Ethnomethodology as Methodological Approach to Consumer Culture Theory Studies

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ABSTRACT

Ethnomethodology is a theoretical-methodological approach aimed at sharing meanings among people when carrying out their daily practices. Thus, the choice of this method leads with an epistemology oriented to daily life, considering the social reality as being constructed in the daily practice by the social actors in interaction. Seeking to elucidate a proposal for applying a research method that accesses the phenomenon of consumption within the scope of social practices, and with the intention of offering guidance to researchers who would like to engage in new empirical projects, this essay aimed to present the main aspects and concepts that delimit ethnomethodology as a research method, to then propose its applicability in studies of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). Adopting the ethnomethodological lens, the CCT approach starts to focus less on individual choices and consumption experiences and more on the collective development of everyday practices, shifting the consumer's focus to the organization of the practice and the moments of consumption. Thus, it is understood that ethnomethodology is

indicated as a methodological opportunity for CCT studies that seek to analyze consumption as a social practice.

Keywords: Ethnomethodology, Practice, Consumer Culture Theory.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) is a guidance of research that aims at comprehending the social cultural aspects of consumption. The chain of studies proposed in 2005 by Arnould and Thompson, constitutes a field of dynamic investigation that encompasses multiple theoretical approaches and representation practices (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). Basically, the authors point out that projects of CCT should "systematically bond individual (or ideograph) meanings to the level of process and cultural structures" located within historical and market contexts (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, p. 875).

Within this debate between agency and structure, some questions regarding the positioning of CCT studies have been raised. This is due to some authors criticizing the existence of dominant epistemology in the field that prioritizes the level of individual analysis (Moisander, Penãloza and Valtonen, 2009; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011). To these authors, the adoption of the hegemonic experiential or humanist speech prevents the production and publication of researches that could investigate other forms of social cultural formation of the consumption. Which means, as understood by Maisander, Peñaloza and Valtonen (2009) and Askegaard and Linnet (2011), for instance, the influence of an orientation focusing on the psychological cognitive aspects would give little attention to other theoretical and methodological approaches.

For example, Askegaard and Linnet (2011) discuss that individualism had become overly present in research on consumption. Therefore, the authors state that, although these epistemologies have generated richness of

knowledge on the phenomenon experience of consumption, it is time to broaden the context to the market influences and social systems that are not necessarily felt or tried by consumers in an exclusively individual way, therefore, not being usually able of being expressed in the individual's speech. For the authors, the theoretical depth can only be reached if these results depending on the context can be conceited. (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011).

On the other hand, Thompson, Arnould and Giesler (2013) state that the experiential or humanist speech was embraced by the early studies of CCT, however, this epistemological orientation has become a hetero-glossy of multi-layers that represent a broad number of theories integrating different levels of analysis. The authors also state that a considerable amount of research in CCT has investigated the sociological, historical, ideological, and institutional aspects on the formation of consumption and of the social systems and of the market.

Therefore, in face of this conflict of opinions, to determine the advance of the field, still it is necessary to reflect on some epistemological delimitations. The researchers of CCT should work on developing studies that reach both structural influences of the market and social systems as well as the daily experience lived by the consumers (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Earley, 2014).

Considering this layer by new reflections that delimit the epistemological ground of the field, consequently the methodological choices for future researches, we believe that the Ethnomethodology approach proposed by Garfinkel (1967) has potential to contribute in a relevant way in the production of knowledge in Consumer Culture Theory in two aspects. Firstly, it does not assume the duality agency and structure and second because it enables to understand both the phenomenon of consumption as an individual experience and as a collective performance through situated daily livings.

It is important to clarify that although the terms present similarities in writing, ethnomethodology and ethnography are not similar, once the first reflect a way of analyzing a phenomenon comprehending consumption as a social practice and, this way, understanding that analysis should be directed to structures and not to individuals, as indicated in ethnography.

