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FRONTIERS BETWEEN SUBJECTIVITY AND FOOD: A SCOPING REVIEW

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Abstract

Food is a complex field of knowledge that connects subjectivity, society and the person. Furthermore, subjectivity is a concept which has been understood differently throughout each particular field and time. This scoping review intends to map the many ways subjectivity was conceptualized in Food Studies, as well as the limitations imposed by them. The search strategy generated a total of 416 results, of which 45 studies were included in the final review. Most of the papers relied on post structuralist studies to conceptualize subjectivity. The commonly used theoretical framework was based on Foucault. Two main categories were identified: the first in which the concept refers to the idea of embodiment or incorporation; the second in which it refers to social interactions, including identity formation, and the capacity to act (or not). Findings revealed that the generative character of subjectivity is sometimes presented in a contradictory manner, at times understood as requiring mediation, imposition, at others, understood as an internalization from that which is on the outside. The unique fabric of the individual's subjective configuration is an approach to be encouraged so as to enable advances in the understanding of subjectivity.

Keywords: Food Security; Nutrition; Psychology; Subjective Production; Systematic Review.

Resumo

A alimentação é um campo de conhecimento complexo que conecta a subjetividade, a sociedade e o indivíduo. Além disso, subjetividade é um conceito que tem sido compreendido de forma diferente ao longo do tempo e em cada campo científico. Esta revisão de escopo pretende mapear as diversas formas como a subjetividade foi conceituada nos estudos sobre alimentação, bem como as limitações envolvidas nos mesmos. A estratégia de busca gerou um total de 416 resultados, dos quais 45 estudos foram incluídos na revisão final. A maioria dos artigos baseou-se em estudos pós-estruturalistas para conceituar a subjetividade. O referencial teórico comumente utilizado foi Foucault. Foram identificadas duas categorias principais: a primeira em que o conceito remete à ideia de corporificação ou incorporação; a segunda se refere às interações sociais, incluindo a formação da identidade e a capacidade (ou não) de agir. Os achados revelaram que o caráter gerador da subjetividade ora se apresenta de forma contraditória, ora entendida como exigindo mediação, imposição, ou mesmo entendida como uma interiorização de algo fora de si. Propõe-se que a trama singular da configuração subjetiva do indivíduo é uma abordagem a ser estimulada a fim de se avançar na compreensão da subjetividade.

Palavras-chave: Nutrição; Produção Subjetiva; Psicologia; Revisão Sistemática; Segurança Alimentar.

INTRODUCTION

Food is articulated to life, its values, relationships, bonds, which raises questions and reflections with regards to what affects us and impacts our relationships and emotions. Research on subjectivity in the field of Food Studies occurs across a great diversity of methodologies, theories, epistemologies,

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which are not always clearly identified and can make it difficult for researchers to elect a theoretical path that best suits their studies. Thus, in the sense of cooperating with regard to the orientation of research in the area, this paper intends to map the manner in which subjectivity is conceptualized as well as the possible limitations of said conceptualizations. The objective of this study is to explore how the concept of subjectivity is used within Food Studies.

The cultural-historical perspective was referred in order to understand how subjectivity production is recognized in food studies. This perspective opposes the comprehension of food from a biological standpoint, in which food is discussed in a reductive way as its components and nutrients related to its individual value. The sum of nutrients, vitamins and minerals is not the only way to promote health and nourish the body. Beyond this perspective, there are other dimensions involved to achieve food security as socio-economic, cultural, environmental and psychological aspects that are indivisible from a human rights perspective. Therefore, it can be questionable to give a vulnerable community a package of food that is adequate in nutrients but does not respect their culture and eating habits. In this case, there could be violations of the human right to adequate food, by disrespecting the dignity of the person as a human being.

The subjective configuration of food is a cultural-historical process, socially constructed and present in people's everyday lives, in their actions and in the subjective-relational fabric. The subjective organization of food involves people's life history, their family and institutional relationships. The subjective configurations related to food can manifest themselves in the stances people adopt in their lives, such as habit changes, practices, experiences – which are all an expression of subjectivity. With these subjective configurations we are capable of mobilizing ourselves and take a stance in life. Food is related to affections, interests, motivation, desires, values, which can lead to a less alienated and more emancipatory way of life, or that can conduct to a more individualistic one. The field of food studies requires an understanding that it involves both individual and social subjectivities in organizing subjective senses of individuals and groups.

