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## The Potential of Emic Perspective in the Qualitative Inspections of Everyday Life

### ABSTRACT

These reflections tackle a specific understanding of researching everyday life, which presents itself as a methodological demand, i.e., as a constitutive element of the new forms of inquiry. Consequently, the discourses revolve around the specificity of the anthropology of everyday life, as seen from various angles entailing third wave of sociology, cultural anthropology, and symbolic interactionism. It also elaborates on the methodological issues encompassing idiographic, emic characteristics of a qualitative inquiry that with relation to everyday life can provide a useful and cognitively attractive tool of reconstructing the world of different cultural groups.

### Keywords:

anthropology of everyday life, qualitative research, emic strategy, participant observation

### INTRODUCTION

These reflections tackle a specific understanding of researching everyday life, which presents itself as a methodological demand, i.e., as a constitutive element of the new forms of inquiry. It can be also referred to as the argument for practical application of anthropology. A methodological interest in the everyday life occurs indispensable in the context of keeping up with the current processes of social and cultural changes while they emerge, i.e., in their course. It seems equally impor-

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tant given the demand for applying new methodological and theoretical proposals indispensable in deepening the expertise knowledge on (multi)cultural issues.

Consequently, the above should take place with regards to the key issues of the contemporary humanities, followed by the objective to “shape” a competent observer and researcher that would understand the mechanisms which manage culture (of everyday life), thus becoming well informed in issues concerning cultural diversity.

Yet, it is the everyday life as an anthropological category that constitutes essential base (and foundation) of conducting research projects, providing a context in which phenomena of human experience are manifested. To such a degree, everyday life appears as “obviousness”, i.e., a background, and at the same time the contents, for activities within social space, as well as the template for the cultural diverse order. However, everyday life has its social range, and spatial borders, followed by historical, temporal framework. In terms of the specific social-cultural space-time continuum, it can constitute a valuable source of empirical inquiry, becoming the key point of reference in reflection over the contemporary forms of social-cultural practices. Despite the seeming inertia of its basic structures, everyday life is historically and culturally changeable. It is a dynamism particularly noticeable within the commonplace cultural practices in the ethnic, linguistic, national or religious borderland, that is, in such cultural meeting points, where they acquire a form of negotiating meanings and significance attached by the representatives of different cultural traditions and patterns.

The very notion of a cultural borderland as a research category is comprehended as “an ethnically and culturally diverse area, located within the national or regional borders” (Bukowska-Floreńska, 1994, p. 165). Therefore, it is a territorial area, inhabited by more than two ethnic-cultural groups, where contacts between them (on given territory) generate a plane for (and of) confrontation, proximity, or exchange of given indicators of the cultural identities of their members. Thanks to the cultural borrowings, as well as due to the interpenetrating features of rituals and customs of the everyday culture, this area becomes a transitional zone given its bridging specificity of encountering the Other, entailing confrontation, but also coexistence of cultures (Sadowski, 1992, pp. 5–7). Even so, everyday life, subject to qualitative investigation, reveals the dynamism of not only the culturally internal borderland, but also a borderland that exists within one, given culture, and a society. It stems from, among others, the border nature of intergenerational and intern-environmental relationships, where – within the everyday life – the contact between and amongst the local communities takes place.

The qualitative insight into the everyday life in the borderland allows to reconstruct specific, local (idiographic) phenomena, for every culture entails characteristic dynamisms which, in turn, imply the borders of given cultural values. This thesis results from the author's experience of almost 17 years in conducting field research in the culturally diverse setting, i.e., in the cultural (not to say civilizational) borderland, encompassing distinctive features of such a research for expression of everyday cultural and social practices. Examining everyday life in the borderland, it is possible to reconstruct a bigger, fuller image of the area "in between", i.e., for instance the social-cultural borderland between the rural and the urban culture, or in the religious borderland encompassing the aesthetic-symbolic aspect of culture, such as customs, or their symbolic-magic significance (cf. Bukowska-Floreńska, 1994, p. 167). These dynamisms, becoming apparent upon the confrontation of cultures, take particularly distinct form within the culture of everyday life, through ordinary, common practices, rituals and gestures. As Roch Sulima stresses, "the anthropology of everyday life makes small field conquests and tells small stories: about the house, the closest neighbourhood, the most immediate surroundings; thus making a statement with its very presence, and providing a tool of getting to know the world around" (2000, p. 11). Accordingly, everyday life can provide a very valuable and effective manner of the insight into the reality, subject to empirical interpretation for the researcher especially in view of the fact that, as Sulima writes, "the meaning of everyday life is present at all times, right in front of us" (2000, p. 7).