Being the considerations exposed above, this essay aims at discussing the ethnomethodology while theoretical-methodological lens of research in the studies of CCT. Therefore, we start characterizing the field of Consumer Culture Theory, elucidating the discussion on the positioning of its works and the gap that could be filled by the adoption of the ethnomethodological method. We highlighted the use of practices theories in the research of consumption. We continue to present the main assumptions and concepts which constitute this method. And finally, we end the text with some reflections that articulate and integrate the approach of studies based in practice and ethnomethodology, discussing the potential of such contribution for the comprehension of the phenomenon of the consumer culture.

When proposing this discussion we aim at elucidating a proposal of application of a method of research that access the phenomenon of consumption in the field of social practices and also to offer guidance for the orientation of researchers that wish to engage in new empiric projects under these lens.

THE CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY AND ITS EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROPOSAL

The interest in cultural perspectives of consumption has significantly raised in the last decades (Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2017). In 2005, Arnould and Thompson performed a review in the Journal of Consumer Research from twenty years prior of researches that focused on the

social-cultural, symbolic, experienced, and ideological aspects of consumption.

The purpose of the study was to offer a general theme vision of the motivation interests, conceptual and scheduled guidance, just like the creation of a label for this research tradition, which up until then received labels as qualitative, interpretation, post-positivists or post-modern. The authors argued that each one of these labels brought mistakes and deceive connotations that harmed institutional legitimacy of this tradition. This way, the proposition of Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) would provide a more effective academic brand.

Centered on the CCT researches was the understanding of the consumer navigating in an endless sea of opportunities offered by the market to build its identity project consciously. (Arnould and Thompson, 2005; Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013). Far from the aspiration of being a united and great theory, CCT is referred as a family of theoretical perspectives that approach the dynamic relations between the consumer actions, the market, and cultural meanings (Arnould and Thompson, 2005). In 2007, Arnould and Thompson concluded that maybe the term theoretics would better reflect the conceptual, methodological, and philosophical diversity of this tradition.

The researches in the field are under constant development. The diversity of authors and traditions have contributed to the multiplicity of theoretical approaches and methodological guidance (Casotti and Suarez, 2016; Gaião, Souza and Leão, 2012). The paradigm debates raised by the studies in the 80's are different from the second wave of researches that started around the 90's going up to the early of the year 2000, which also differs from the third wave, in which new theoretical vernaculars are introduced (Arnould and Thompson, 2015; Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013).

In fact, the multi-discursive constitution of the CCT has emerged a series of questions on the future of investigation of the field (Steenkamp, 2019;

Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013). Since its initial mark in 2005, some debates on epistemological guidance, agency versus structure, emic versus ethic, were raised by some authors (see Belk and Sobh, 2018; Moisander, Penãloza and Valtonen, 2009; Askegaard and Linnet, 2011; Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013).

Maybe one of the most interesting criticism would be that in this process of construction of field some theoretical and methodological restrictions were imposed, suppressing marginalized perspectives by epistemological, ontological and axiological hegemonic choices (Bardhi and Eckhardt, 2017; Moisander, Penãloza and Valtonen, 2009).

A big part of the initial studies of CCT had the individual as a main unit of analysis. About this beginning, the researchers typically tried to extract interpersonal constructions, conceptions on how the identity, values and personal meanings of personal behaviors would make sense. This first moment was called humanistic speech or experientialist (Bode and Østergaard, 2013; Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013). The humanistic CCT speech or experientialist embraced approaches of research as the natural inquire (Belk et al., 1988) and the existential phenomenology (Thompson et al., 1989), used to document the emic perspectives. The focus of the researches were the consumer narratives, aimed at investigating the meanings of experiences of consumption, as well as the meanings linked to possession (Belk et al., 1988; Hirschman, 1992; Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

Methodologically, it was believed that the field has followed the marketing tradition and of research of consumption adopting an epistemology of verification that worked as a qualitative analogue to the logic empiricist methods of validation (Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013; Saatcioglu and Corus, 2018). Which means, the narratives of the consumers were easily tended to psychological reductionism and methodological individualism.

However, this initial epistemological guidance gave birth to a broad of theories that integrate different levels of analysis between agency and structure. It is inherent when we reflect on culture of consumption that personal meaning originates in complex cultural systems and articulates within social-cultural specific fields, being, therefore, transformed by social structures, power relations and immersion in market structures (Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013).