To achieve the expected results, a scoping review was carried out. The research nature of the scoping review method is exploratory, as it aims to explore a comprehensive overview of the main aspects of the concepts of subjectivity used in food studies, in face of the scientific eclecticism present in the area. It has also descriptive characteristics, as it is primarily intended to allow mapping the key concepts of subjectivity that support the food studies field, especially in this complex area of study.

The text is divided into the following sections: (1) Introduction, which summarizes the study and was organized to indicate the study theme, its justification, objectives; (2) Theoretical framework of food in social sciences as well as the concept of subjectivity from a cultural-historical perspective; (3)

Methods with the procedures for data collection and analysis; (4) Results that presents the search strategy into the PRISMA Flow Diagram and the characteristics of the selected studies; (5) Discussion that presents the categories in which the concept of subjectivity is used in food studies, including perspectives related to the experience of the person's body as embodiment and internalization processes as well as interaction with the Other; (6) Final considerations that systematizes the main results and discussions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Food is a complex field that connects society, subjectivity and the person, which are traditionally separated in academic thought. The systematic review study of Brandão, Dantas and Zambon (2023) highlights that many studies cite cultural factors linked to eating habits and nutritional status, associating them to socioeconomic, family, behavioral and psychosocial factors. They suggest that future studies should take into account the cultural factor in food studies, as the biological aspect is not enough for intervention measures (BRANDÃO; DANTAS; ZAMBON, 2023). This complexity appears in the concepts used in a wide variety of academic fields as economics, nutrition, agriculture, anthropology, public policy, sociology (FAIZAN AFZAL *et al.*, 2023). Food and Nutrition Security, according to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS, 2012), "exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to food, which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life". The CFS High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE, 2017) also has a comprehensive definition for sustainable food system, which is defined as a "food system that ensures food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition of future generations are not compromised". Although the complexity of the concepts, subjectivity is not considered, at most as consumer behavior (VON BRAUN *et al.*, 2020). Many studies that intend to orient decision-making use important measurements of food security (availability, access, use and stability) or dimensions as environmental, socioeconomic, and nutritional, but cannot cover the entire range of aspects associated to the field, including subjectivity (CARVALHO *et al.*, 2021; FAIZAN AFZAL *et al.*, 2023).

Carvalho, Luz and Prado (2011) point out that food can be associated to many meanings, and the practice of eating takes on meanings and senses in accordance with the signification present in the context of that symbolic and imaginary universe. This universe is not always rational and produces both

individual and collective identities. The anthropology of food understands food culture as "the set of representations, beliefs, knowledge and practices, inherited and/or learned that are associated with food and are shared by individuals of a given culture or a given social group" (CONTRERAS; GRACIA, 2015, p. 29).

The eclecticism of methodologies, theories, epistemologies is present in the field of Psychology itself, in which critiques against both the alleged anti-scientificism that the concept of "subject" entails, as well as against the disregard for the social in the concept of the "private individual" (FIGUEIREDO, 2022). Subjectivity, therefore, is a largely ignored concept in psychology (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2022). Traditional psychology separated "psychological phenomena from social and cultural realities, reducing human phenomena to individual psychological nature and behavior" (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2019, p. 38). In a social perspective, all other theoretical approaches had in common the effort to overcome the individual and natural reductionism by taking into consideration the symbolic processes of social characteristics. Nonetheless, critical approaches in Psychology have embraced the social over the psychological, this time putting aside the complex psychic process and the individuals. This fragmentation prevented theoretical advance in a theory of subjectivity due to the absence of an ontology of the human psychic phenomena whether individual or social (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2022; GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2019).

