sino
modo	ocho	porque	sabemos	sí
momento	of	posible	saben	sín
much	once	primer	saber	so
mucha	oracione	primera	sabes	sobre
muchas	os	primero	se	sois
muchísima	other	primeros	sea	sola
muchísimas	otra	principalmente	seamos	solamente
muchísimo	otras	propia	sean	solas
muchísimos	otro	propias	seas	solo
mucho	otros	propio	seáis	solos
muchos	para	propios	segun	some
muy	parece	próximo	segunda	something
nada	parecer	próximos	segundo	somos
nadie	parecer	pudo	según	son
ni	parliamentary	pueda	seis	soy
ningun	parte	puede	señaló	sólo
	partir	pueden		

Appendices

sr	tengas	tu	último	ya
sra	tengáis	tus	últimos	yo
sres	tengo	tuve	va	
sta	tenida	tuviera	vais	
su	tenidas	tuvierais		
sus	tenido	tuvieran	vamos	
suya	tenidos	tuvieras	van	
suyas	teniendo	tuvieron	variable	
suyo	tenía	tuviese	variant	
suyos	teníais	tuvieseis	varias	
tal	teníamos	tuviesen	varios	
tales	tenían	tuvieses	vaya	
tambien	tenías	tuviéramos	veces	
también	tercera	tuviésemos	veinte	
tampoco	that	tuvimos	veinticinco	
tan	them	tuviste	veinticuatro	
tanta	these	tuvisteis	veintidós	
tantas	they	tuvo	veintinueve	
tanto	this	tuya	veintiocho	
tantos	ti	tuyas	veintiséis	
te	tiempo	tuyo	veintisiete	
tendrá	tiene	tuyos	veintitrés	
tendrán	tienen	tú	veintiuno	
tendrás	tienes	ultimo	veintiún	
tendremos	to	un	ver	
tendré	toda	una	verdad	
tendréis	todas	unas	verdadera	
tendría	todavía	uno	verdadero	
tendríais	todo	unos	vez	
tendríamos	todos	usa	vosotras	
tendrían	tomar	usais	vosotros	
tendrías	total	usamos	voy	
tened		usan	vuestra	
teneis		usar	vuestras	
tenemos	tras	usas	vuestro	
tener	trata	uso	vuestros	
tenéis	través	usted	we	
tenga	trece	ustedes	what	
tengamos	treinta	última	who	
tengan	tres	últimas	y	

Appendix 6 Questionnaire

N
YEAR OF BIRTH

GENDER

Female Male

MUNICIPALITY
OF RESIDENCE

EDUCATION

None Primary Secondary Higher Education














This questionnaire is about ageing in Chile

How to fill this questionnaire:

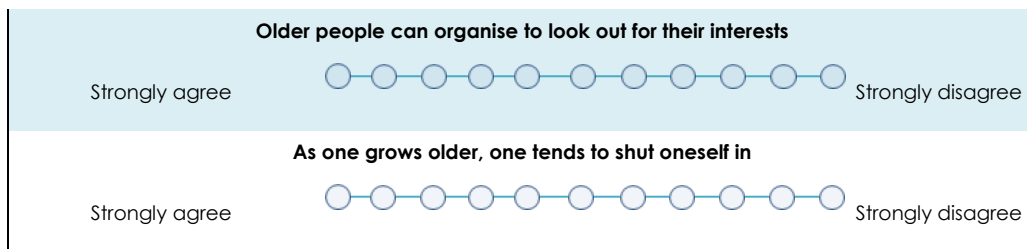
Draw a mark in the circle that best represents the strength of your preference for each statement.
Don't over think your choice; go with your first instinct.

When I think about my home, I would rather live in a flat or house with family	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
When I think about my home, I would rather live in my own flat or house	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
I'd rather spend my leisure time at a Centre for older adults	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
I'd rather spend my leisure time at Home	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
I would prefer to spend my time in places where I can do things with other people	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
I would prefer to spend my time doing my things around the neighbourhood/city	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree
I feel that risky environments are frequently caused by living in places without appropriate infrastructure for age limitations	Strongly agree <input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly disagree

<p>As an older person I would feel that risky environments are frequently caused by the aggressiveness of pedestrians, cyclist and drivers in the city</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As an older person I would be worried about violence at home, where I am an easy target for robbers</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As an older person I would be worried about violence at the bus, where I can be insulted and ignored</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>If it is important that my home is accident proofed</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>People should respect the pace of older people in public spaces</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>It is motivating to stay informed because one can help educating other people</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>It is motivating to stay informed because one always has a topic of conversation</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>One must keep updated to learn about things in general</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>One must keep updated to be productive to society</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Older people must undertake training to remain useful to their communities</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Keeping up to the date is useful for communicating with younger people</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As we grow older, our most important social networks are the family networks</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As we grow older, our most important social networks include various people like friends, neighbours or others</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>