This way, it is considered that CCT studies still dwell on the discursive legacy of its humanist/experientialist (and correspondent epistemology), but we can indicate that it developed reverberations which contribute for the discursive diversification of the field. As put by Akskeergard and Linnet (2011), the epistemological space of the emergent CCT was not totally phenomenological in the anthropological tradition of emic descriptions of social contextualized phenomenon, neither is a great sociological theorization in a more aggregating level, however it has elements of both.

Being these considerations exposed on the epistemological ground of Consumer Culture Theory and its reverberations, we considered that the actual challenge of the field would be the production of studies that aim at both individual as well social analysis of the phenomenon.

This way, we propose that the researchers of CCT may dwell on the analysis of the consumption practice. Each day more, practices have become the main purpose of social analysis (Garfinkel, 1967). Within a sociology of consumption, the awakening of the "turn of the practice" (Schatzki et al., 2005) has raised attention fundamentally to mundane activities of the everyday and common aspects of consumption (see Warde, 2005).

CONSUMPTION AS PRACTICE

In the following years after the article of Arnould and Thompson (2005), the discursive structure of CCT has been transformed by the insertion of new theoretical terms, including among them the theory of practice (Arnould and Thompson 2015).

The term "practice" has gained a highlighted position in the academy. Recently, several phenomena have been re-examined through this lens (Antonacopoulou, 2008), which was influenced by the interpretive or cultural turn in social theory (Reckwitz, 2002) and it has researchers positioned theoretically between structuralism and individualism (Wahlström, 2006).

The comprehension of the philosophical essence of the theories of practice is based on four big plural influences that have in common the location of social practice: the Marxist tradition, the phenomenology, the symbolic interaction and the legacy of Wittgenstein. The big contribution of such approaches would be understand practice as a group of activities in which knowledge is not separated from doing, and learning is not configured only by cognitive activity, but a social occurrence (Nicolini, Gherardi and Yanow, 2003). To Schatzki (2001, p. 2), this movement recognizes "knowledge, meaning, human activity, science, power, language, institutions and historical transformations", all as elements in the field of practices.

Therefore, the understanding of social life as practice enables to work with phenomena in a situated form, considering, this way, that both temporality as historicity are meanings to comprehend social worlds (Gherardi, 2006). In this sense, this perspective adopts a distinct social ontology once it involves the body, material and their intersections with organized practice around shared knowledge (Schatzki, 2001). The so-called contextual ontologies assume that the "social life" exists and its outcomes are always "inside" a given context (or *site*) that is essential in the comprehension of social phenomena. This means to say that to search for social analysis would be necessary to turn the eyes back on dynamics of the practice itself, instead of the actor/individual/part (methodological individualism), or

context, society, all (societism) (Schatzki, 2001; Reckwitz, 2002). As well-mentioned by Giddens (1984, p. 2). "the basic domain of the study of social sciences is not the experience of the individual actor, nor the existence of any type of society totality, but social practices ordered by space and time".

Thus, assuming what was exposed, in this group theories could be placed, which possess in common the argument that social analysis should start on social contexts. As pointed out by Nicolini, (2012), there is no such thing as a theory of practice, but several theories that have the focus the study of practices. These theories try to overcome the dichotomies of the relation between agency and structure focusing in what the social actors do in a localized situation and how these are related to the institutions or structures and to the agents (Schatzki, 2001). We can highlight that among the main versions are the theory of practice of Pierre Bourdieu (1972), the theory of structure by Anthony Giddens (1984) and, recently, the studies of Theodore Schatzki (1996, 2001) and Andreas Reckwitz (2002).

In the studies of consumption, such perspective emerged recently with a promising approach different from the one found in linear models of behavior (Hargreaves, 2011). The focus of analysis is taken from the decision making of the consumer and put in routine aspects of consumption, considering the performance of several social practices (Warde, 2005; Gram-Hanssen, 2011).

