Expanding Research Horizons: use of online interviews in Consumer Culture Theory[1]

Expandindo Horizontes de Pesquisa: uso de entrevistas online na Consumer Culture Theory

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ABSTRACT

Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) is the consumer research culturalist tradition. With the deterritorialization of culture, networked cultural connections fluidly encompass social and economic dynamics. The Internet has become a cultural network that allows for mediated social interactions. In this context, online interviews emerged as an adaptation of face-to-face interviews and a means of accessing individuals from physically dispersed cultural contexts, therefore, suitable for the CCT agenda. Thus, this research seeks to characterize the use of qualitative online interviews through Digital Technologies for Information and Communication in CCT research. To this end, we analyzed a research corpus composed of articles that adopted the online interview. The articles were published in the main international marketing journals recognized for publishing works in the culturalist tradition of consumer research. We identified that online interviews have gain resonance in the field, through different qualitative research methods, with a focus on access to spatially dispersed consumers. However, little emphasis has been given to the operationalization of the interviews. Thus, we concluded that discussions about the technique's use would be suitable for its broader and more transparent adoption.

Keywords: Online Interview, Consumer Culture Theory, Digital Technologies for Information and Communication.

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RESUMO

A *Consumer Culture Theory* (CCT) é a tradição culturalista da pesquisa do consumidor. Com a desterritorialização da cultura, as conexões culturais em rede abrangem de forma fluida as dinâmicas sociais e econômicas. A Internet tornou-se uma rede cultural que permite interações sociais mediadas. Nesse contexto, as entrevistas online surgiram como uma adaptação das entrevistas presenciais e um meio de acessar indivíduos de contextos culturais fisicamente dispersos, portanto, adequados à agenda de pesquisa do CCT. Assim, a presente pesquisa busca caracterizar o uso de entrevistas qualitativas online por meio de Tecnologias Digitais de Informação e Comunicação na pesquisa CCT. Para tanto, analisamos um corpus de pesquisa composto por artigos que adotaram a entrevista online. Os artigos foram publicados nas principais revistas internacionais de marketing reconhecidas por publicar trabalhos na tradição culturalista de pesquisa do consumidor. Identificamos que as entrevistas online têm ganhado ressonância no campo, por meio de diferentes métodos de pesquisa qualitativa, com foco no acesso a consumidores espacialmente dispersos. No entanto, pouca ênfase tem sido dada à operacionalização das entrevistas. Assim, concluímos que as discussões sobre o uso da técnica seriam adequadas para sua adoção mais ampla e transparente.

Palavras-chave: Entrevista online, Consumer Culture Theory, Tecnologia Digitais de Informação e Comunicação.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing research increasingly uses qualitative methods, with a strong emphasis on consumer research (Figueiredo & Uncles, 2014; Jantzen et al., 2012). Such perspective led to the establishes and develops the know-how of data collecting techniques (e.g., focus groups, interviews, and participant observations) in conjunction with the social sciences as a whole. Especially because consumers and market relations are a fruitful field to elicit and learn about sociocultural phenomena as a whole (Nilsson, 2020).

If the sociocultural context has been continuously changing in recent years, the same can be observed in consumption practices (Bardhi et al., 2012). When it comes to consumer behavior research, an alternative tradition has emerged as a possibility for marketing researchers who wish to carry out investigations that are dissonant from the mainstream management perspective (Gaião et al., 2012; Jantzen et al., 2012). Such tradition, despite being previous, had its name proposed by Arnould and Thompson (2005) in their seminal by suggesting the Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) as a relevant investigative tradition for the expansion and adequacy of consumer research to the cultural possibilities and articulations disposed of in the market scope.

The CCT tradition follows the aegis of the interpretive paradigm. In this perspective, consumers are co-responsible for the production of the culture they are part of, configuring this through their interactions in the market (Casotti & Suarez, 2016; Berge, 2017). Thus, consumer's accounts are capable of revealing a critical part of their meaning-making. Moreover, when consumers discard prior belief systems, it is common for consumers to create for themselves perceptions of how they would like to live their lives (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Dean, 2019).

Creations that are even more forceful in the context of the Web: an interactional sociocultural space in which consumption becomes a possibility for individuals to converge and get closer to their interests. This aspect became more and more increased by their use of electronic devices and

connectivity (Kozinetes & Jenkins, 2021; Madianou & Miller, 2012). Accordly Schwarz (2009), the interactions mediated in the online context should be seen as an opportunity for qualitative research. In this environment, there is a wide availability of data that works as a facilitator (i.e., minimize financial costs, duration of the research, the comfort of participants) for investigations that want to investigate consumption practices of electronic devices and virtual contexts.