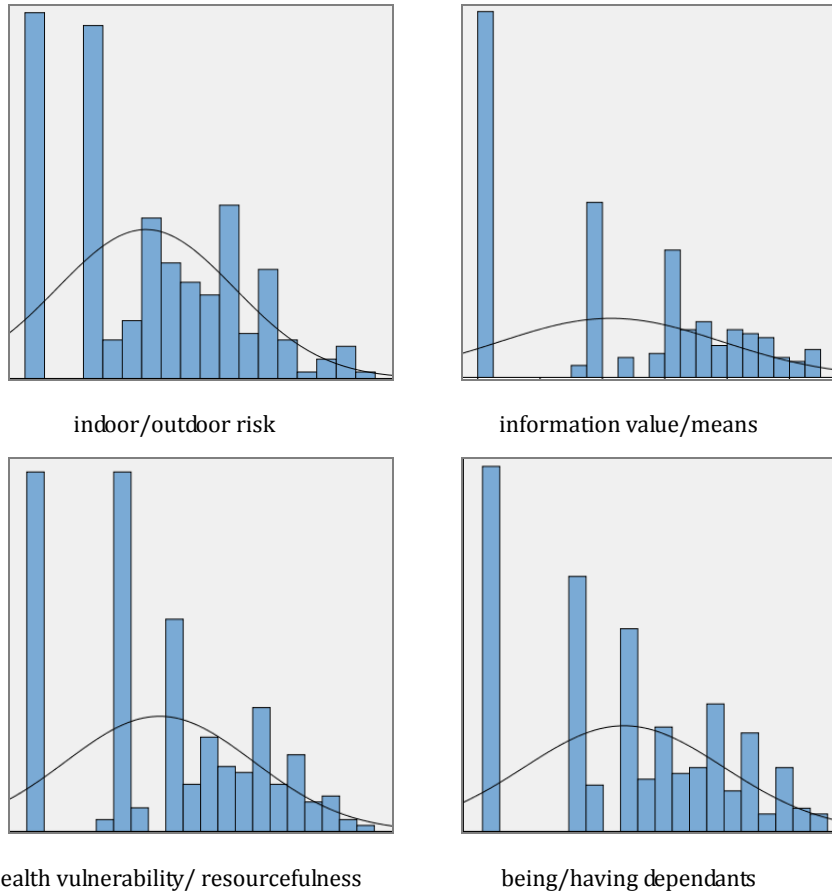
To live in a tranquil environment in older age family must make sure all is well at home	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
To live in a tranquil environment in older age one must have good neighbours that help keeping an eye on the houses	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
Family is the best emotional support in older age	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
Friends are the biggest support an older person has	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
It is typical in the relationship between older people and their families that families leave them alone	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
It is typical in the relationship between older people and their families that families meddle in all their decisions	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
It is normal that families don't visit older people a lot because they are too concerned with their own responsibilities	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
It is normal that families come visit with nephews/grandchildren, but leave a mess	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
That family tries to control you is one of the worse things about growing older	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
I fear that my family abandons me as I grow older	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
When growing old health depends mostly on being able to afford treatments and medicines	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
When growing old health depends mostly on knowing how to take care of one's health	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree
If my health expenses increase as I grow older it is indispensable to have more money to pay for my health	Strongly agree		Strongly disagree

<p>If my health expenses increase as I grow older it is indispensable have good health services for older people</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Quality of life is necessarily attached to having money</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Everyone can create their own strategies to improve their health</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>People should avoid becoming an economic burden on the family as they grow older</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As I grow older the family should avoid being financially dependent on me</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>A good economic policy would provide benefits and bonuses for older people</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>A good economic policy would give equal job opportunities for all ages</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As I grow older I will need more financial help</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Considering the state of affairs, the younger generations will always need support from the elder</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As time goes by my social participation tends to stay within my closest circle</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>As times goes by my social participation tends to change according to my interests and activities</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>The citizen role of older people is present through older adult's clubs and associations</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>
<p>The citizen role of older people dwindles after retirement and children leaving home</p> <p>Strongly agree</p>		<p>Strongly disagree</p>



Appendix 7 Normalised scales

Figure A.19 Distribution of the ratio variables after Box-Cox transformation



Although some values increase the kurtosis of these distributions, the skewness has been corrected.

Appendix 8 Ethical aspects of visual elicitation interviews

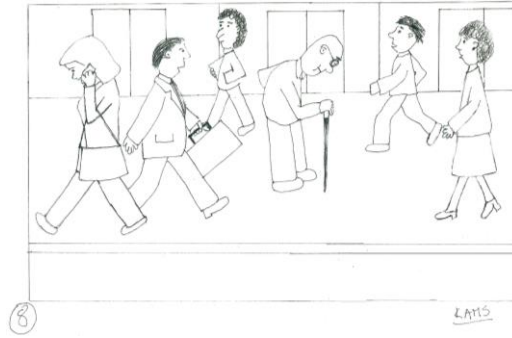
What discomfort, danger or interference with normal activities could be experienced by **participants**? State probability, seriousness, and precautions to minimise each risk.

Risk/Discomfort	Probability (high/medium/low)	Seriousness (high/medium/low)	Precautions
I will be working with images (drawings) to elicit responses about the ageing process. These may elicit emotional responses to the participant's own ageing process.	The probability of distress happening is low. The instrument is not designed to cause discomfort.	If the participant feels discomfort during the interview, it should be low and it should not exceed the time-frame of the interview.	If I notice during an interview that the participant is eliciting emotions that cause them discomfort, an offer will be made to stop the interview. During the time for recovery, I will stay with the participant unless asked to give them privacy.

			Also, the person will be protected by their right to withdraw from the interview at any point.
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Appendix 9 Set of drawings for visual elicitation interviews