The emphasis of these authors in overcoming the dichotomy agency-structure, proposing a non-dual ideal, aims at counterbalancing the recurrent methodological individualism of the research areas on consumption, which means that the unit of social analysis becomes the practice itself rather than individuals that execute them or the social structures that surround them (Hargreaves, 2011). Within this context, patterns of consumption are not seen as results from attitudes, values of beliefs, limited by contextual barriers, but occurring as part of social practices (Warde, 2005).

A fine example of what we are trying to illustrate would be the study of Marcoux (2009). Basing on experiences from a group of informants who

participated in an ethnographic study in Montreal, the author provides significant evidences that the non-attraction of the gift economy would incite people to return to the market as a way to escape. The study examines how people uses the market to become free from social expectations. This way, it is searched to go beyond the level of individual analysis, focusing on how meanings of consumption are built inside a social and material network (Thompson, Arnould and Giesler, 2013). Using the assumptions of the theory of practice, Marcoux (2009) highlighted the social dynamic of the gift economy, something that up to then was not target of previous studies. The treatment given by the author to the emic part is out of any individualism.

Other studies that use the theoretical-practice approach for the area aim at comprehending how practices change and what are the consequences of such changes for consumption. Warde (2005), for example, mentions the change and continuity of practices of consumption when discussing the implications of the use of the theory practice for consumption research. Shove and Pantzar (2005) suggested that new practices such as "*Nordic walking*", a type of walk in Finland, appears form the interaction between elements such as images, artifacts and shapes of competences in a process that involves both consumers and producers. Gram-Hanssen (2011) focused in understanding the role of new technologies in the change of consumption practices, using a case study with household energy consumption.

Therefore, as exposed, the consumption as social practice has become object of study in the area. However, researches of consumption based on the theory of practice face challenges regarding the choices of methodological strategies that are coherent with the theoretical approach adopted. With the purpose of sustaining an argumentation in favor of the analytic utility from theory of practice, it is necessary to reflect on the empiric methods used in the studies (Halkier and Jensen, 2011).

Great part of studies that adopt this lens are inspired primarily in the initial considerations of the authors from social sciences such as Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1972); from philosophy, as Schatziki (1996). And posterior, authors with applied perspectives, such as Gherardi (2016), Nicolini (2012), Shove (2017) and Warde (2005).

We are grounded on the studies of Silvia Gherardi (2016) and Davide Nicolini (2017) to reflect that ethnomethodology as method, will be an opportunity to analyze the consumption as practice and, this way, to fill an epistemological gap in the Consumer Culture Theory, promoted by the debate agency versus structure. We present, as follow the theoretical key-assumptions of ethnomethodology, as well as delimit how its methodological application occurs.

THEORETICAL-METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS OF ETHNOMETHODOLOGY

Ethnomethodology may be understood as both theory and research method. Whatever the perspective, this approach has the purpose of studying the daily phenomena, being considered a form of theory of practice (Gherardi, 2006).

While adopted isolated as theory, ethnomethodology is referred to as a sociology chain, which appeared in the late 60's, having its main reference the publication of the book Studies in Ethnomethodology by Harold Garfinkel. The author elaborates his ideas influenced mainly by the symbolic interactionism, the theory of social action by Parsons, phenomenology by Husserl and Schutz, in addition to Wittgenstein regarding language games (Coulon, 2005). The theoretical innovation key point brought by Garfinkel is about some conceptual issues from Sociology, as the theory for social action, the nature of intersubjectiveness and the constitution of the social action of knowledge (Heritage, 1999).

In the vision of Garfinkel, sociology was not a positive science, in which, through a stable structure, facts would be established a priori in an objective manner, not considering the dependency with the history. This way, the author proposed that this science would adopt an interpretivist posture, giving value to subjectiveness, in which describing a situation would be to build one. Starting from this idea, sociology considers social acts as a product of constant activity from individuals who practice their knowledge (knowing and doing), beyond their procedures and their rules of conduct (Coulon, 2005).