A consideration shared by Kozinets (2020), when he recommends that consumer researchers seek to perform at least one of its steps from the virtual context. For the author, specifically, online interviews have an additional benefit as they allow the exploration of a myriad of cultural contexts and in greater depth through schedulable, adjustable, achievable, and analyzable dialogues. Thus, online interviews stand out as an adaptation of one of the most traditional methods of qualitative research: face-to-face interviews. Specifically, is characterized by the gain of being already performed via electronic devices that usually help in the process of transforming the dialogue into data for a future research corpus (James & Busher, 2006; Nilsson, 2020).

Interviews, in general, have become popular among qualitative research for making the world visible through the representation and description of details experienced by the individuals investigated (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Its online version offers the researcher a connection with the interviewee who may be anywhere in the world or be a member of a culture to which they would not normally have access (Dean, 2019; Salmons, 2016). Something that is made possible through the use of Digital Technologies for Information and Communication (DTIC). This aspect has gained greater acceptance among the public and researchers from the popularization of social networks and video call interaction applications (Dean, 2019; Reid & Duffy, 2018). Resuming the understanding that online interviews are relevant for CCT and the growing use and popularization of online consumption practices (Kozinets et al., 2016;

Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014), we consider this collection technique provides researchers in the field with a new scope for their investigations. Consideration based on how online methods correspond to one of the possibilities presented by Arnould and Thompson (2015) to expand the filed investigation agenda. The authors indicate that it is fundamental for the future of consumer research to try to deal with phenomena that are spread out and that, simultaneously, occur in various parts of the world based on marketing practices. In this sense, this study seeks to explore how online interviews conducted through DTIC have been used and explored in CCT investigations to execute online interviews. To this end, present research conducted a desk review of articles published in internationally renowned marketing journals and that usually publish studies that explore perspectives associated with the culturalist consumer research tradition.

Thus, it is justified by despite the contemporary importance of electronic devices in people's lives, marketing research still shows some resistance to exclusively online techniques and methods (Reid & Duffy, 2018). It is the efforts to naturalize online qualitative research methods that have emerged to investigate objects in the field (i.e., netnography). Also, the increasing use of social media platforms (e.g., social networks, forums, blogs) such as data sources or object to be investigated that has enabled online qualitative research for the tradition (Kozinets, 2020).

Therefore, the study aims to establish a methodological path – between marketing investigations associated with the epistemology of consumption as a cultural practice – based on the use of one of the most traditional data collection techniques in qualitative research: online interviews through DTIC. In this sense, the investigation considers that in the pandemic context that started in 2020 – and beyond it –, the technique can become a fundamental alternative for conducting consumer research (see Gordon-Wilson, 2021). As such, it is possible to adjust both to situations of isolation of individuals – the video call feature breaks physical barriers – and as a means of updating and

adjusting possibilities for carrying out investigations (see Borgerson & Miller, 2016).

ONLINE INTERACTIONS: AN AGENDA FOR CONSUMER CULTURE THEORY RESEARCHERS

From the 1980s onwards, an alternative paradigmatic tradition emerged for consumer research: those that followed an interpretive epistemology (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; Gaião et al., 2012). Taking into account notions of cultural anthropology, some consumer research studies started to consider the socio-cultural reality. Thus, moving away from the managerial and positivist perspective, considered as mainstream by the area (Jantzen et al., 2012; Souza et al., 2013).

In this regard, Arnould and Thompson (2005) called CCT a range of theoretical perspectives that consider the dynamic relationship between markets, cultural meanings, and consumer choices. The emerging tradition was not a unified theory, but a field of knowledge that encompasses different theoretical issues capable of assisting investigations focused on consumer identity projects, marketplace cultures, market ideologies massively mediated, and sociohistoric patterns of consumption (Casotti & Suarez, 2016; Souza et al., 2013).

CCT is a conceptually dynamic field of research with a multiplicity of theoretical approaches and methodological orientations, dealing with a range of representational practices mediated by consumption (Jantzen et al., 2012). Among the points indicated by Arnould and Thompson (2015) – when revisiting and proposing possibilities of expansion for investigations of cultural consumption –, it is highlighted that future works should consider that contemporary consumption practices are closely related by a society that works in a network and through web connectivity.

Such aspects represent how, more and more, the Web is legitimizing itself as the main source of communication and information: individuals turn to the

network of social interactions to complement their routine tasks (Obiegbu et al., 2019; O'Leary & Murphy, 2019). It is a cultural movement called technological appropriation that, together with the phenomenon of convergence, has allowed consumers to continuously connect to what interests them (Kozinets & Jenkins, 2021).

Technological appropriations allow individuals to agglomerate and converge to cultures that identify themselves as part. These cultures are characterized by the active participation of their members and largely reflect their consumption choices and practices (Camargo et al., 2021; Dean, 2019; Madianou & Miller, 2012). And as we live in a consumer society (Bardhi et al., 2012), individuals organize themselves in a network: cultural connections are, simultaneously, social and economic; fluids and dynamics (Arnould & Thompson, 2015).