Taking the above into consideration, the objective of these reflections is to reveal the exploratory potential of everyday life for the practice of conducting qualitative inquiry, within the framework of emic strategy. Although the point of departure for the author's observations refers to the area of the cultural borderland, which is for her the empirically closest and most familiar setting, these reflections constitute a part of a wider framework for deliberations concerning the utilisation of everyday life in the design of social research tackling, and orientated at, the reconstruction of the meaning, as assigned to the cultural and social practices by the members of local communities.

## **ANTHROPOLOGY OF EVERYDAY LIFE**

The everyday life establishes a specific ontological category, for it comprises occurrences and practices embedded in the social contexts, revealing at the same time the relationalness and the intersubjectivity of the knowledge it concerns. Thus, since "everyday life is accessible to the researcher in a series of empirical events and

praxis of the social contexts, such events and practices provide the ontologically distinguished fragments of the everyday life” (Bryda, 2016, p. 13). As a result, it can constitute the axis of anthropological interpretation involved in “microstories”, disclosing the meaning of spontaneous common expressions, and diagnosing hidden (unrevealed) meanings of rituals of the everyday life. As Piotr Sztompka emphasizes, within the area of the everyday life the analysis concerns “family, work, consumption, entertainment, religion, illness, recreation, and the like” (Bogunia-Borowska, 2009, p. 32), expressing interactive and communicative character of the anthropology of everyday life, bearing in mind that “in all the recalled fields human relationships are of utmost importance, whereas their contexts differ between each other predominantly in the character of these relations (that is, who participates in them)” (Sztompka in: Bogunia-Borowska, 2009, p. 32). Interestingly, it accords with symbolic interactionism. The latter, as a key American psychosocial theory, puts emphasis on the role of meanings which emerge as a result of interactions, whereas its main subject of interest is their analysis “in everyday life, based on thorough observation and close familiarity with the examined phenomenon” (Marshall, 2008, p. 129). Such accustomed familiarity, in turn, enables insight into the everyday life, which most noticeably marks its presence within interpersonal communication. Hence, since “the everyday life encompasses situations which people go through in the course of their living” (Collins, 2004, p. 45), it is accessible to individuals in direct experience, and it can be experienced on all levels (Ibidem). Thus and so, making everyday life the centre of the research interest can facilitate the disclosure of a wide range of dynamisms within interpersonal relationships, as well as the complexity of the cultural or social identity of the members of given groups, including the dialectics of the human life “suspended” between routine and spontaneity in temporal dimension. By means of qualitative strategy and the anthropological exploration of everyday life, it is achievable to reach the meanings, which given community members acquire and assign to given everyday rituals and practices. The latter, in turn, provide with the sense of security (routine), and on the other hand reassuring creativity and the innovation of these practices (spontaneity). Moreover, taking into account that everyday practices “belong to a broad range, which borders are difficult to mark out, and which can be provisionally referred to as the set of procedures” (de Certeau, 2008, p. 45), it is worthwhile to acknowledge their potential not only as “by-products” with regards to the core subject of anthropological reflection, but rather as the primary source of the insight into social phenomena, occurring in the everyday life. For the practices of the everyday day reveal dynamics of functioning with regards to a given discourse, they also concern the acquired (e.g., Bourdieu’s *habitus*), and what de Certeau defined as the opportunity (2008, p. 45).