Gonzalez Rey (2022) comprehends human subjectivity from a cultural-historical perspective, that is inseparable from the symbolic world of culture. For him, subjectivity specifies an inseparable unit of the symbolic with the emotional, in which the emotional acquires a symbolic character. Subjective senses are symbolic-emotional units that emerge as a production of the person as a result of human experience within an organized social and cultural life. They appear in a flow of movement, in which one feeling engenders the other, which result in subjective configurations that emerge as a relatively stable production of certain subjective senses that characterize the subjective value of an action, relationship or person for an individual or group (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2022).

As argued by Teles and Rossato (2023), the production of meanings by individuals is a process that involves an irregular and dynamic flow, meanings that integrate a person's history as well as her current moment of existence. Therefore, beliefs and values are produced in historical and cultural dynamics, generated in a symbolic and emotional unit by people in relation to their contexts.

METHODS

The methodological approach of this study is a scoping review. Scoping reviews are a type of "evidence synthesis that has the objective of identifying and mapping relevant evidence that meets pre-

determined inclusion criteria regarding the topic, field, context, concept or issue under review" and it seeks "to develop a comprehensive overview of the evidence rather than a quantitative or qualitative synthesis of data" (PETERS *et al.*, 2021, p. 2). By intending to identify and map evidence, scoping reviews are a more descriptive type of study. They are also exploratory research as the question or questions are often broad and this means to develop an overview of a wide and diverse body of literature.

This proposed scoping review was conducted inspired by the Joana Briggs Institute methodology for scoping reviews (PETERS *et al.*, 2015; PRISMA, 2023; SUBERO; ESTEBAN-GUITART, 2021; TRICCO *et al.*, 2018). The scoping review method was used as the basis of studies (HAYASHI *et al.*, 2023; GALLOWAY, 2023; ONYISHI, 2023).

A protocol was registered in February 23rd, 2023 at Open Science Framework Platform, under the DOI registration number 10.17605/OSF.IO/UHQ3M. A preliminary search on the Open Science Framework Platform, PROPERO, the Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, JBI Evidence Synthesis was conducted and no systematic reviews or scoping reviews on the topic were identified. The acronym "PCC" (Population/ Participants, Concept, Context), which is recommended for scoping reviews, guided the formulation of the review questions: How is subjectivity defined in Food Studies? What are the concepts used to comprehend subjectivity among individuals or groups related to Food Studies?

The search strategy was elaborated together with the University of Brasília librarian. An initial search was performed at The Improvement of Higher Education Personnel Coordination – CAPES, an internet portal that hosts a collection of journals in Brazil. This initial search was used to establish the relevant index terms, as well as to identify words contained in titles, keywords and abstracts in order to develop a complete search strategy, which then guided the final electronic databases selection. An electronic search took place in March 2023, according to the search strategy presented in Table 1. The Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used, as well as the parentheses (), asterisk * or quotes "" so as to aid the search. The search was carried out within the following databases: Social Science Citation Index, Directory of Open Access Journal - DOAJ, Gale Academic One File, Taylor & Francis Journals, EBSCO/ Academic Search Premier. To access a wide range of available literature, a gray literature search was also conducted on Google Scholar and Proquest Dissertation and Theses. A handsearch was conducted so that additional sources that were not under the previously mentioned databases could be included. The search strategy, including all identified keywords and index terms, was adapted according to each database. There was no minimum or maximum number of studies established, nor language or date range limit.

Table 1 - Search strategies used in each electronic database

Databases	Search Strategies
Social Science Citation Index Directory of Open Access Journal – DOAJ Gale Academic One File Taylor & Francis Journals EBSCO/ Academic Search Premier	(subjectivit* OR "subjective development" OR "theory of subjectivity") AND (hunger OR malnutrition OR obesity OR eat OR food OR diet OR nutrition OR agroecology)
Scholar Google	allintitle: subjectivity AND (hunger OR malnutrition OR obesity OR eat OR food OR diet OR nutrition OR agroecology)
ProQuest	title ((subjectivit* OR "subjective development" OR "theory of subjectivity") AND (hunger OR malnutrition OR obesity OR eat OR food OR diet OR nutrition OR agroecology)) OR subject ((subjectivit* OR "subjective development" OR "theory of subjectivity") AND (hunger OR malnutrition OR obesity OR eat OR food OR diet OR nutrition OR agroecology))

Source: Own preparation.