According to Husemann and Eckhardt (2019), reflects a movement represented by the continuous technological advances and popularization of smartphones. A movement that, in addition to making consumer relations asynchronous and continuous, breaks down physical or geographic barriers, amplifying movements of globalization or glocalization of consumption (Siebert, 2013). Moreover, may work as a solution for the expansion of CCT: according to Arnould and Thompson (2015), the tradition is still concentrated among researchers from certain territories (i.e., United States of America, European Union) and which does not reflect a good part of consumption practices globalized aspects of contemporary society.

To account for this asymmetry, the field of consumer research must continue to expand the use of qualitative methods and, especially, those that account for phenomena that occur partially or totally in the virtual environment (Kozinets, 2020; Nilsson, 2020). Thus, it was natural that online technologies also became a means to adapt data collection techniques from traditional qualitative research in the field of CCT, such as interviews (Kozinets et al., 2016; Obiegbu et al., 2019).

THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION IN ONLINE QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

Many of the qualitative research methods online are adaptations of traditional methods (Braun et al., 2020; Kozinets, 2020; Moura & Souza-Leão, 2020). Initially, because they deal with phenomena mediated exclusively online, but later because it allows the researcher not to be limited by physical barriers. Increasingly, online qualitative research methods have become increasingly common (Salmons, 2016).

And among the data collection techniques of qualitative research, the interview is considered one of the most classic methods (Creswell, 2010; McCracken, 1988). Qualitative interviews are essential for enabling the researcher to engage with individuals who are part of a phenomenon to be investigated at a deeper level, seeking to understand details of their relationship with the object studied. They are fundamental for investigations that aim to understand experiences, opinions, attitudes, values , and processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

As an adaptation of the traditional method, online interviews enable researchers to connect with participants from around the world and with a range of different cultures, breaking down physical barriers (i.e., time and space). (Dean, 2019; Salmons, 2016). When researchers interact with participants, they consider the convergence that technologies have in people's lives as something natural (Madianou & Miller, 2012). In the virtual sphere, the different interaction platforms and the continued applicability of DTIC overlap with other technologies and media (Dean, 2019). This aspect is capable of constantly creates new hybrid technologies, such as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) being accessible anytime or anywhere via smartphones (Madianou & Miller, 2012; Marchant & O'Donohoe, 2014).

The use of DTIC in online interviews allows researchers to preserve the investigated more naturally: encourages those to express their opinion and

stimulates proactive participation. These, in turn, in everyday situations or personal contact are usually not mentioned (James & Busher, 2006; Nilsson, 2020). What leads Iacono et al. (2016) to indicate that the use of DTIC VoIP as a technique for conducting interviews in qualitative research often complements other forms of textual data collection (e.g., email, SMS).

According to Salmons (2016), this set of different forms of collection from electronic devices mediated by the Internet can be called as research methods on the Web. However, because they are different types of media, the communicative properties are equally distinct: VoIPs allow synchronous communication, including sound and video, with the option to exchange text messages. These features are not shared by messaging or email applications, these are also asynchronous tools. Therefore, DTIC VoIP goes beyond synchronous communication: allows for continuous sharing and dialogue among its users, either individually or in groups. Also, serves as a possibility to collect stimulated primary data (i.e., via interview) and non-stimulated secondary data (i.e., via dialogue archiving) (Madianou & Miller, 2012; Murray, 2015).

It is worth noting that online interviews follow the same ethical guidelines as traditional research: safeguarding the intellectual property, as well as the safety of the participants. The investigated right to privacy and not participating in the research whenever they want, following exactly the information obtained and, most importantly, obtaining the consent of the participants (James & Busher, 2006; Salmons, 2016). For this to occur, the researcher must explain to the participant(s) that the online interview will be recorded and archived and that the recording software can only be run with the explicit authorization of the latter (Iacono et al., 2016; Kozinets, 2020).

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

To meet the objective of this research, we sought a desk review of the works that use online interviews in the CCT investigations. The method is also

known as secondary data search as an exploratory-descriptive approach, being appropriate for the selection and study of data (Souza et al., 2013).

Seeking to meet quality criteria that Paiva Jr. et al. (2011) indicate for qualitative research, we built the research corpus from articles published in well-known journals in the marketing ranking. Ranked in the best stratum (i.e., Q1 and Q2) of the scimagojr.com (SJR) portal, we access the academic articles available on the websites of each of the journals that have significant work for the CCT (de Souza-Leão & Moura, 2022). There were nine journals in question (as listed in Table 1).