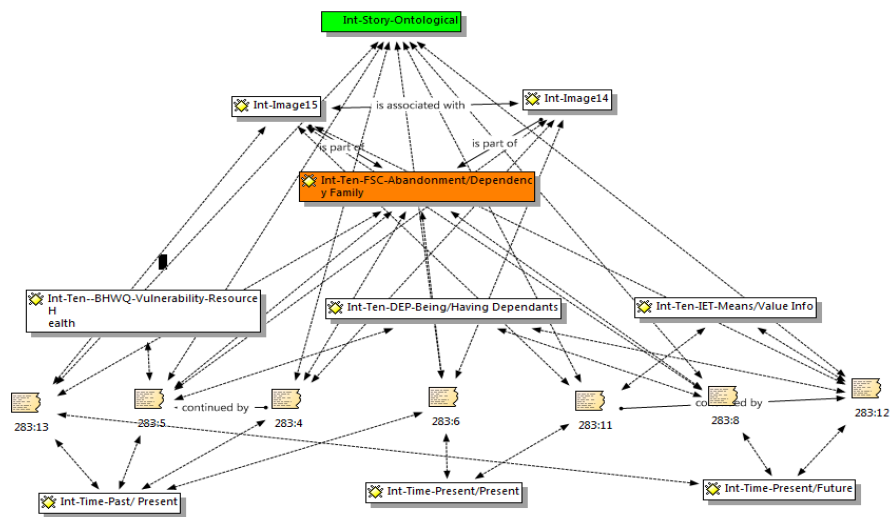
Appendix 10 Interview form

Case N°

N°	REPRESENTS		DESIRABLE		
	YES	NO	YES	NO	NEUTRAL
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					

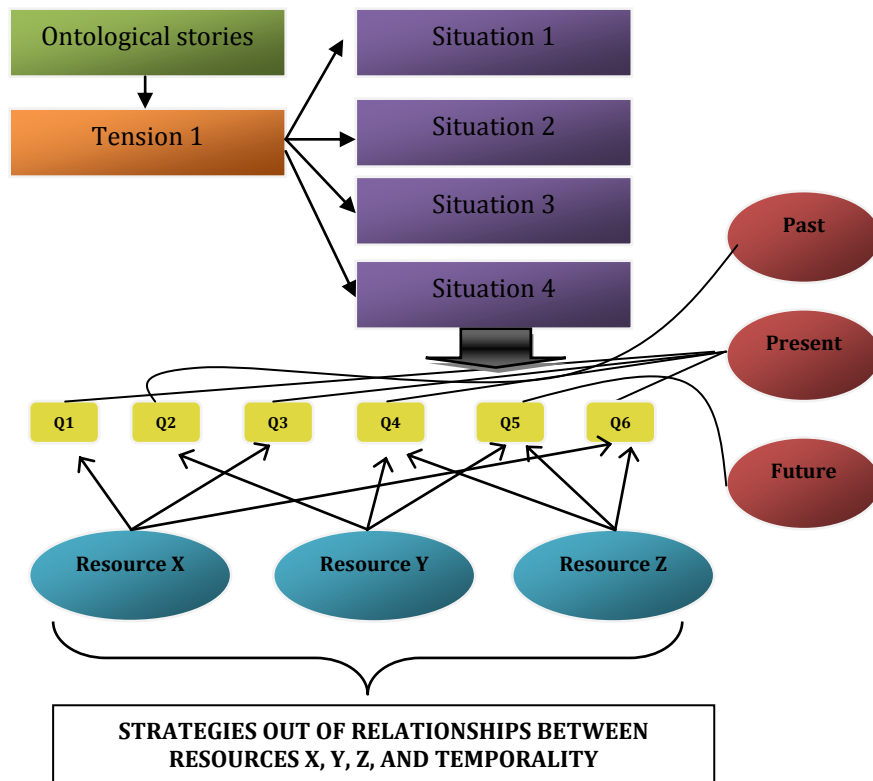
Appendix 11 Coding situational networks

Figure A.20 Quotations interlock tensions and temporalities



The figure above is a caption from Atlas ti. Quotations from from ontological stories (green) of the tension that is being resolved (orange) interlock other tensions too. At the bottom the quotations are arranged according to their temporalities (past, present, future).

Figure A.21 Illustration of the coding process leading to the emergence of strategies of control



The diagram illustrates the emergence of strategies from relationships between resources. Within ontological stories, tension 1 (out of 4) comprises four types of situations (themes within a tension). In the diagram Situation 4 is linked to six quotations (Q1-Q6). Resources emerging from the stories in these quotations are codes in the analysis, as are the temporalities (past, present, future). I then reconstructed stories in the quotations by making explicit the relationship between resources. For instance, Resources X and Z together are codes for Q6. Every time X and Z were together in a quotation I rewrote the story making this relationship explicit, as well as the temporal frame in which this relationship occurred. Then, all quotations coded by X and Z were synthesised in one narrative that constituted a strategy. Therefore, all strategies constructed for Situation 4 constitute a family of solutions for Tension 1.

Appendix 12 Correlations between sides of a tension

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of normality showed p values $< .05$ for all 32 variables. This means that the distribution of the variables is different from a normal distribution. This is why we should consider Spearman's Rho a better measurement of correlation for these variables. Following conventions in statistical analysis, the threshold for accepting a correlation was .2 as long as the correlation was significant (p -value $< .05$).

The variables for *collective environments* (from the individual/collective environment dimension) and those items in *wider networks* (from the family/wider networks dimension) were not significantly correlated. The *individual environment* sub-dimension had a significant ($p \leq .05$) but low correlation ($r_s=.15$) and the items in *family network* showed a significant ($p \leq .001$) moderate correlation ($r_s=.42$).

Out of the 14 significantly correlated pairs, one had a correlation weaker than .2. The sub-dimensions in *family abandonment/dependency* were significantly correlated ($p \leq .01$). The correlation for the two variables in *family abandonment* was weak ($r_s=.19$), and the correlation in *family dependency* was also weak ($r_s=.26$).

In the dimension *indoor/outdoor risk*, both sub-dimensions were significantly correlated ($p \leq .001$). The relationship for *indoor risk* was moderate ($r_s=.40$) and that for *outdoor risk* was weak ($r_s=.24$). In the dimension *information as value/means*, both sides of the tension had a significant relationship ($p \leq .001$). The pairs of items in each sub-dimension also showed moderate correlations; *information as value* ($r_s=.55$) and *information as means* ($r_s=.52$). In the dimension *health*

vulnerability/resourcefulness, both pairs of items were significantly correlated ($p \leq .001$). The correlation for *vulnerability* is moderate ($r_s=.38$) and the correlation for *resourcefulness* is weak ($r_s=.20$). The dimension *being/ having dependents* showed correlations significant at $p \leq .001$ in each sub-dimension. Both pairs of variables had weak relationships, with *being dependent* ($r_s=.22$), and *having dependents* ($r_s=.21$). Finally, the dimension *passive/ active roles* was significantly correlated ($p \leq .001$) in both pairs of items. The correlation for *passive roles* was weak ($r_s=.23$) and the correlation for *active roles* was moderate ($r_s=.30$).