Ethnomethodology is considered the science of practical knowledge, in the manner as it is referred to the way of rationalizing and giving visibility to the daily practices (Rawls, 2008). The term *ethno* means to be a member of a group, and methodology refers to the methods of the members. Therefore, ethnomethodology is about "everyday methodology". Thus, it would be the study of methods that members of a group use to produce recognizable social orders (Bispo and Godoy, 2014).

Considering the importance given to practical activities produced by social actors inserted in a specific context, the main purpose of the method is to investigate how people perform the activities in their daily lives (Maynard and Clayman, 1991; Heritage, 1987; Rawls, 2008). Coulon (2005, p. 32) defines ethnomethodology as "the empiric search for methods employed by individuals to give sense and, at the same time, perform their everyday actions: to communicate, to make decisions, to think ".

For Garfinkel (2006), ethnomethodology would aim at comprehending the production and reproduction of social practices. In this case, the social interactions between the actors would generate a negotiation process around the collective action and collective identity of a group.

Ethnomethodology, as all theoretical chain, is constituted by some concepts that better explain the group of ideas that it defends. Based on the considerations of Coulon (2005), Heritage (1987), as well as Francis and

Hester (2005), five key concepts are exposed for the ethnomethodological investigation: the practice (in the sense of fulfillment), indiciality, reflexiveness, accountability (able to be related) and notion of member. Table 1 presents the concepts that constitute the ethnomethodological investigation.

Concept	Content
Practice / Performance	Indicates the experience and performance of a practice from members of a group in their daily context, which means, it is necessary to share this daily life to make the comprehension of the practices of the group possible.
Indiciality	It refers to all circumstances that the word carries in such situation. Such term is adopted in linguistics and shows that, at the same time, in a word that has a meaning, in some way "generic", this same word has a distinct meaning in particular situations, therefore, its comprehension in some cases, needs that people search for additional information that go beyond the simple generic understanding of the word. It is about language in use.
Reflexiveness	It is related to the "effects" of the practices from a group, it is about a process that occurs in an action and, at the same time, produces a reaction over its creators.
Relatability	It is how the studied group describes the practical activities from the sense references and meanings that the group itself has to be considered a "justification" from the group for certain activity and conduct.
Notion of member	The member is the one that shares a language of a group, induces a condition of "being of" the group and not only "being in" the group.

Table 1: Ethnomethodological Concepts
Source: Bispo and Godoy (2014, p. 116).

It is important to say that this Table 1 should serve only as guidance in the ethnomethodological investigation, being not able to be interpreted as a prescriptive proposal (Bispo and Godoy, 2014). Ethnomethodology aims at investigating empirically the methods that people employ to attribute sense and, consequently, perform their daily actions, whether trivial or sacred (Heritage, 1987). Starting from what is understood as common sense, it aims at analyzing beliefs and behaviors from members of a group, having the assumption that every behavior is socially organized (Garfinkel, 2006).

For the ethnomethodological researcher, before all, to comprehend the organized social world is to comprehend the language being used by the authors (Guesser, 2003). The idea of indiciality is that the language is a collective production that assumes several meanings. This concept is referred to the several senses that language can have depending on the way that it is used. According to Garfinkel (2006), the ordinary language, by which people express themselves during the day, is extremely indicial, once for every social actor, the meaning of the language has relation of dependency with the context in which it manifests itself.

The concept of reflexiveness is referred to the way that a certain reality guides the human interaction, considering such as being reflexive. In this concept it is highlighted the degree of construction and social transformation (Coulon, 2005). It is a process in which an action simultaneously produces a reaction in its practitioners. In any way, should the reflexiveness be mistaken with reflection. For Garfinkel, the reflexiveness regards practices that, while it describes it also constitutes a social chart in which the social actors may express meanings (Coulon, 2005).

The term accountability, which designs the property of description (relatability), allows the communication from social actors, in addition to sharing their practices. Relatability refers to the descriptions made by the authors through reflexiveness, in which they aim at showing the construction of the reality that they produced (Guesser, 2003). Which means, this concept is used to design the descriptive aspect of a practice, once it allows the sharing be the capacity to communicate it within the meanings built by the person (Guesser, 2003; Coulon, 2005). Guesser (2003, p. 162) points that "as having meaning and sense through the process from which they are related, the social actions express the social world in its purest essence".