Within the discourse of the anthropology of communication “the society is an orchestra playing without the conductor, and yet referring to the invisible score a culture provides” (Winkin, 2007, p. 13). Thus, the communication regards, on one hand, individuals creating a given community, or the communication dyad, but on the other, it concerns the culture, which constitutes the contents and a point of reference for those communication practices. Therefore, in accordance with symbolic interactionism, “the show appearing in front of the eyes of the observer is communication” (Winkin, 2007, p. 13). Along these lines, acknowledging that culture “is happening” within the communication, and that the colloquial, common meaning of (cultural) practices are in charge of managing everyday life, the role of the involved observer-researcher of daily prose comes to the front, as s/he, similarly to Goffman’s actors, defines and interpret everyday common events, acting in the agreement with rules and situational patterns s/he is familiar with (Godlewski, Mencwel, & Sulima, 2003). It was indeed Erving Goffman who, analysing the theatre of everyday life, highlighted that various social situations constitute the stage, which – to different degree – favour (or disable) establishing interaction, allowing to attach meaning to events, practices, procedures, and rituals (Goffman, 1967). Therefore, taking into account the premises of cultural pragmatics that “a cultural performance is a public process through which individuals solely or collectively communicate to others the meaning of the social situation in which they act” (Alexander, 2006, p. 32), it is legitimate to claim that the society is what “happens between people as the sum of events occurring within the interpersonal space” (Sztompka in: Bogunia-Borowska, 2008, p. 33). The same author points to the fact that “the everyday life often takes shape and is expressed through ritual, dramatized patterns, carried out according to the instilled and unconsciously accomplished scenario” (Sztompka, 2012, p. 25). For this reason, since it is a scenario carried out with no reflection, as the sociologist assumes, researching everyday life can enable the reconstruction of colloquial meanings of gestures and common, perhaps not always consciously performed, rituals. Hence, within the framework of anthropology of everyday life the insight into this aspect of life of individuals and communities can help to reconstruct the logic of popular, common attributions, as well as the complexity and the multidimensional nature of everyday world by reconstructing temporal and spatial maps, as well as cultural and linguistic principles being part of a cognitive organization of a given culture. At the same time, the processual, dynamic aspects of communication become the frame of the perception and a communication channel, given the fact that according to Edward Sapir, “the communication emerges within individual action, yet acquiring social dimension” (Sapir, 1978, p. 150).

Everyday life have become an object of scientific inquiry and matter of examinations not only on anthropological grounds, but also on account of the third wave of sociology (Burawoy, 2005), directing the researchers and theoreticians of micro- and macro- social structures towards the individual and the society, the former and the latter as two inseparable aspects of the same reality, concurrently recognising the key role of the relation between them for social and cultural dynamics. It was the exactly on the so-called wave of the “third sociology” that the traditional sociological issues became scientifically empowered, as revealed in phenomena, behaviours, rituals and ceremonies of the everyday life, i.e., abstracting from the large social systems (Rykiel & Kinal, 2016). Consequently, as the sociologists claim, human life is so interesting, yet also so difficult, thanks to the diversity of the social contexts, the location and the episodes of everyday life, uniqueness of their individual patterns and differences in the significance assigned to every context of a situation, or the episode (Sztompka, 2012, p. 47). It is possible, however, to analyse this complexity of life from a perspective of the internal observer, which succumbs to the dynamics of everyday life similarly as the rest of the “users” of cultures of the given group, for everyday life is always about living with others, in the presence of others.

In view of methodological reflections concerning everyday life it is worth recalling the concept of Alfred Schütz’s phenomenological sociology, according to which everyday life acquires significant, intersubjective meanings, in conformity with the conviction that “the world of my everyday life is by no means my private world, but from the very beginning it is an intersubjective world, shared, experienced and interpreted by others; in other words, it is a world shared with the rest” (Schütz, 1970, p. 163). Therefore, only empirical, personal experience of everyday life in the relation to the other allows the researcher to gain insight into its culturally, socially and interpersonally unique phenomena. It is noticeable particularly in the constructive discourse, which in the social science guides the researcher towards the social practice of constructing and revealing everyday life, concurrently acknowledging that the knowledge about world is constructed within processes of communication (and in this way shared with others), whereas its social representation concerns the common knowledge.

## **METHODOLOGICAL PREMISES OF THE RESEARCH ON THE EVERYDAY LIFE**

The constructive worldview was theoretically established in the second half of the 20th century (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Crotty, 1998). In

the constructive optics of the social world, the individuals strive to understand the world, granting subjective meaning to their experience. It stems from the fact that people connect with the world and make meaning of it from their own historical and cultural perspective. In consequence, given the methodological point of view, understanding the context by the researcher is crucial, equally as much entering such culture. Therefore, interpretations of the researcher result from own experience and the life story, whereas their process of generating meanings is of social character, and takes place in the course of interaction within the framework of the inductive procedure.