Appendix 13 Statistical details Principal Component Analysis

The majority of the correlation coefficients in the matrix below (Table 0.2) were significant, with most of p-values $\leq .001$; the exceptions are the correlations between items Q9 and Q22 (p-value $\leq .01$) and items Q9 and Q29 (p-value $\leq .1$), both from the dimension *roles & representations*. The dimensions *physical environment* and *information & education* showed the highest correlations between items, most of them approaching .4 and up to .6; with no correlation under the recommended value of 0.3 (Field 2005:648). The correlations for *body, health and well-being* approached .4, with one correlation below .3. The dimension *economy & politics* showed one correlation approaching .4 and two below .3. Finally, three of the correlations in *roles & representation* were above .3 and the remaining three were below this value.

Table 0.2 Correlation Matrix of Retained Variables for PCA

	Physical Environment				Information Education				Body, Health and WB			Economy & Politics			Roles & Representations			
Q	2	5	14	31	11	18	23	30	10	19	25	7	17	20	9	21	22	28
2	1	.31	.34	.40														
5		1	.26	.37														
14			1	.31														
31				1														
11					1	.45	.55	.40										
18						1	.58	.53										
23							1	.48										
30								1										
10									1	.36	.15							
19										1	.38							
25											1							
7												1	.22	.38				
17													1	.22				
20														1				
9															1	.39	.17	.10
21																1	.25	.21
22																	1	.33
28																		1

Despite the presence of low correlations in some pairs the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, with all KMO values ≥ 0.5 , which is the limit acceptable for the analysis (Field 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was $\leq .001$ for all models, indicating that the correlations between items were sufficiently large to conduct the PCA. I then determined how many factors to retain by considering the correlation matrix, the mean of communalities and the amount of variance explained by the eigenvalues (Table A.3). In all models, the mean of communalities is ≥ 0.5 , which is considered acceptable for a sample of 266 cases (Field 2009).

	N ^o Variable	Retained Factors	Determinant	KMO	Bartlett's (df)	Eigenvalue \geq 1 % Var.	Mean Commun.	Fact. Compo. x
Physical Env.	4	4	.585	.724	140.88*** (df 6)	1 50.0%	.500	1(4)
Info. & Edu.	4	4	.300	.776	314.82*** (df 6)	1 62.3%	.623	1 (4)
Health & WB	4	3	.748	.561	76.445*** (df 3)	1 53.4%	.534	1(3)
Econ. & Politics	4	3	.797	.591	59.674*** (df 3)	1 51.8%	.517	1(3)
Roles & Rep.	4	4	.688	.601	98.173*** (df 6)	2 68.7%	.687	1(2) 2(2)

Sig. $p \leq .05^*$; $p \leq .01^{**}$; $p \leq .001^{***}$

Appendix 14 Factorial ANOVA models

The following significant interactions were found:

Table A.4 Information as value/means

	Age* Gen	Age*SES	Age* Edu	Edu*S ES	Age*Gen* SES	Age*Edu* SES	Age*Gen* Edu	Edu*SES*
R squared					.117		.054	.055
Age								
SES								
Age*SES					F=2.55*			
Age*Edu							F=3.34*	
Edu*SES								F=3.50*
Age*Gen*SES					F=3.33*			
Age*Edu*SES								

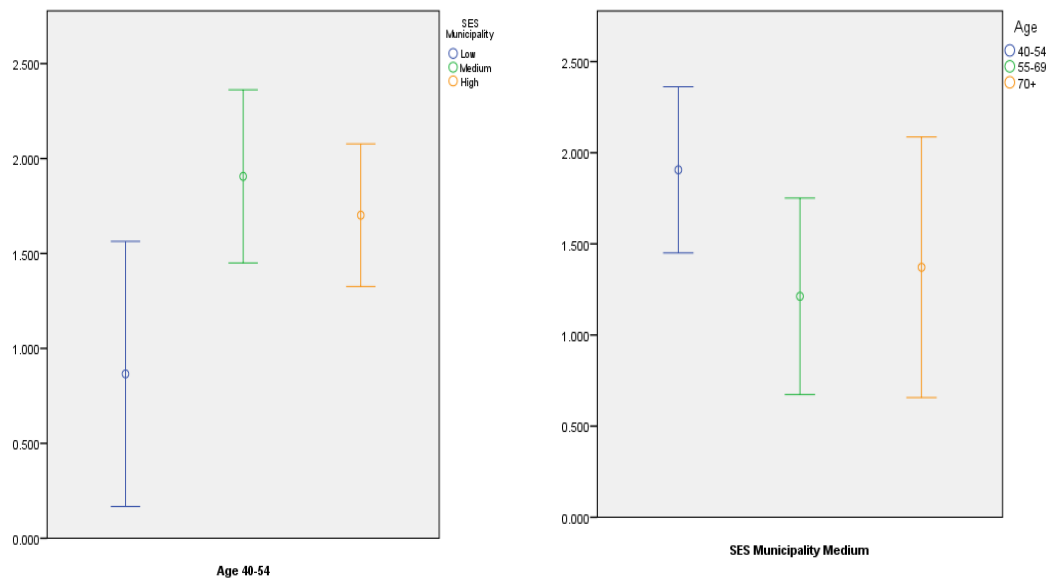
Sig. $p \leq .05^*$; $p \leq .01^{**}$; $p \leq .001^{***}$

Model 1 (Age* Gender* SES):

a) *SES within age*: Within the age group 40-54 years ($F=4.40$; p -value $\leq .05$), SES high $1.151 \geq$ SES low $.593$ (p -value $\leq .05$) and SES medium $1.372 \geq$ SES low (p -value $\leq .01$).

b) *Age within SES*: Within SES medium ($F=3.07$; p -value $\leq .05$), age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 (p -value $\leq .05$).