After the initial search, all identified citations were uploaded onto EndNote Web™ (CLARIVATE, 2023) and duplicates were removed. Titles and abstracts were first screened by an independent reviewer and then assessed according to the inclusion criteria for the review. Potentially relevant sources were retrieved in full. Full-text researches were assessed in detail and screened for specific inclusion criteria. Reasons for the exclusion of studies were recorded and reported in the scoping review. The results of the search and study inclusion process were reported in full in the final scoping review and presented in the "Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses extension for scoping review" (PRISMA-ScR) flow diagram (Figure 1) (TRICCO *et al.*, 2018). Figure 1 presented in the results outlines the study selection steps and the final number of those eligible for this review, as well as the number and justification of excluded articles.

The population included individuals or groups in Food Studies, with a special emphasis on those connected to food systems, social vulnerability and minorities. One concept was the focus of this scoping review: subjectivity. The absence of a concept or theory explicitly described as a theoretical framework of subjectivity was considered an exclusion criterion. Subjectivity being presented as a source of error, as a personal opinion to be quantified and measured, as a part of the major concept, or it being cited superficially also was an exclusion criterion. The contexts included those related to food and nutritional security, such as small-scale farming, public policy institutions and programs, communities/ local places and food systems. As food and nutrition are intrinsic to cultural existence and its diversity, they are, therefore, internationally investigated. Hence, there was not a limit on the geographical setting of this study. Nevertheless, a focus on economic interests of the food industry, globalized markets and its industrial organizations and marketing, food not being the focus of the study were considered as exclusion criterion.

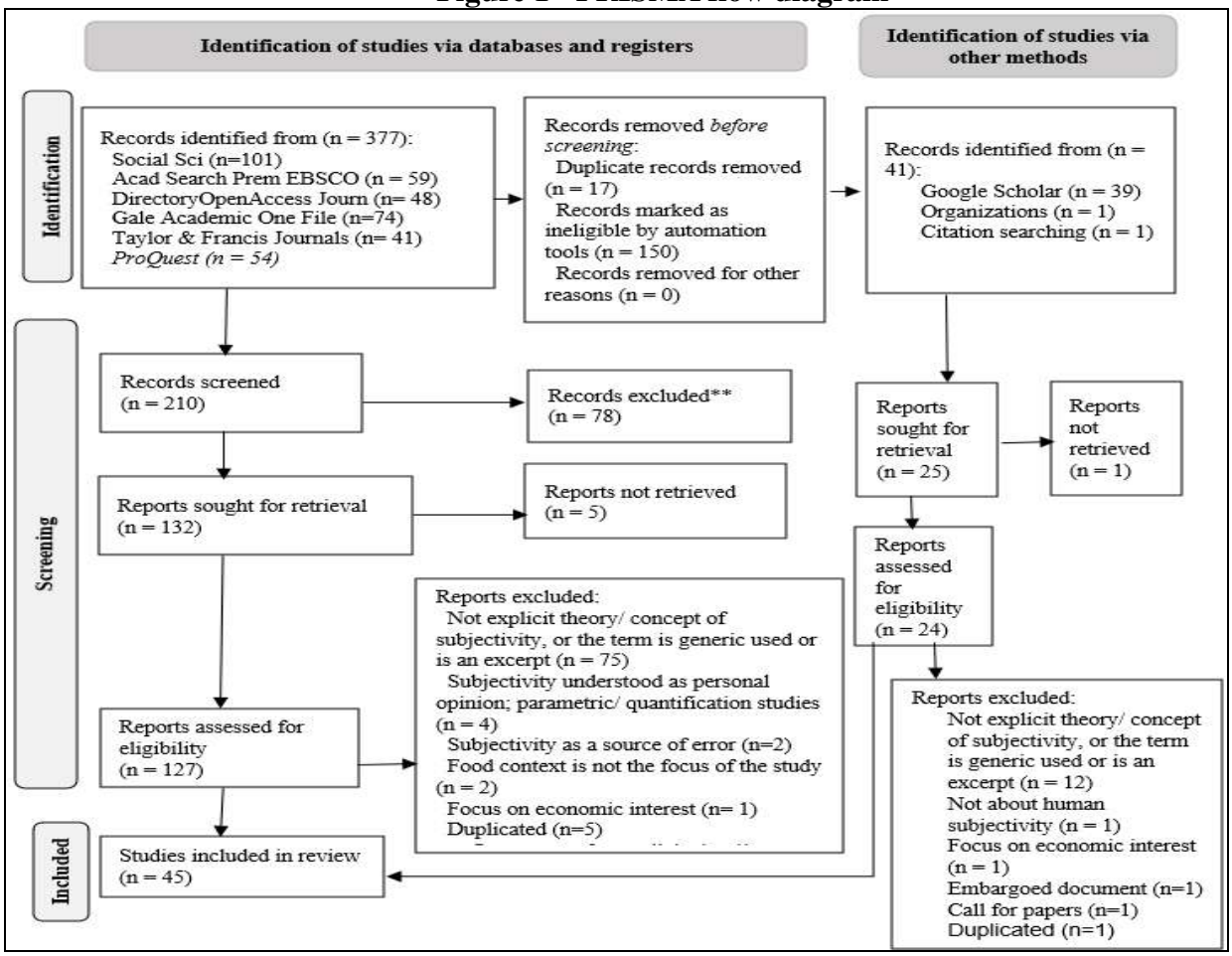
This scoping review included qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods researches. Literature review, dissertations, thesis, book chapters, commentaries, opinion pieces were also included. Journal's call for papers or papers' summaries that did not discuss the theme further were excluded from this