At last, the fifth key concept of ethnomethodology is the notion of member. For a practice to be performed practitioners are needed, the language shared by the group in question qualifies its members as social

members. This way, for the ethnomethodological researcher, the notion of member is not directed only to those who belong to the group, but also to those who share the social construction of the group. The members dominate the common language of the group and interact with each other from meanings established by the social interactions (Guesser, 2003; Coulon, 2005; Bispo and Godoy, 2014).

Ethnomethodology aims at understanding the social phenomenon through daily activities of a certain group (Bispo, and Godoy, 2014). From the daily investigation, ethnomethodological studies highlight how activities are performed by members of the group, just as, detect the problems that needed to be addressed by the individuals, searching for answers that are not obvious or easily presumable (Rawls, 2008). For the author, this approach assumes that the methods in which the group organizes itself are constituted by intelligent activities that requires mutual constant guidance, just as the commitment with the execution of practice. Therefore, this methodology shows itself as adequate in researches in which the analysis lens are the social practices (Bispo, 2011; Bispo and Santos, 2014).

Regarding the forms of data gathering that could be used to capture the elements that compose the everyday of practitioners, the researcher may use a group of techniques belonging to the umbrella of qualitative research (Oliveira and Montenegro, 2012), mainly the use of the participant observation, field notes and informal conversations. For Francis and Hester (2004, p. 26), the "observations are not the end of the investigation, they are the starting point to what is called constructive analysis". This type of analysis regarding to the practices are constructed. The participant observation enables the researcher, from the description and interpretation of practices, appropriates itself from the reality of the studied group (Ten Have, 2004). Field notes preserve the detailed characteristics of the practices (Rawls, 2008). And what is related to the use of informal conversations, Francis and Hester (2004) and Ten Have (2004) highlight that these enable the researcher interact with

people in a more natural way in order to provide reports of the themes that start emerging.

For the analysis of the data gathered in the field, it is necessary once more to highlight that the researcher shares the same language with the participants of the research. The researcher must be secure as of the meanings constructed by the group in order to develop a proper final report. In case of the researcher not having familiarity with the practices of the members of the group, these may be diminished as of their importance and to stay hostage only of the interpretation. In order to avoid such condition, it is indicated to perform studies in environments in which the researchers have already had previous contact (Ten Have, 2004; Francis and Hester, 2004). We assume that for the experience analysis of consumption, naturalist approaches are adopted.

According to Ten Have (2004) the ethnomethodological study should be divided into two phases: the first is referred to the comprehension of the activities that are being studied, having focus in the creation of the sense of practices, which the social actors share, and the second refers to the analysis of the methods used in the first phase. We also consider that the method does not necessarily should be used in a whole way, but only for the part of data gathering, linked to methods of analysis more critical (for example, critical analysis of content, Foucauldian analysis, etc.).

Therefore, as a method of research, it is understood that ethnomethodology presents a great importance for the empiric knowledge in the study of practices and of everyday life. When conducting a study with ethnomethodological character, one should not start conceptions a *priori,* this is called ethnomethodological indifference. Being similar to the character of inductive and abductee thought, common to the studies of CCT. The researcher investigates the employed methods by the members admitting them as specialists in the phenomenon approached (Rawls, 2008; Bispo, 2011).

In addition, when performing ethnomethodology, the researcher should portrait reality as it presents itself, stepping aside from one's personal opinions, values and beliefs. It is about something already brought by other traditions in research such as phenomenology, in which it has great influence over this method. Also, by focusing in the mundane language of everyday, it is necessary for the researcher to access the sense attributed to the practices, as one become a legit member of a group, an *insider* (Guesser, 2003). Within this sense, Garfinkel (2006) points out that the researcher should have domain or proximity with the observed group, so in this way, one can realize any relevant detail in the analysis of the practices.

