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HOW TO PRODUCE KNOWLEDGE IN FAMILIAR CONTEXT ? A COMPARATIVE VIEW OF TWO NATIVE RESEARCHERS ON THE TALE OF REFLEXIVITY

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Following the recent inclination in the practice of ethnography to study close or familiar contexts, or to practice auto-ethnography (Ellis et al., 2010; Holbrook, 2005), the native researcher position have become more frequent with the expansion of new fields of research and new contexts of ethnography (Ghasarian, 2004). A native ethnographer is defines as a researcher who is a participant of – and belongs to – the cultural context prior to study. But how to make the familiar strange and how to seek knowledge within familiarity ?

TWO NATIVE ETHNOGRAPHERS



Ethnographic research conducted between 2011 and 2016



Ongoing ethnographic study started in 2015

METHOD: CROSS-INTERVIEW

In an attempt to address the research question, we alternatively asked each other questions about our respective field experiences. The result is a 2 hours video-recorded cross-interview, that we have analyzed, to take a reciprocal and reflexive look at our ethnographic tale.



The two researchers interviewing each other on their ethnographic experiences, November 2017

FORMS OF ENGAGEMENT

The postures of the researcher are constitutive of different forms or “regimes of engagements” (Thévenot, 2006): actor, researcher, consumer, participant, activist, fan etc. The engagement of the ethnographer is multiple, (Cefai et al., 2010). We have identified four specific forms of engagement of native ethnographers studying consumer culture:

Axiological engagement	Engagement of the body
Affective and emotional engagement	Market-oriented engagement

“The researcher engagement is not contradictory with the distanciation that is necessary to the [production of] knowledge” (Schnapper, 2010, p.3)

OBJECTIVATION AND DISTANCIATION STRATEGIES

Interviewing the “Other”	Distinct the scales of observation and the level of analysis	Defamiliarize: reflexive introspection	Getting out of our comfort zone	Studying extreme cases
“Interviews offer other perceptions of our context. I have a conception of what is my context. I am very careful about that. I have an idea of what is independent music that I don't think to conflate with [participants' conceptions]” (Boris)	This distinction between the scale of observation (Desjeux, 1996) and the level of analysis can be used as a strategy to distance ourselves from questions that have to do with close and personal accounts.	“[Reflexive] introspective narrative is a good tool, even if I deleted some parts of it” (Mailys). Reflexive introspection is essential when the researchers' personal posture is necessary to understand what they say about others (Olivier De Sardan, 2008)	“What I did is to go to concerts on my own. I never do that. I did it for a while in Paris before. Usually when I go to concerts I either go with friends or I perform [...].The idea is to put myself in an uncomfortable position. Sometimes I get out of my comfort zone and it forces me to wear different hats.” (Boris)	The study of extreme case is a methodological strategy to consider for a native researcher. The study of extreme or deviant cases can bring out unusual manifestations of the studied phenomenon (Canguilhem, 1978 ; Miles and Huberman, 1994).