review. The extracted data was organized in an Excel™ spreadsheet. The findings were categorized in subgroups according to similarity in meanings and were accompanied by a narrative summary. Descriptive information extracted from all articles included authors, publication year, population, theory or concept of subjectivity, theoretical framework, context of the study, limitations. Additional information extracted from articles involved other concepts used by the authors, types of subjectivity identified and any relevant themes that emerged to comprehend the investigations.

RESULTS

The search strategy generated a total of 416 results, of which 43 studies were included. Two additional studies (GONZÁLEZ-REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2016; LUPTON, 1996) were identified and included in the final set of studies, summing up a sample of forty-five (n = 45) (Fig. 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram). It is important to acknowledge that a study could include more than one category (participant, context, type of subjectivity, theoretical authors), so the final percentage presented for each group of analysis is not equal to 100%.

Figure 1 - PRISMA flow diagram



Source: Own preparation.

Characteristics of the selected studies

In terms of participants, most studies focused on women (n=10), followed by those related to community producers/ local smallholder farmers/ peasants/ subsistence farmers/ organic farmers/ refugee farmers (n = 6). Another group of studies (n = 5) focused on food consumers. Studies also included ethnical groups (n = 4), migrants and refugees (n = 4), workers of the food industry (n = 4), those who practice some form of self-starvation (anorexia, hunger strike, lip sewing) (n = 4), early years students (n = 3), youth (n = 3), university students (n = 2), lower socioeconomic groups (n = 2), vegetarians (n = 2).

A wide range of contexts were studied, such as community gardens/ farms (organic, small hold, rural) (n = 8); school (nursery, kindergarten, elementary, middle school), college and university (n = 7); ethnic communities (n = 6), hospitals and clinics (n = 4), digital devices/ online media and platforms/ blogs (n = 4), ethnical food services (n = 2), prison/ detention or refugee centres (n = 2), small-medium food enterprises (n = 2), Brazilian favela/ low income communities (n = 2), workplace (n = 2), etc.