Figure A.22 Models 1.a and 1.b

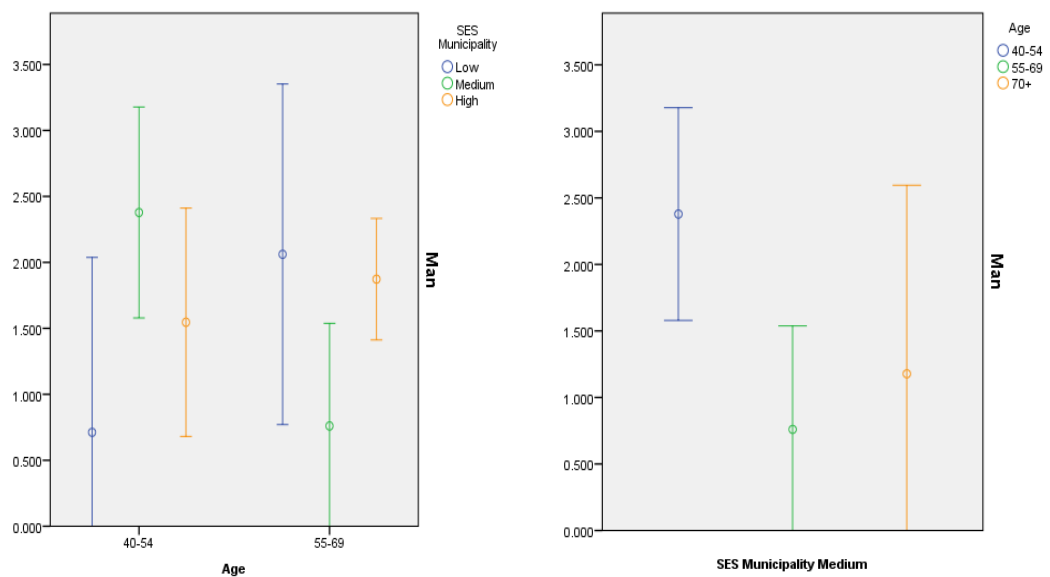


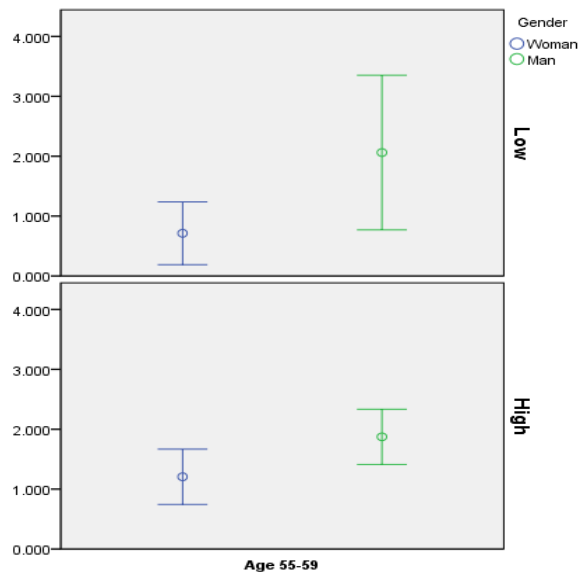
c) *SES within gender*age*: i) Men age 40-54 ($F=3.79$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), SES medium \geq SES low ($p\text{-value} \leq .01$); ii) Men age 55-69 ($F=3.65$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), SES high \geq SES medium ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$) and SES low \geq SES medium ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$).

d) *Age within gender*SES*: Men SES medium ($F=5.16$; $p\text{-value} \leq .01$), age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 ($p\text{-value} \leq .01$) and age 40-54 \geq age 70+ ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$).

e) *Gender within Age*SES*: i) Low SES age 55-59 ($F=5.03$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), men \geq women ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$). ii) High SES age 55-59 ($F=4.86$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), men \geq women ($p\text{-value} \leq .05$).

Figure A.23 Models 1.c, 1.d and 1.e



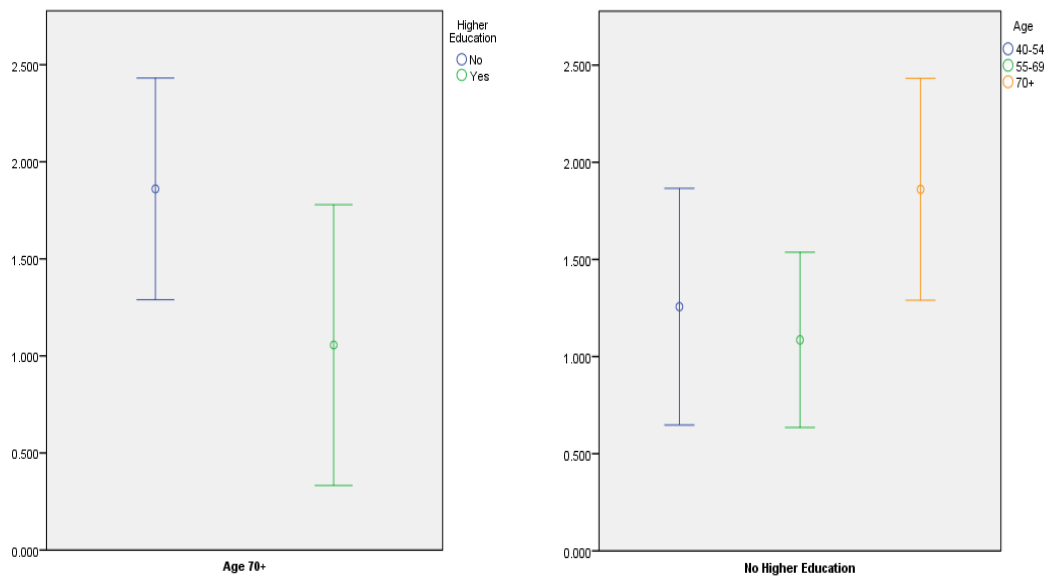


Model 2 (Age*Gender* Education):

a) *Education within age:* Within the age group 70+ years (F=4.03; p-value $\leq .05$), No higher education \geq higher education (p-value $\leq .05$).

b) *Age within education:* Within No higher education (F=2.53; p-value $\leq .1$), age 70+ \geq age 55-69 (p-value $\leq .05$).