Journal	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Consumer, Market and Culture (CMC)	4	6	0	10
European Journal of Marketing (EJM)	4	3	1	8
International Journal of Consumer Studies (IJCS)	1	5	0	6
International Journal of Research in Marketing (IJRM)	0	0	0	0
Journal of Consumer Culture (JCC)	3	2	0	5
Journal of Consumer Research (JCR)	1	7	2	10
Journal of Macromarketing (JM)	0	0	0	0
Journal of Marketing Management (JMM)	5	7	0	12
Marketing Theory (MT)	4	0	0	4
Total	22	30	3	55

Table 1. Articles by journal and analytical level
Source: author's elaboration.

Adapting de Souza-Leão and Moura (2022) instructions, a desk review were operated to find articles linked to a search term (i.e., "online interview") in the electronic portal of each journal, we found 1852 works. However, by opening and reading their abstracts and keywords as a first filter, the number dropped to 235 articles that appeared to deal with the use of online interviews on CCT objects. Considering that there could be the possibility of there being works that dealt with online mediated objects, but, through face-to-face interviews, we considered it valid to carry out another round of debugging. In a last filter for the research corpus construction stage and in the first analysis contact, each of the articles was accessed through the Adobe Acrobat Reader search tool, in order to find how the term "interview" was used in the body of the text. In this step, it was possible to exclude both

works that only dealt with objects mediated in the virtual environment, or with relevance to, and that use face-to-face interviews in their investigations, and those that did not explain what type of interview they had done through a DTIC. Thus, we reached number 55 articles that make up the final corpus of our research.

In Table 1, we explain the journals accessed, as well as the number of articles for each journal that make up the final corpus of the research. Although all nine journals presented articles that seemed to be relevant to our research in both the first and second rounds of filters, two of them did not meet the final filter in the formation of our research corpus: International Journal of Research in Marketing and Journal of Macromarketing.

Also in Table 1, we present a division into three analytical levels: works that use only online interviews for their research or discuss their validity to deal with objects studied by the CCT (Level 1). These indicate the method as fundamental to the research. Papers that use online interviews in conjunction with other interview tools (i.e., face-to-face interviews, field observation) at a supporting level for carrying out the study comprise the intermediate level (Level 2). Finally, studies that explain the use of online interviews only as a solution to deal with physical limitations (i.e., geographic, time) that emerged during the execution of the research (Level 3), being a contingent and unplanned option.

RESULTS

Adapting the criteria used by Gaião et al. (2012), our analysis was directed to four aspects: academic use, research strategies, main knowledge, and contributions of the method to the field. In Table 2, we indicate how the criteria guide our analysis.

Criteria	Definition
Academic use	Adhesion of a relevant number of studies using online interviews by scathing journals in the CCT in recent years.

Research strategy	Ways in which researchers use online interviews to support, complement or solve the construction of research corpora from different strategies of non-functional qualitative studies.
Main knowledge	Knowledge produced from the use of online interviews to investigate phenomena linked to the thematic fields of the CCT.
Contributions	Ways that the online interview presents or assists in CCT research.

Table 2. Criteria for validating a data collection method
Source: adapted from Gaião et al. (2012).

To present the results of our analysis, we chose to address each of the criteria explained in Table 2 in the following subsections. Still, we elaborated a fifth section that deals with reflections, conclusions, and extrapolations from the four previous criteria. Such criteria explain online interviews as a possible data collection technique for CCT studies. Thus, our critical review was carried out focusing on the research question of each study: whether this was aligned with the use of online interviews as a collection method for CCT studies. In this sense, we follow Creswell (2010) who considers that the research question should indicate the epistemic and methodological boundaries of the study.

Academic use

Although two of the nine journals investigated do not present research that uses DTIC online interviews, another seven have had a growing number of articles that use the method. The articles that are part of our corpus are from journals in the marketing area and occupy the following positions - in June 2021: 1st (JCR), 29th (MT), 38th (EJM), 40th (JCC), 48th (JMM), 56th (CMC) and 61st (IJCS).

Considering that the popularization of mechanisms for virtual interaction dates back to the mid-2000s (Kozinets & Jenkins, 2021), the first academic article using online interviews for the CCT field dates from the beginning of the following decade: the work of Harwood and Garry (2010). The authors already considered that the DTIC allows to bring interviewers closer to geographically dispersed interviewees, as well as facilitating the recording of the meeting. Complementarily, two years later, Bradshaw and Dholakia (2012) also pointed out that the data collection technique presented a

synchronous interaction with the respondent that leaves nothing to be desired in traditional interviews, equivalent to face-to-face interaction.

However, it was only from 2014 onwards that the online interviews' use became more recurrent in CCT. We prepared Table 3 to present the evolution of publications of online interviews in works published in the most reputable journals to CCT studies.

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Quantity	1	0	1	0	7	5	5	4	10	10	8	4	55

Table 3. Evolution by years of online interviews' use in CCT papers
Source: author's elaboration.