The main ways in which the concept of subjectivity appeared in the results was related to subjectivation processes, for instance: (1) *Political subjectivities* (ANDERSON, 2010; BARGU, 2014; 2022; BARRON, 2017; BERMÚDEZ, 2020; CRONIN; HOPKINSON, 2018; ANDRADE, 2021; DU, 2021; ERIKSEN *et al*, 2019; GRISOLIA; CASTRO, 2016; HIETANEN; SIHVONEN, 2021; THROOP, 2009; WING CHAN; MILLER, 2015); (2) *Embodied subjectivities* (PIAN, 2012; DRIVER, 2008; GINGRAS, 2010; HOLT, 2017; LUPTON, 1996; NAESS; KOLNES, 2022; NORMAN, 2013; PUURONEN, 1999), and (3) *Community or ethnic subjectivities* (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; GINGRAS; TIRO, 2008; LAZOROSKA, 2021; PROTSCHKY, 2009; SKINNER, 2013; WALL, 2016; WILLIAMS, 2010).

Other studies focused on a particular group's subjectivity, as: Consumer subjectivity (BARRON, 2017; CRONIN; HOPKINSON, 2018); Producer/ Farmer subjectivity (BARRON, 2017; ERIKSEN *et al.*, 2019; WING CHAN; MILLER, 2015); Modern or citizen subjectivity (n = 2); Student subjectivity (PIAN, 2012; DREW; GORE, 2016); Obesity/ Fat subjectivity (NORMAN, 2013); Organic/ alternative food subjectivity (CODY, 2019); Dietitian subjectivity (GINGRAS, 2010); Adult, infant, mother subjectivity (HOLT, 2017); Employee subjectivity (n = 1); Vegetarian subjectivity (TANKE, 2007), etc.

Additional studies placed emphasis on subjectivity related to gender, such as female, feminist subjectivity (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; TIUSANEN, 2021; TOMOKO, 2001; YAN LI, 2009); Fluid, diverse subjectivity (NORMAN, 2013; PROTSCHKY, 2009; YAN LI, 2009); Masculine subjectivity (NORMAN, 2013).

Most of the papers relied on post structuralist studies to conceptualize subjectivity (Table 2). The commonly used theoretical framework was based on Foucault (n = 15); followed by Lupton's cultural studies (n = 8); feminist/postfeminist studies (n = 6); Merleau-Ponty and phenomenological-hermeneutic approaches (n = 5); psychoanalytic perspective (n = 4); Judith Butler's approach (n = 4); postmodern theories (n = 4); postcolonial theories (n = 3); Deleuze (n = 3); O'Brien's quantum theory (n = 2); Levinas's Otherness ethic approach (n = 2); Derrida's approach (n = 2); etc.

Table 2 Main theoretical frameworks used for the comprehension of subjectivity as described in food studies in selected papers

Theoretical framework	Author (Year)
Foucault	Abou-Rizk & Rail (2014); Anderson (2004); Bargu (2022); Cody (2019); Craveiro (2018); Cronin & Hopkinson (2018); Drew & Gore (2016); Du (2021); Grisolia & Castro (2016); Skinner (2013); Tanke (2007); Tiusanen (2021); Wing Chan & Miller (2015); Woolhouse et al. (2012); Yan Li (2009).
Lupton's poststructuralist cultural studies (with influences of Merleau-Ponty and Phenomenology)	Gingras (2010); Gingras & Tiro (2008); Holt (2017); Lazoroska (2021); Lupton (1996); Tiusanen (2021); Tomoko (2001); Wall (2016)
Feminist/postfeminist studies	Abou-Rizk & Rail (2014); Menozzi (1994); Tiusanen (2021); Williams (2010); Woolhouse et al. (2012); Yan Li (2009)
Merleau-Ponty and phenomenological-hermeneutic approaches	Andrade (2021); Drew & Gore (2016); Naess & Kolnes (2022); Puuronen (1999); Throop (2009)
Psychoanalytic perspective	Bermúdez (2020); Andrade (2021); Drew & Gore (2016); Menozzi (1994)
Social and Postmodern theories	Barron (2017); Bermúdez (2020); Spannring (2019); Sun & Chen (2021)
Judith Butler (gender, performance approaches; influenced by Foucault and psychoanalyses)	Anderson (2010); Drew & Gore (2016); Holt (2017); Yan Li (2009)
Postcolonial theories	Abou-Rizk & Rail (2014); Protschky (2009); Williams (2010)
Deleuze	Craveiro (2018); Pian (2012); Grisolia & Castro (2016)
O'Brien's quantum theory	Eriksen et al. (2019); Rigolot (2020)
Levina's Otherness ethic	Hietanen & Sihvonen (2021); Stoneman (2009)
Derrida	Magnone (2014); Timar (2013)
Dejour and psychodynamic of work	Andrade (2021)
Annemarie Mol (multiple realities; objects that act in the relations; influenced by Foucault)	Strathern (2012)
Vygotsky	González-Rey & Mitjáns Martínez (2016)

Source: Own preparation.