In their methodological nature, the research projects on everyday life resemble ethnographic and anthropological field research, as with regards to those conducted by Margaret Mead, Edward Sapir, or Ruth Benedict, i.e., tackling the relation between the culture and the personality, or reconstructing cultural practices, which in turn “teach” psychological mechanisms and shape personality. As a result, personality reveals its dynamics in the prose of everyday events in a given cultural context, taking into account that the level of the everyday practices “is indeed an area of constant move and change, i.e., an area of becoming” (Sztompka, 2012, p. 33). In the methodological framework, it is worthwhile to underline that in “getting to know” everyday lives by the researcher special importance lies in performative utterances (speech acts) revealed in the course of social events (i.e., elementary events), and as an intentional practice (time-consolidated activity patterns). Therefore, since the language forms the basis of everyday life, the social semantics allow within the emic research proceedings to reconstruct phenomena, forms and rituals of everyday life, becoming part of an inspection of social reality in conformity with L. Wittgenstein’s claim that the borders of colloquial language are the borders of social world, in which people communicate and act (Wittgenstein, 2000, p. 64).

In this regard it is worth drawing attention to the division of qualitative research as carried out by Ewald Terhart in his study “Entwicklung und Situation des qualitativen Forschungsansatzes in der Erziehungswissenschaft” (Terhart, 1997). Terhart categorised qualitative strategies into ethnographical-descriptive, communicative-explanatory and structural-reconstruction patterns. According to the first one, which aims at the reconstruction of world of the examined – the participants of various events, autobiographical materials provide a foundation of such reconstruction, whereas empathy and phenomenological bracketing – “suspension” – of the prior knowledge and expectations constitute the key factor enabling the researcher “to put oneself in the situation of the examined”. Further, he distinguished communicative-explanatory (phenomenological and interaction-

ist) research designs, where the researcher does not aspire to “empathize” with the situation of the examined, but remains openly “other” towards the examined community. By doing so, s/he reaches this, what by the members of the examined community may remain unidentified, as the latter constitutes the obvious, unaware, and integral element of their attitudes and the worldviews. Thus, the researcher gets access “not only to the single interpretations of the events, but also such elements which remain unconscious for the examined community members, yet concurrently having impact on their actions [...]. Interestingly, according to Terhart, these strategies are by definition «biased», as within their framework the researcher consciously stands up on the side of the discriminated, marginalized groups, and aspires along with them to trigger real changes in the environment” (Terhart, 1997, p. 29). Last but not least, he also distinguished structural-reconstruction examinations, where the text provides the foundation of the analysis, whereas the objective concerns “«decoding of rules of the grammar of the social interactions» which accumulate in the surface layer of the text, treated solely as the performance” (Terhart, 1997, p. 27). For the area of the reflection within this article, i.e., anthropology of everyday life and the emic strategy, it is the ethnographic-descriptive category that comes across as closest to the understanding of qualitative field research, as its main objective is to reconstruct and reflect the worlds of the participants and “users” of a given local culture that a researcher temporarily becomes a member of.

The very concept of emic strategy stems from the cognitive anthropology of Kenneth Lee Pike, who – in his book *Language in Relation to a Unified Theory of the Structure of Human Behavior* – examining linguistic behaviours portrayed two prospects of researching the culture, i.e., outside (etic) and internal (emic) view. Both terms come from the abbreviations of essential linguistic notions, i.e., phonemic versus phonetic aspect of the speech. The above recalled constructive paradigm provides an epistemological framework for emic studies, saturated with interpretative-symbolic discourse, the hermeneutics, and phenomenology. The emic perspective entails a position of the “insider researcher”, who acknowledges the direct contact and relation with the researched, followed by personal commitment on account of the researcher’s belief that there is a common foundation for the human-to-human relation.

The vision of reality subject to qualitative inspections in the emic perspective corresponds to the recalled constructive paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 2013), which ontologically takes into account subjective approach towards the reality, as well as relativism, in accordance with the acknowledged view that there are many locally constructed and reconstructed (idiographic) realities. Thus and so, there are dif-



ferent social worlds which functioning is intersubjective, i.e., there is no providing with objectively available outside structures. Consistently, since reality exists in human minds, and social worlds are under constant process of construction, the only way of getting to know them is by reference to the subjective experiences, opinions, beliefs and values of their “owners”. The latter, in turn, are available to the fullest and most credible inspection by adopting the internal perspective of the participant of a given culture. Such methodological approach, through deepened (e.g., narrative) interviews and participant observation is oriented at reflecting the worlds created by the local participants of the culture. This, in consequence, makes the researcher the “mediator of polyphonic reconstruction” in this process.