We could see that, over time, online interviews have had their use recognized in the academic world since the middle of the second decade of the 21st century. On the one hand, some of the early works sought to explain how the method was equivalent to face-to-face interviews (Figueiredo & Uncles, 2014; Harwood & Garry, 2010). On the other hand, during the process, the vast majority of studies consider that using DTIC to perform interviews is a factor that reflects the context of the phenomenon or the investigated consumption practices (Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Oakes et al., 2014). Likewise, several works are dedicated to exploring territorially dispersed phenomena, demanding that access to respondents is, at some level via electronic contact, to, for example, schedule a possible face-to-face meeting (Daskalopoulou & Skandalis, 2019; Emontspool & Georgi, 2016). Another very common type of work observed were those investigating phenomena that exist exclusively in the virtual context (Kozinets et al., 2016; Viswanathan & Sreekumar, 2019).

In total, 109 different researchers are authors of the works that make up the research corpus. These are linked to different universities around the world, which indicates the growing decentralization of CCT research, which Arnould and Thompson (2015) have already indicated as an interesting emerging movement: small research nuclei of locations (e.g., Scandinavian

countries, America Latin) beyond the main axis (i.e,, Europe and North America) that dominated publications in this tradition of consumer research.

Research strategy

Creswell (2010) considers that qualitative research that follows a non-functionalist paradigmatic orientation – as is the case with CCT – usually follows five major traditions: phenomenological studies, grounded theory studies, case studies, narrative studies, and ethnographic studies. In Table 4, we present the research strategies of the studies that make up our corpus.

Qualitative tradition	Ethnographic	Grounded	Narrative	Case	Phenomenological	Total
Quantity	32	7	5	8	3	55

Table 4. Research strategy in the analyzed articles
Source: author's elaboration.

Ethnographic studies are the most incisive in our corpus: when online interviews appear in works from the three levels of our category: those that use DTIC to collect research data (Alhashem et al., 2021; Campbell et al., 2019; Corciolani, 2014; Gordon-Wilson, 2021; Kozinets et al., 2016; Le-Phuong Nguyen et al., 2017; Obiegbu et al. 2019; O'Leary & Murphy, 2019; Podoshen et al., 2014 ; Reid & Duffy, 2018; Yalkin & Veer, 2018); use virtual dialogues as a complement to in-person interviews (Athwal & Harris, 2018; Chimenti, 2020; Darmody et al., 2017; Dean, 2019; Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Figueiredo & Scaraboto, 2016; Harwood & Garry, 2010; ; Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019; Nilsson, 2020; Pulh et al., 2018; Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019; Sandes et al., 2019; Scaraboto, 2015; Scarborough & McCoy, 2016; Veer & Golf-Papez, 2018; Veresiu & Giesler, 2018; Zanette & Brito, 2019); and those who resorted to the technique as an option not initially planned for the scope of the research (Beverland et al., 2020; Feiereisen et al., 2020; Giesler & Veresiu, 2014; McAlexander et al., 2014). Specifically, we identified that online interviews are often associated with a stage or complement of netnography – the adaptation of the ethnography developed by Kozinets (2020) to investigate

consumption practices in the virtual context. Furthermore, we observed two studies that use another naturalistic method, autoethnography (Dean, 2019; Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019), complemented by interviews via DTIC.

Grounded theory studies use the data collection technique both at Level 1 of our analysis (Emontspool & Georgi, 2016; Philip et al., 2015) and at Level 2 (Berge, 2017; Dessart et al., 2016; Drumwright & Kamal, 2015; Macleod, 2020; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). In both cases, online interviews were justified as a means of speeding up the conduct and, later, coding and analyzing the data. More than that, the technique stimulates the induction and interaction with the research findings, allowing an enrichment of the process of discussion of previous theories or formulations that complemented these based on what was observed in the study.

The case studies, on the other hand, present works that use only online interviews (Level 1) to perform data collection (Freund, 2015; Goulart Sztejnberg & Giovanardi, 2017; Oakes et al., 2014; Tan & Xu, 2020; Viswanathan & Sreekumar, 2019) and as a complement to traditional interviews (Level 2) to optimize the execution of the investigation (Kostakis et al., 2015; Persson & Klintman, 2021; Turunen & Pöyry, 2019). These works point out that the technique is a facilitator in the scope of minimizing the displacement to carry out the various meetings necessary for the various interviews to be carried out. It also allows reaching respondents who are geographically dispersed from the interviewers, making the studies more comprehensive.

In turn, narrative studies (Bradshaw & Dholakia, 2012; Daskalopoulou & Skandalis, 2019; Figueiredo & Uncles, 2014; Jones et al., 2020; Viotto et al., 2021) use the method exclusively in their studies (Level 1). The narrative studies that we observed considered online interviews equivalent to face-to-face meetings in terms of wealth, but mainly allow interviewers and interviewees to conduct a process that is often long, from the comfort of their own homes.