It was observed that, in the selected studies, both classical authors and contemporary authors were referenced in an attempt to generate intelligibility that otherwise would have been compromised by the limitations and gaps present in the works of the authors if looked at separately.

> Like Judith Butler, I use 'Foucault as a starting point rather than a theory to be defended' (SKINNER, 2013, p. 906).

> The latest concepts introduced by Vygotsky, especially the concepts of senses and *perezhivanie*, demand to transcend the type of traditional experiment that dominated Soviet psychology in the study of functions. (…) However, Vygotsky failed to advance an epistemological proposal that would support a new methodology (GONZÁLEZ-REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2016, p. 8).

DISCUSSION

The term subjectivity was presented across a wide variety of constructs, concepts and characteristics, as well as according to multiple author's theoretical frameworks from contemporary ones to classical ones, so as to construct intelligibility and enhance academic discussions. Overall, the selected results of the way subjectivity appears in Food Studies, pointed to a use of the concept of subjectivity in such a manner that allowed for us to organize them into two relevant categories. The first is related to a conceptualization that refers to embodiment, incorporation, assimilation and internalization processes. The second refers to the interactive and intersubjective processes related to identity, as well as to agency and the capacity to act, resist, and change social normativity.

Subjective production in food studies and the experience of bodies that are the agents of action

A person's body carries one's history and emotions, which were culturally symbolized and subjectively configured through experience. Experience was the main focus of phenomenology, and subjectivity was represented as a complex phenomenon that first appeared in philosophy in discussions by authors such as Marx, Dewey, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and Edgard Morin (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2020). Phenomenology was used in psychology as a descriptive/ inductive method, using the interpretation process not as a theoretical construction, but rather as merely a procedure (making the field findings fit into instruments and pre-conceived concepts) (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2020).

For Lupton (1996), the sensual experiences that arise with food preparation and consumption evoke emotions on conscious and unconscious levels. This experience is lived primarily by the body. The idea of embodying, incorporating, assimilating food or another being (like an animal or a person) can be described as a sensual experience, "that can be tasted, touched, seen, heard and smelled" (DRIVER, 2008, p. 930). It can also be understood as the expression of unconscious desires (DRIVER, 2008), social struggles (CRONIN; HOPKINSON, 2018), autonomy (TIMAR, 2013), control (LUPTON, 1996; YAN LI, 2009), sacrifice and domination of oneself or of another (MAGNONE, 2014; SPANNRING, 2019). Incorporation and embodiment, as discussed among the selected texts, reveal a connection between eating and the body that goes beyond the individual field or of that of nourishment carried out to satisfy daily necessities and promote self-care.

Incorporation and embodiment are actions carried out in the living world according to the person's sensual experiences. Strathern (2012) exemplifies how cannibalism can be more than a form of nourishment through food, as it represents the consumption and assimilation of the others' agency. In doing so, she states that it is not the incorporation itself that is relevant, but the act of eating that has senses and meanings attributed to it. Thus, the eaters are agents that eat others' agency (and the actions of others are also the outcome of their own agency).

According to González Rey (2017), subjective decisions do not result from one's conscious assumptions, but from a "flux of subjective senses that are configured during the action, embodying the subject's action beyond any conscious intention". Conscious and unconscious are not separated from subjectivity, as they are two simultaneous moments of a process and are part of the same system. The unconscious aspect is present in the analyzed studies (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; DRIVER, 2008; LUPTON, 1996; PUURONEN, 1999; YAN LI, 2009). This discussion is an important aspect of psychoanalysis. Although psychoanalysis is a science of the senses, it is not a science of the immediate senses, which makes it eminently anti-phenomenological. Interpretation in psychoanalysis is more an induction, a procedure, than a theoretical construction (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2020). Differently from what is assumed in psychoanalysis, subjective senses and configurations cannot be induced, as the emergence of emotions occurs intrinsically in psychological processes, according to González Rey (2020).