Figure A.24 Models 2.a and 2.b



In sum, for the ratio *information as value/ means*: the age group 55-69 shows lower tension scores than the age groups 40-54 and 70+. However, when controlled by SES and gender, among people age 55-69 of low SES, men have higher tension than women; and among people of high SES, women have higher tension than men. Also, men age 55-69 of high and low SES show higher tension than those of medium SES. Within men of medium SES, those age 40-54 show higher tension than ages 55-69 and 70+. Finally, People 70+ and with no higher education, show higher tension than people in other age groups, and people of the same age group with higher education.

Table A.5 health vulnerability/ resourcefulness

	Age* Gen	Age* SES	Age*Edu	Edu* SES	Age*Gen* SES	Age*Edu* SES	Age*Gen *Edu	Edu*SES* Gen
R squared			.068			.142		
Age			F=5.77**					
SES						F=3.73*		
Age*SES								
Age*Edu			F=3.88*					
Edu*SES						F=3.72*		
Age*Gender*SES								
Age*Edu*SES						F=2.96*		

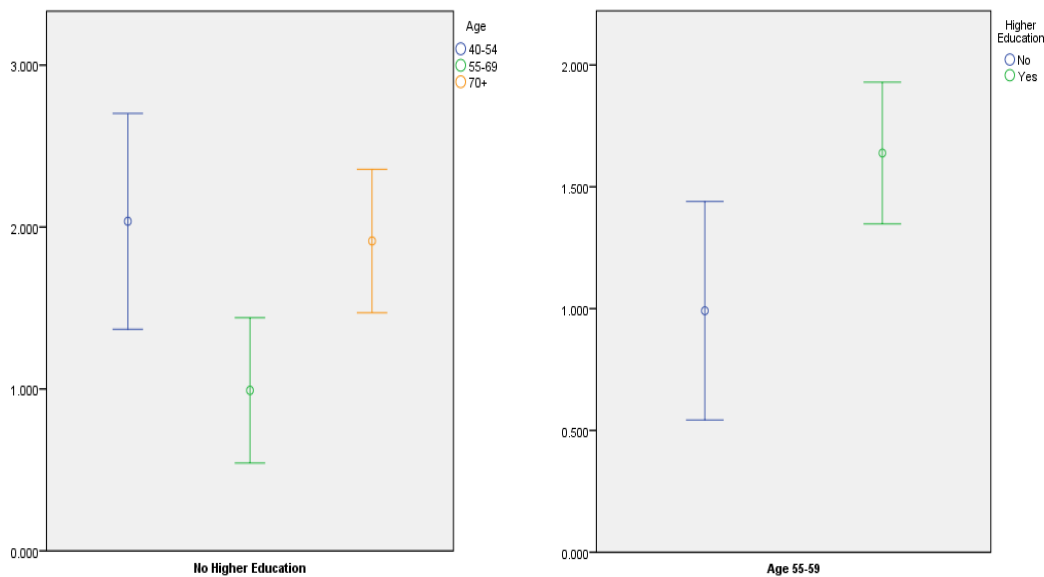
Sig. p< .05*; p< .01**; p< .001***

Model 1 (Age*Education):

a) *Age within education:* No higher education (F=6.10; p-value \leq .01), age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 (p-value \leq .01) and age 70+ \geq age 55-69 (p-value \leq .01).

b) *Education within age:* Age 55-69 (F=6.44; p-value \leq .05), higher education \geq no higher education (p-value \leq .05).

Figure A.25 Models 1.a and 1.b



Model 2 (Age*Education* SES):

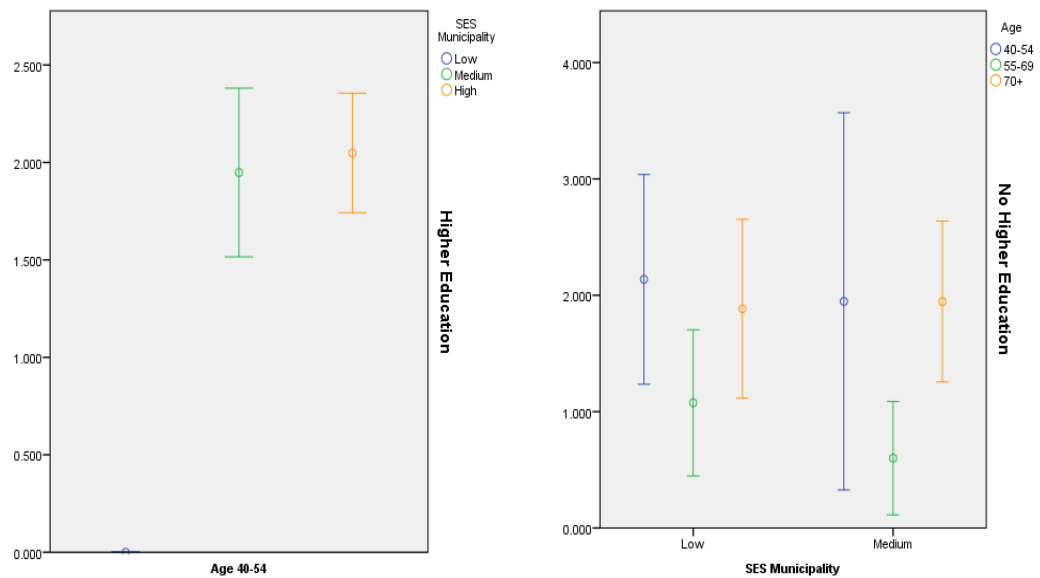
a) *SES within Age*Education:* i) Age 40-54 higher education (F=4.41; p-value \leq .05), medium SES \geq low SES (p-value \leq .01) and high SES \geq low SES (p-value \leq .01); ii) Age 55-69 higher education (F=2.93; p-value \leq .1), medium SES \geq low SES (p-value \leq .05) and medium SES \geq high SES (p-value \leq .05); iii) Age 55-69 no higher education (F=2.95; p-value \leq .1), high SES \geq low SES (p-value \leq .05) and high SES \geq SES medium (p-value \leq .05).