Finally, the phenomenological works consider the method as a complementary choice to investigate the object of their study (Level 2) (Gamble, 2019) or point to it as an alternative solution to in-person interviews (Level 3) (Koponen & Mustonen, 2020; Liu, 2019). In these, there is an understanding that the technique complements or adjusts the research, but also limited to observing the meanings of interactional phenomena that occur in offline contexts (i.e., equity in crowdfunding, the experience of the male body).

Main knowledge

To assess the main knowledge of the analyzed articles, we adopted as analysis criteria the thematic fields of the CCT proposed by Arnould and Thompson (2005). In this sense, we chose to assign articles that dealt with more than one thematic field to the one that was more evident or relevant in the analyzed study. Table 5 shows the number of articles per thematic field of the CCT.

CCT thematic programs	Quantity
The Sociohistoric Patterning of Consumption	17
Marketplace Cultures	20
Mass-Mediated Marketplace Ideologies and Consumers' Interpretive Strategies	9
Consumer Identity Projects	9
Total	55

Table 5. Thematic programs in analyzed articles
Source: author's elaboration.

Works dealing with sociohistoric patterning of consumption (Athwal & Harris, 2018; Chimenti, 2020; Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Drumwright & Kamal, 2015; Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019; Kostakis et al., 2015; Le-Phuong Nguyen, et al., 2017; Macleod, 2020; Persson & Klintman, 2021; Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019; Veresiu & Giesler, 2018; Viswanathan & Sreekumar, 2019; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018; Yalkin & Veer, 2018; Viotto et al. ., 2021; Zanette & Brito, 2019) seem to make DTIC's use to investigate social classes and categories spread across several territories. When needing to access several interviewees who

had physical barriers (i.e., time, location), researchers resort to online interviews as a justification to enrich the research corpus. And as the objective of these studies is to observe the influence – positive or negative – of institutional structures on the consumption of individuals, interviews via DTIC also proved to be assertive as they bring a greater degree of intimacy and reliability to the interviewees.

Studies that deal with phenomena linked to marketplace cultures (Alhashem et al., 2021; Berge, 2017; Corciolani, 2014; Daskalopoulou & Skandalis, 2019; Dessart et al., 2016; Feiereisen et al., 2020; Figueiredo &) Scaraboto, 2016; Gamble, 2019; Gordon-Wilson, 2021; Goulart Sztejnberg & Giovanardi, 2017; Harwood & Garry, 2010; Koponen & Mustonen, 2020; Oakes et al., 2014; Philip et al., 2015; Podoshen et al. ., 2014; Reid & Duffy, 2018; Scarabot, 2015; Scarborough & McCoy, 2016; Turunen & Pöyry, 2019) use DTIC to investigate phenomena that work exclusively online, or a large part of consumer relations are established virtually. Mainly dealing with collective consumption relationships (i.e., branded virtual communities, consumer subcultures), the works explore how the context of the Web has modified these relationships. For cultural groupings that take place exclusively in the virtual environment, the DTIC's use is a natural tool to access the investigated market agents. As for the phenomena that occur materially, online interviews are pointed out as a solution to access a greater number of respondents at a lower cost.

Investigations that focus on mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretative strategies (Campbell et al., 2019; Darmody et al., 2017; Freund, 2015; Kozinets et al., 2016; Nilsson, 2020; O'Leary & Murphy, 2019; Obiegbu et al. 2019) usually present narratives and discourses that position consumers. Therefore, the use of DTIC VoIP seems promising as it easily allows respondents to be accessed more than once, to complement the first interview.

Finally, works associated with consumer identity projects (Beverland et al., 2020; Bradshaw & Dholakia, 2012; Dean, 2019; Emontspool & Georgi, 2016; Figueiredo & Uncles, 2014; Pulh et al., 2018; Sandes et al., 2019; Tan & Xu, 2020; Veer & Golf-Papez, 2018) elucidate how using VoIP allows access to the respondent at any time, without limitation of time or specific meeting. It facilitates the understanding of how he deals with everyday consumption practices, being able to be interviewed while carrying out the investigated consumption practices or how this complements the formulation of his identity.

Contributions

As for the contributions presented by the DTIC online interviews' use in CCT investigations, we observed two types of work. On the one hand, those were careful to treat the online interview as an improvement of traditional interviews to investigate the objects and phenomena that relate to the Web (Dean, 2019; Drumwright & Kamal, 2015; Sandes et al., 2019). On the other, those that consider the technique as natural, without needing further justification. Such studies have a scope in global or virtual objects that could not be physically accessed (Darmody et al., 2017; Kozinets et al., 2016; Scaraboto, 2015).