Franz Boas, known as “the father of American anthropology”, emphasized the significance of internal dynamics of the culture and idiographic inquiry (Kopczyńska, 2012, p. 67), acknowledging the local knowledge with no need of universalization pursuant to the Western ethnocentrism and discriminatory attitude of the alleged superiority of the European culture. Thus, making the assumption that qualitative methodology is of dialectical and hermeneutic character, emic interpretation of the meanings will be idiographic. Similarly as in the British social anthropology, examinations of the local community include participant observation and qualitative interviews, that is, the techniques of the cultural anthropology, as Franz Boas called for. Boas, in his ethnographical reflection over examining cultures, made (among others) reference to his *Kulturbrille* concept, assuming that every person in the dyad of interaction is, to a certain degree, determined by own “cultural glasses”, through which one looks at the world around, and by standards of which evaluates it. Hence, in the course of the participant observation within the research on the everyday life, the researcher should “lay aside” own cultural glasses and put on the ones by which participants in his/her examinations observe the world. By doing so the researcher is capable of understanding the co-producers of knowledge which concern their world, behaviours, norms and rituals, acquired in such manner. This approach is confirmed by another anthropologist, Christoph Wulf, who stresses that “mimetic processes constitute a central element of encounter in field research, as in their course the ethnographer becomes similar to the unknown surroundings [...] thus, such mimetic processes move towards other persons, establishing interaction between the field researcher and the world surrounding him” (Wulf, 2016, p. 169). Similarly, Boas (opposing with his disciples the evolutionist positions) stressed the importance of the particularism, relativism and individual cultures, emphasizing that cultures are incomparable and understandable only with reference to them alone. Emic approach to field research contradicts at the same time universalist, comparative standards towards the cultures,

criticising cultural determinism to the same degree. In view of the above, it is exactly the everyday life subject to empirical investigation that favours the reconstruction of the meaning in the life of the members of given culture encompassing myths, rituals, ceremonies, or patterns of experiencing the reality.

The benefits of emic approach are reflected in the work of Marvin Harris, according to whom “the emic statements refer to logical-empirical systems, in which division of phenomena [...] is built through contrasts and distinction which are important, meaningful, and real, [...] perceived as appropriate by the very actors” (Harris, 2001, p. 570). Additionally, Jingfeng Xia stresses the fact that “emic analysis is linked to the way of thinking that emerges in the researched environment, entailing given person’s beliefs, thoughts and attitudes. In other words, the local knowledge and interpretations are crucial for the emic approach” (Xia, 2011, p. 76). Research projects carried out in the natural context imply in the emic strategy the need to establish direct interactions with the researched, so that given meanings can be reconstructed by the research participants without being influenced by own, prior assumptions on the researcher’s side. It makes such emic design taking place *in situ* in the course of the research, by using the knowledge from, and of, the very participants. Idiographic approach corresponding with the emic strategy entails analysis of the culture in its everyday expressions and manifestations, relying on notions developed by the given community, considering the fact that the culture is an integral part of human behaviours (Helfrich, 1999, p. 133), contrary to the universalist, etic and at the same time nomothetic approach. The former research view corresponds to the purpose of the social science, stated by the previously recalled phenomenological sociologist Alfred Schütz, that is, to explain the social reality based on experiencing everyday life (Schütz, 1970, p. 176)<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, what a researcher wants to search often emerges only upon the exploration, that is, interviews and observation, which course cannot be established prior to the field research (neither assumed), but rather should be “revealed” within the framework of verbalising experience by the researcher.