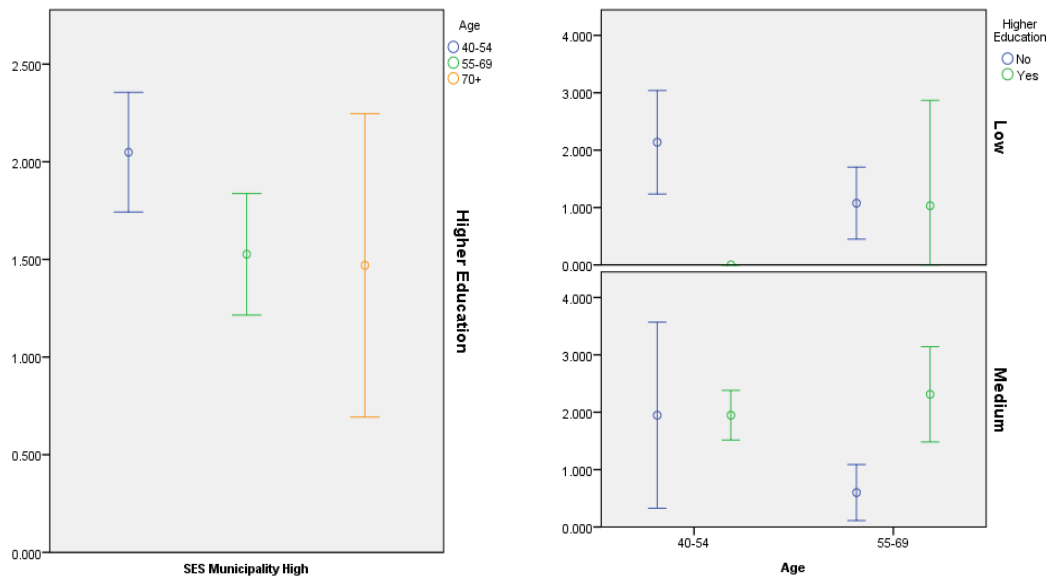
b) *Age within SES*Education:* i) Low SES, no higher education (F=3.51; p-value \leq .05) age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 (p-value \leq .05) and age

70+ ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .05); ii) Medium SES, no higher education (F=4.13; p-value ≤ .05) age 40-54 ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .05) and age 70+ ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .01); iii) High SES, higher education (F=3.00; p-value ≤ .1) age 40-54 ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .05).

c) *Education within Age*SES*: i) Age 40-54, low SES (F=3.51; p-value ≤ .01), no higher education ≥ higher education (p-value ≤ .01); ii) Age 55-69, medium SES (F=3.51; p-value ≤ .001), higher education ≥ no higher education (p-value ≤ .001).

Figure A.26 Models 2.a, 2.b (i-ii; iii) and 2.c





In the ratio *health vulnerability/ resourcefulness*, again age groups 40-54 and 70+ show higher tension than the group 55-69. The interactions indicate that in the age group 55-69, the tension increases with higher SES and higher education. For the age group 40-54 however, low SES people with no higher education show higher tension than those with higher education, and only among those with higher education the tension increases with higher SES.

Table A.6 Being/ Having Dependents

	Age* Gen	Age*SES	Age*Edu	Edu* SES	Age*Gen* SES	Age*Edu* SES	Age*Gen* Edu	Edu*SES* Gen
R squared	.047	.053	.046					
Age	F=5.40**	F=3.19*	F=4.51*					
SES								
Age*SES								
Age*Edu								
Edu*SES								
Age*Gen*SES								
Age*Edu*SES								

Sig. p< .05*, p< .01**, p< .001***

Model 1 (Age*Gender):

Age within gender: Women (F=3.28; p-value ≤ .05), age 40-54 ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .05).