It is possible to cite works allocated to the first and second level of analysis that sought to adapt McCracken's (1988) guidelines on traditional interviews to be carried out via DTIC, but adjusting to the quality criteria established by the author (Dean, 2019; Harwood & Garry, 2010; Reid & Duffy, 2018). Also, those who insist on explaining how the virtual environment facilitates the execution of interviews. Specifically, the snowball technique is enhanced, as the referral of respondents to other research participants is not limited by synchronicity barriers (Emontspool & Georgi, 2016; Sandes et al. 2019; Zanette & Brito, 2019).

It is worth highlighting the understanding that the online interview optimizes research time and planning, giving the possibility of adjusting semi-structured interviews according to the results obtained in the first executions (Dolbec & Fischer, 2015; Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019; Persson & Klintman, 2021). As it is common for works in the area to start with a broad research question and specific directions that help in answering it - aspect named by Creswell (2010) as grand tour question -, online qualitative interviews provide the researcher with versatility (Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019; Sandes et al., 2019).

In another context, the DTIC interviews executed by VoIP make it easier to spontaneously observe and obtain physical manifestations and connections between people (Kostakis et al., 2015; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). When properly planned, they can capture opinions from consumers in their daily lives (Veer & Golf-Papez, 2018; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). They are extolled as a possibility to keep the research corpus up to date without major problems. Among the works in the area, some highlight the importance of repeating interviews in different time cycles to give robustness and legitimacy to the results obtained. Soon, some works carried out new rounds of interviews to elucidate this (Athwal & Harris, 2018; Pulh et al., 2018).

The validity of using DTIC as a tool for online interviews allows for greater ease in recording the interview, it seems to us to incorporate fundamental aspects of communication (Kostakis et al., 2015; Wiederhold & Martinez, 2018). This aspect allows the possibility to repeat several times a moment that, in traditional interviews, would be ephemeral. Thus, can facilitate the observation of fundamental aspects of communication highlighted by Leão et al. (2016). The authors explain that not only linguistic aspects (i.e., perceptible in the language itself) but also paralinguistic or phonetic aspects (e.g. accentuation, voice tone, utterance duration) and extralinguistic or bodily aspects (e.g. gestures, head movement, posture, expression easy) are fundamental for capturing what the interlocutor wants to say.

Finally, we can observe how studies dealing with specialized consumers (e.g., fans, prosumers) or specific markets (e.g., music, online-to-offline) have their practices extendable to the virtual environment. So, this seems to be the best environment for the execution of online interviews (Corciolani, 2014; Darmody et al., 2017; Daskalopoulou & Skandalis, 2019; Kozinets et al., 2016; Obiegbu et al. 2019).

REFLECTIONS AND EXTRAPOLATIONS

If initially, we intended to deal with the DTIC online interviews' use, we realized that the CCT studies prefer to explain the software used to execute their data collection - and, sometimes, the analysis. Among the tools for online interviews, those named as the main ones were: FaceTime, Instagram, Skype, and WhatsApp until 2019 (Campbell et al. 2019; Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019). As of 2020, and with the context of the pandemic at a global level, the Google Meet and Zoom apps have become more popular for conducting online interactions (Gordon-Wilson, 2021). Also, and according to Witteborn (2019), there is a schism in the use of Western and Eastern software and apps: in works aimed at Eastern cultures or the emerging Chinese market, the VoIP to be used is WeChat. However, among our research corpus, we did not find any articles that used the tool to operationalize online interviews, although two quote its existence (Dean, 2019; Reid & Duffy, 2018).

Following other areas that use qualitative research, the use of DTIC to operationalize online interviews had a timid beginning (Iacono et al., 2016) also in CCT. Despite the tradition had the first publications using the technique in the early 2010s, it seems valid to consider that, from this year on – as identified in this research – the use of is no longer just an alternative possibility. Something that may result from the very popularization of virtual environments and devices, so that it is natural that it is progressively inserted in research agendas and becomes legitimized in fields of studies that promote investigations that focus on online phenomena as is the case of CCT.

No wonder, this coincides with the phenomena studied by the area and the shift from the initial themes of the field to research axes (Arnould & Thompson, 2005; 2015). Among the strategies that make use of DTIC to conduct online interviews, we notice works from the five great traditions pointed out by Creswell (2010). On them, the method is more common in ethnographic research, which represented approximately 60% of our research corpus. This may have happened because netnography (i.e., online ethnography) was developed to investigate objects in the area (Kozinets, 2020). But, especially, it seems to coincide with the change in the investigative gaze that started to observe the online environments themselves. About this, Kozinets et al. (2016) highlight that it is natural to use DTIC to conduct online interviews, as the virtual environment and the use of the software enrich the collection of data on sociocultural phenomena mediated on the Web.