Since Bronisław Malinowski developed the method of participant observation, the field research became the centre of the anthropology of culture. Thus, the methodological reflection over everyday life resembles the ethnographical description by depicting behaviours of the acting members of a given community who enter interactions, preserving the balance and the natural context of the phe-

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<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, in conformity with the phenomenological sociology of Alfred Schütz, it can be assumed that the practices of everyday life are subject to division, i.e., the process of classifying by an individual the elements of the reality into given types (categories), by making reference to the resources given persons possess, applying simplifying mechanisms (Schütz, 2006, pp. 867–893).

nomenon, interaction, or the behaviour. Such a manner of conduct of the researcher also contributes to the inspection in the sociologically (and anthropologically) valuable matter, that is, *habitus*, related to shaping the set of individual dispositions, corresponding to given cultural characteristics of the society under investigation (Bourdieu, 2007, pp. 192–193). As the representatives of symbolic interactionism stress, the direct and accurate knowledge of the studied area (intimate familiarity) (Blumer, 1969) allows to describe how others – in diverse empirical contexts and analytical dimension – experience the surrounding reality. Such processual approach to the analysis of the observed phenomena and the process of naturally unfolding actions are empowered by the concept of sympathetic introspection by Charles H. Cooley, entailing the empathizing with intentions and motives of the acting and studied subjects by putting oneself in their position (i.e., the emic perspective of the insider).

Methodological reflections within qualitative inquiry indicate three types of observation, i.e., it can be assumed that the observer can be entirely participating, partly participating, or non-participating in the occurrences. Given the emic inspection of the everyday life, the perspective of the “insider” participant observation appears most adequate, as it enables to examine life from the inside, by temporary immersion into the culture, yet retaining analytical distance. Undoubtedly, this is a challenging procedure, as it involves the simultaneous participation, observation and documenting from the researcher. In this way the researcher can get, and have access to, similar experiences as the examined group through the connection to the latent knowledge. It is worthwhile at this point to stress the fact that participant observation designed in such way utilizes widely available tools, typical for everyday acts of common conversations and situations, while sharing given experience with the members of a given culture. In consequence, the subjectivity and the self-reflection of the researcher both become a tool of the cognition (Guba & Lincoln, 2013).

James P. Spradley (1980), developing the methodology of participant observation, established nine vital points one should take into account in the design of emic examinations. Thus, while researching the everyday lives from the “insider” perspective, the following gains great methodological and practical significance.

1. Space: physical layout of the place: the location of the given social situation, or behaviours, the physical – material space, in which rituals are performed and where certain gestures are practised in consonance with the cultural code;
2. Actors: range of people involved, i.e., participants of the given situation, ritual, or behaviours, who through their presence create interpersonal dynamics of the given phenomenon; such actors perform given social roles in a situation

subject to observation when the roles can be expressed, or remain latent, in the context of the meaning and contents of a situation;

3. Activity: a set of related activities that occur: words, gestures, behaviours, body language, verbal communication;
4. Object: the physical things that are present in such a situation: financial environment in the given public sphere, e.g., a park, a square, eating places, cafés, public buildings, and the like, or the private space such as a house or a flat;
5. Act: single actions people undertake: a gesture, a verbal or non-verbal expression;
6. Event: activities that people carry out: what counts as routine, and what within its framework seems more or less essential (for example, during informal, social meeting, conversations in a public place, and so on), what rituals are observable (e.g., customs or ceremonials connected with everyday habits), what is the message they entail (e.g., emphasizing the social status, the stratification role, satisfying social needs such as affiliation, recognition, respect, authority, or establishing deeper emotional relations, conflict solutions, and etc.), what happens and in what context, how people behave, what they say, what they do, how (after an act) they evaluate given event, how their status in a group is changed or confirmed;
7. Time: the sequencing of events that occur, the pace of events: when, and how long given interaction takes, how long the event or the social situation lasts, how much of this time concerns the process of reconstructing gestures and cultural rituals, etc.;
8. Goal: things that people are trying to accomplish in a given situation or an event; whether these are emotional needs, or formal objectives associated with formal contacts, whether it is a relation of power, or the objective is to fulfil the need of belonging to the given cultural group in which given interactions occur according to the cultural code;
9. Feelings: emotions felt and expressed; whether these are positive or negative emotions.

Such a multidimensional inspection within the framework of the involved observation<sup>3</sup> allows to reconstruct not only the “tangible” indicators of situations, occurrences or rituals, but also (even more importantly) their idiographic contexts.

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<sup>3</sup> Such view of the reality makes the observation, as a tool of gathering data in qualitative inquiry, a strategy of immersion by the participation in the lives of the others. At this point it is worth stressing that for the Chicago School researchers, observation is always a participant observation.

Thus, paraphrasing the notion of social interactionism, it is possible to conclude that observation designed in such way takes into account the stage, as well as the back stage of everyday life.