Being the theoretical assumptions exposed and some considerations on the ethnomethodological method, the following section reflects on consumption as practice and the application of the methods in the studies of the Consumer Culture Theory.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: THEORY OF PRACTICE, ETHNOMETHODOLOGY AND CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY

During this essay, we argued that the theoretical lens of the practice presents a relevant potential for the field of CCT when allowing that researchers perform different empiric studies from the mainstream approaches. Such approaches many times tend to privilege individual choices from consumers, following a tradition still in the field of consumer behavior or analyze social structures where the consumers are considered all passive. This way, they may bring up an excess of individualism or structuralism in the analysis. The theory of practice highlights the complexity of the phenomenon of consumption and how it is incorporated in the production and social reproduction (see, for example, Gram-Hanssen, 2008; Southerton et al., 2004; Warde, 2005).

In summary, adopting this lens, the consumption occurs inside and for social practice ends. The consumed items are put in use during the practice

of specific activities (Warde, 2005). The difference is that this approach focuses less on individual choices and experiences on consumption, characteristics of the phenomenological approach, and more on the collective development of daily practices. It moves the consumer's focus to the organization of the practice and to the moments of consumption.

We also consider that, when adopting the practical-theoretical approach, the researches in the field face challenges belonging to the choice of methods of research that understands their theoretical-analytical assumptions. Therefore, we indicate ethnomethodology as a methodological opportunity for future studies that analyze consumption as practice.

Through the application of such method, we can understand the logic of functioning of a certain group, understanding what people are, what they consume and why they consume. Getting out of the individualism, ethnomethodology allows understanding the organized phenomenon collectively, this aspect is important having in sight that many researches still see collective analysis in the individual level. Another important consideration is the use of the observation as the main way to collect data. This method proposes investigating what people really do, which is different from what they say they do. It takes the focus out of experiences narratives from consumers that may tend the research to psychological reductionism.

As basis in ethnomethodology, the phenomenon of consumption would be studied within inside the practices of consumption from individuals. The use of such method implies in performing researches that focus on the comprehension of consumption as collective construction, which is able through social interactions, inter-subjectivity, and creation of sense in everyday life. Within this sense, researches that dwell on the experience of consumption may use the method in order to observe how everyday life from the consumers overpowers the cultural practices that insert them in certain phenomena. In another tone, studies that adapt ethnomethodology for the consumer research may benefit from the movement of naturalization of

natural methods, which was the case of Netnography, developed by accident to observe practices of consumption through virtual environment (see Kozinets, 2001).

In addition, it is understood that practices are built and modified collectively in a tactical, situated and natural way. Studies that aim at using this methodological proposal may have as purpose the identification and comprehension of changes in practices of consumption, highlighting also that, unlike ethnography, in which culture is essential, in ethnomethology, culture represents the background, thus, any practice of consumption may be analyzed.

Ethnomethodology would search to comprehend the production and reproduction of social practices. In this case, social interactions between the actors would generate a process of negotiation around the collective doing and the collective identity from a group (Garfinkel, 2006). Therefore, we believe that the themes related to marketplace cultures, subcultures and collective identity of consumers may be benefit by the adoption of such method. When comprehending how in fact the consumption practices are constituted in certain groups, researchers can make relevant inferences to the field. We envision specific types of consumers to be observed and analyzed, specific types of ethnics, identity, and ideology. At last, also considering the idea of common sense, of production and reproduction of practice, we point out as relevant the idea of consumption as learning.

This essay aimed at making a reflection on the possibility of application of the ethnomethodological method to Consumer Culture Theory researches through the theory of practice approach. As all essay study, this one also presents limitations, mainly due to the method, once the review and search for terms may not have encompassed all, or the main literature on the theme of ethnomethodology. However, such limitation has not compromised the depth of analysis and discussions performed and presented here.

We believe that there are two gaps that may be filled through this proposal, which may be understood as suggestions for future studies in this area: the first is related to the need of theoretical options that enable other forms of analysis of consumption in the collective scope, on the other hand the second is referred to the lack of researches of CCT that use ethnomethodology as method.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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