Therefore, and still about the research strategies, it was possible to infer that most studies use the para method as the only way to build the corpus of their studies (Level 1) or as a complement to traditional methods (Level 2). Few are the works that consider online interviews as an unanticipated possibility (Level 3). This happens, in many cases, by having the online environment not only as a means for data collection but as a phenomenon to be studied in itself. More than that, we observe works in CCT that use the method in all qualitative research streams that are epistemologically linked to the area and that consider the use of primary data.

All four programs proposed by Arnould and Thompson (2005) presented research using DTIC to conduct online interviews. The sociohistoric patterns of consumption and marketplace cultures are highlighted, which typically deal with the effect of marketing practices on consumer groups. The main contribution of the use of online interviews for these works is being able to access a greater number of respondents in less time. Thus, enables research adjustments at a lower cost, as well as comparing different consumption practices that are territorially dispersed or even dealing with these practices

that occur exclusively online. Studies dealing with massively mediated ideologies and consumer strategies, and consumption identity projects have also incorporated the use, but mainly to deepen the relationship with the respondent: as they can be accessed from the comfort of their own home or an environment that feels safe.

As an extrapolation of our study, it is worth noting that during the data collection process and the first analytical contact - last filter - a resistance of CCT works that resorted to traditional interviews to collect data was observed. Even those that focused on relationships established in the online context. As an example, it is possible to evoke studies that investigated phenomena and consumption practices mediated online (e.g., digitalization of music media, app users) from interviews performed entirely in a traditional way (Bartmanski & Woodward, 2015; Ravenelle, 2020). Likewise, other studies that performed various data collection techniques (e.g., ethnography, observations, focus groups, document analysis) considered it valid to use data available or obtained online, except for interviews (Ulusoy & Fırat, 2018; Zhang, 2017). This seems to reinforce how, even with more and more qualitative researchers adhering to online techniques and methods, this movement is still timid when compared to the quantitative current (Kozinets, 2020).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Dealing with a broader sense than the criteria for the analysis performed in this research, we seek to observe how the use of DTIC has been appropriate to perform online interviews in CCT studies. Based on the results discussed, this study considers that it is valid for the technique to be explained and better delineated. According to Campbell et al. (2019), online interviews help in data triangulation: can be conducted by several researchers at the same time, even if only one of them is being seen by the interviewee. It is a technique that makes it possible to reach the degree of saturation more assertively, simplifying one of the most complex processes when performing traditional interviews.

This leads our study to corroborate and elucidate the directions of Moisander, Valtonen, and Hirsto (2009) about the challenges for consumer research in the face of post-structuralist changes arranged in the interactional practices of contemporary society. In this case, we consider that more than collaborating to offer a very concrete way to encourage consumer empowerment, the online interview collection technique minimizes efforts and resources – physical and financial – that can be reallocated to the analytical process.

Moreover, the work presented here makes it clear that there is an epistemological relationship between studies of cultural consumption and the use of interviews. The adaptation of one of the most traditional data collection techniques among qualitative research is a reflection of how contemporary society overlaps the virtual and material context, including for consumption practices.

Therefore, the analysis criteria - academic use, research strategies, main knowledge, and contributions - show the technique's possibilities to the consumer research alternative tradition. This allows discussion and verification of the relevance of online interviews via DTIC in the fields epistemological, contextual, and for the expansion of CCT. Scopes that equate to recent and resonant directions for the expansion of CCT as a tradition of consumer research studies. In the relationship between researcher and consumers, Arvidsson et al. (2018) indicate that most possible respondents for studies of cultural consumption are usually absent during on-site visits and empirical mapping of the phenomenon and practices to be investigated or observed, so accessing them beforehand and virtually ensures that those investigated are reached. To the contemporary context that produces the marketing practices to be studied, Kozinets and Jenkins (2021) consider that consumer movements are increasingly inseparable from participatory culture and the online context, which requires researchers to consider a way to access people and their practices in this environment. Finally, from the perspective of expanding CCT investigations, Arnould and Thompson (2015) point out that

because consumer relations function as distributed networks, they demand greater analytical and interpretive rigor from researchers - and consequently possibilities to minimize the effort in obtaining data are welcome.

It is also valid to indicate that as a limitation, the work recognizes that it focuses on specific journals. However, they are the most highly regarded and representative of the tradition of cultural consumption studies (see de Souza-Leão & Moura, 2022). Which makes them able to attest to relevant trends among CCT studies. And finally, the research indicates how online interviews have been established for this tradition of consumer research studies over a little over a decade – 2010 to 2021. It highlights, then, the validity of establishing paths and quality criteria for its execution in contextually limited works (i.e., during the pandemic period) and beyond: that consider investigating phenomena and globalized consumption practices that are the object of frequent CCT research.

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