Methodology of everyday life favours empirical examinations which embrace with their reach primary data or the found (secondary) data, with the application of their sources typical for quantitative and qualitative strategies, including films, photographs, internet footage, censuses, parish registers, archive information, blogs, letters, daily newspapers, diaries, memoirs, transcriptions of interviews, and also field notes or memos, i.e., observing and recording events from the perspective of the participants. Diverse forms of the collected data consequently include observation, interviews, documents (studying the biography, using photographs and materials provided by the participants, collecting personal letters of participants), or audio-visual materials (video recordings, examining the private property or ritual objects, collecting sounds, recording the films associated with the social situation of the individual or the group, and etc.). In examining everyday life the qualitative coding of data constitutes the core of the data analysis, providing an analytical frame, i.e., a ground for conclusions. The reduction of the meaning within the text or visual contents by coding serves therefore as a link joining the process of the data collection from the field with the development of an analytical model or a theory, authorizing the above recalled methodological inductive approach (i.e., from data to category).

The research on the everyday life requires to adapt multidimensional and processual approach to the registry of social events and public practices within the framework of the multidimensional, qualitative data mining. Emic research of the everyday life enables such a multidimensional insight into cognitive structures of linguistic and psychological character, reflecting the individual and collective aspects of the world of everyday life. At the same time, it provides the basis for the social construction of empirical representation of everyday life. In consequence, social definitions of the situation as a reflection of individual and collective actions create a social-cultural matrix, in which the individuals exist, and which is subject to the empirical inspection.

## **CONCLUSION**

Everyday life reveals to the researcher much more than a casual observer could read from it. Acknowledging Erving Goffman's sociological interpretation of daily life, these are the small things and epics of daily prose that constitute the

key aspect of the social life, whereas the social order is carried out on the level of interaction. Thus, taking into account that everyday life is a “reality socially constructed by people in the processes of communication” (Bryda, 2016, p. 11), it creates specific narration within the act of communication. Moreover, having considered the fact that perception of the everyday life “relies on subjective experiences of the social actors, who consolidate their image on everyday life on the ground of multiply repeated acts of communication” (Bryda, 2016, p. 11), combining the anthropology of everyday life and emic strategy of qualitative designs can provide cognitively attractive and unique (idiographic) trait of a scientific inquiry. Following the break of the dominance of scientist doctrine, and questioning the monopoly on methodological standards of the positivist paradigm, it is worthwhile to shift accents to qualitative, idiographic (local) participant examinations that are understanding and hermeneutic in their nature. In turn, such approach to the research, which is at the same time a form of social action, operates in conformity with the principle of mutual feedback within the community, which the researcher becomes a part of within the daily life. Correspondingly, emic studies of everyday life gain form of specific animation, transforming ways of performing roles by the actors of the social life.

Although ethnography was created for the purpose of examination of the pre-modern communities, it became an excellent methodology dealing with the present reality. It has proved its value in cultural studies, sociology, education and other (post)modernist research fields or disciplines. It is probably the reason why the radical postcolonial thinking is recognized as a potentially promising theoretical background in dealing with specific, local ethnographic situations or occurrences. For that reason, the emic researcher of the everyday life draws attention to the cultural interpretation of “right now”, encompassing its evolution and indirect phases, which all contribute to the current condition of the contemporary culture. The latter, as a result, reveals in front of the researcher these layers of culture which are usually defined as folklore, cross-cultural communication, mass culture, transformations of the social identity, ethnic tensions, and the like. Therefore, given the fact that the perception of the present times depends on experiencing the past, it can be concluded that everyday life in necessary though invisible way makes reference to the earlier, proceeding stages. In this way, examining everyday life allows to discover what the cultural emanation entails within, i.e., norms, values and meanings assigned to given practices and occurrences of ethnic, religious, linguistic, educational or national character. In consequence, in the qualitative exploration of the everyday life interpretative approaches are dominant, focussed on symptoms revealed in the course of the interaction with the researched co-pro-

ducers of knowledge. Research designs oriented towards such perspective, in their epistemological origin tackle the subject of the discourses within common, contextual concepts, embedded in given culture. Thereupon, it is of key importance that the objective of the qualitative research is the exploration of the regularities and patterns rooted in the set of events and public practices, stemming from daily life.

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