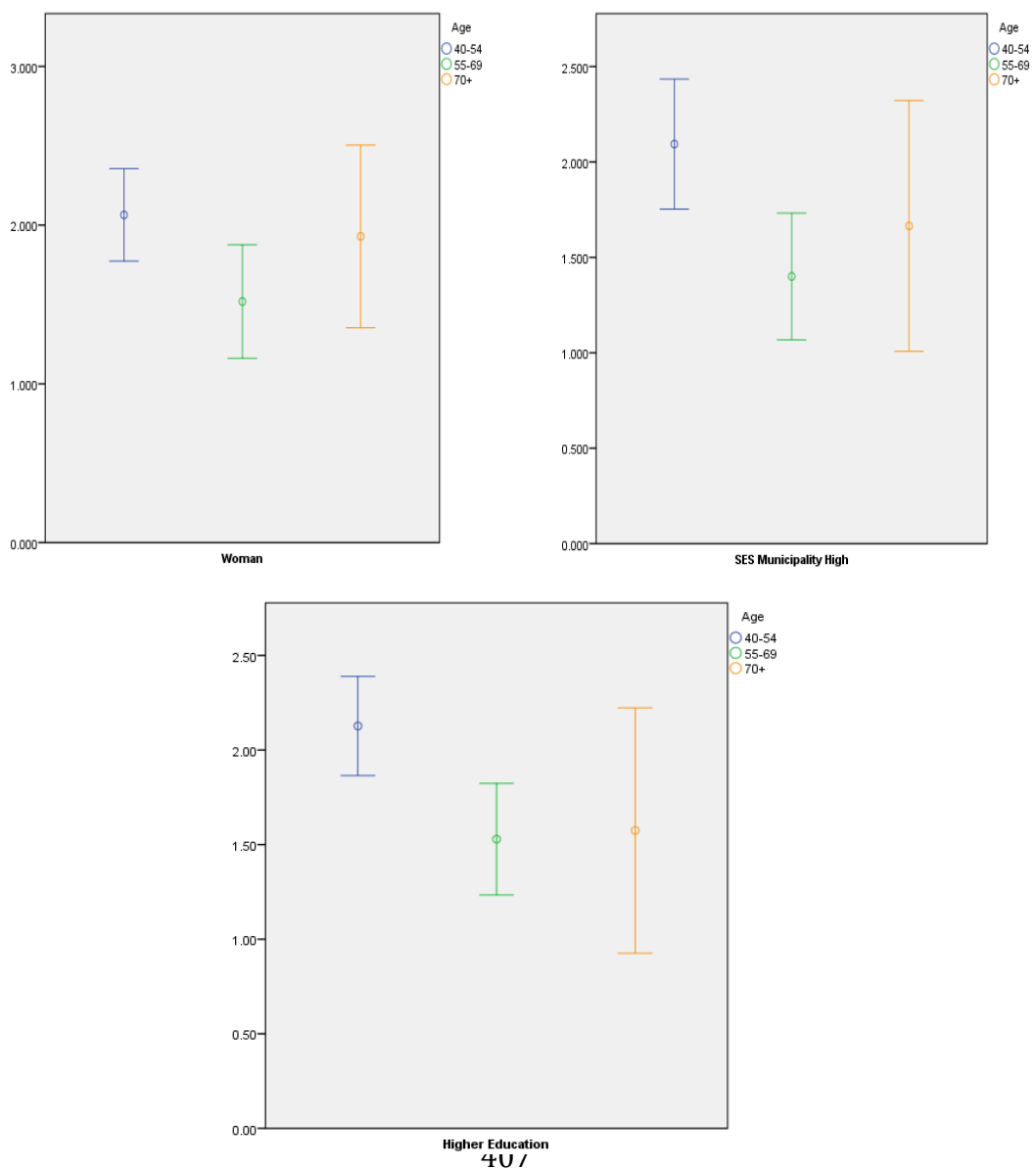
Model 2 (Age*SES):

Age within SES: High SES ($F=3.82$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 ($p\text{-value} \leq .01$).

Model 3 (Age*Education):

Age within education: Higher education ($F=4.45$; $p\text{-value} \leq .05$), age 40-54 \geq age 55-69 ($p\text{-value} \leq .01$).

Figure A.27 Models 1, 2 & 3



For the tension variable *having dependents*, people in the age group 40-54 showed higher tension scores than people in the age group 55-69. This pattern repeats itself for women, for people in high SES municipalities and people with higher education.

Table A.7 Active/ Passive Roles

	Age* Gen	Age*SES	Age* Edu	Edu*SES	Age*Gen* SES	Age*Edu* SES	Age*Gen*E du	Edu*SES *Gen
R squared		.095						
Age SES		F=5.29**						
Age*SES		F=3.33*						
Age*Edu								
Edu*SES								
Age*Gen*SES								
Age*Edu*SES								

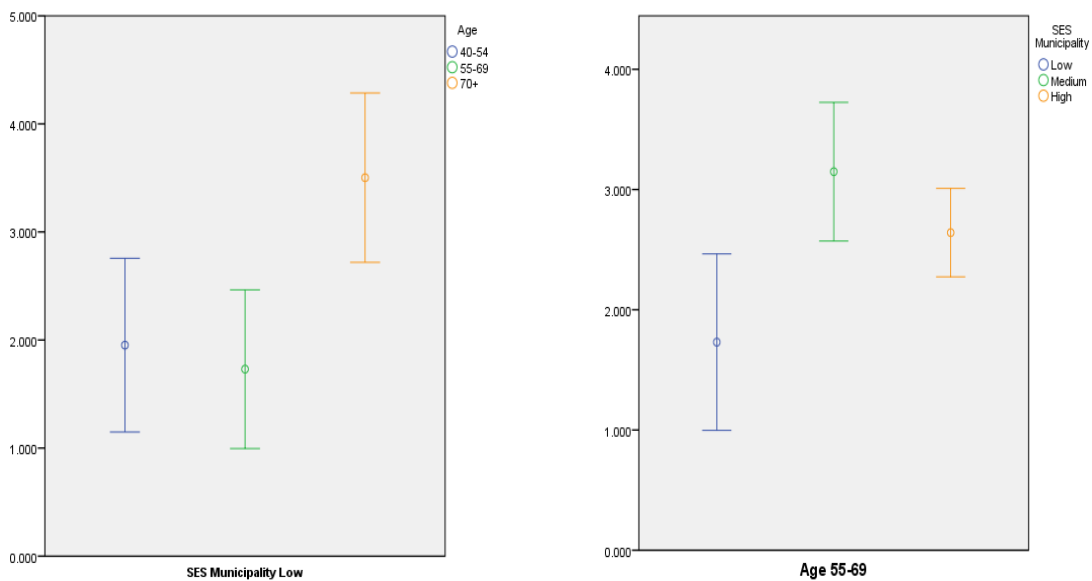
Sig. p< .05*; p<.01**, p< .001***

Model 1 (Age*SES):

a) *Age within SES*: Low SES (F=8.77; p-value ≤ .001), age 70+ ≥ age 40-54 (p-value ≤ .001) and age 70+ ≥ age 55-69 (p-value ≤ .001).

b) *SES within age*: Age 55-69 (F=5.64; p-value ≤ .01), medium SES ≥ low SES (p-value ≤ .001) and high SES ≥ low SES (p-value ≤ .05).

Figure A.28 Models 1.a and 1.b



For active/passive roles we find that among people of low SES, the age group 70+ show higher tension than age 40-54 and 55-69. However, among those in the age group 55-69, both the high and the medium SES show higher tension than people living in municipalities of low SES.

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