Puuronen (1999), in accordance with Merleau-Ponty, understands that a pre-reflective idea is not something hidden in the unconscious (instincts or drives), but an awareness that is unreflected, differing from the psychoanalytic concept of unconscious. This theoretical direction led the author to comprehend anorexia and the issue of overweight not as diseases, but as identities. For example, the first can be understood as a means through which a person protects the body from food they deem could tarnish the body, which is understood as sacred.

The term internalization was used in some studies to explain how subjectivity is produced (ERIKSEN *et al.*, 2019; WING CHAN; MILLER, 2015; YAN LI, 2009). It was used in this sense by Vygotsky during the more instrumentalized period of his work. Vygotsky dichotomized internal and external process proposing that the psyche was configured as a linear internalization of external operations, which reduces the symbolic to operations with objects and signs (SUBERO; ESTEBAN-GUITART, 2021). As Subero and Esteban-Guitar (2021, p. 225), we agree that "subjectivity is not a consequence of any external condition, whether a discursive or concrete reality, nor does it represent a internalization of social productions, but is understood as a generative system".

Subjectivity and interaction with the Other and the world, from belonging to resistance

Other authors discuss the production of subjectivity as interembodiment or as intersubjectivity, emphasizing interactions with the Other and the world (GINGRAS, 2010; HIETANEN; SIHVONEN, 2021; HOLT, 2017; LUPTON, 1996; NORMAN, 2013; THROOP, 2009). González Rey (2017) centers his logic around dialogical processes which lead to spontaneous self-expression. Lupton (2012) considers embodiment and subjectivity relational. For her, "bodies are experienced and conceptualized in relation to other bodies, as well as to discourses, practices, spaces, ideas and non-human objects and other living things" (LUPTON, 2012). Merleau-Ponty's understands the "body-subject" as an experience that is embodied, as "being-in-the-world", which is, for him, always an intersubjective experience (LUPTON, 2012). González-Rey & Mitjáns Martínez (2016) reinforces the importance of the singularity of individuals' creations and questions the concept of "mediator", which implies a mediation process that is in contrast with the defended notion of intersubjectivity. For the authors, true creation can generate intelligibility on processes that might be different from the discourse from which they were produced. So, although interaction and dialogical process are important in the production of subjectivity, it is still a production of the subject that occurs without mediation.

Hietanen (2021) discusses Levinas' concept of subjectivity which he conceptualizes as an ethical revelation that produces a profound intersubjective burden, a perpetual sense of guilt because of the inability to do more for the Other. Another type of interaction that is discussed in some studies is that of the subjectivity of children in relation to care givers or mothers, as follows.

> [The] concept of interembodiment is a useful starting point for exploring the intersubjective, interdependent subjectivity/agency of infants with their carers. Despite many critiques (…), they do emphasize that infants are, from their earliest moments of life, social beings, who seek to provoke specific responses to forge attachment to the adults around them (…) The infant has the ability to refuse the food, and this might change the food offered another time (HOLT, 2017, p. 3,10,12).

For Lupton, "children must be considered agential in their interactions with others and with the material world" (LUPTON, 2012). The process of subjective production in actions and relations involves more than discourses. González Rey (2020, p. 567) understands that emotions are intrinsic to subjectivity and he criticizes that, in psychology, "emotions have been seen as external to other psychological process", as papers commonly consider "thinking, imagination, actions, as if these functions are not also emotional". The concept of *perezhivanie*, developed by Vygotsky to describe an emotional experience, enables the study of the influence of the environment on psychological development (MARCH; FLEER, 2017). "Bodily sensations, experienced subjectively through body

feedback are experienced as subjective feeling of the ongoing emotion", which can regulate actions (MARCH; FLEER, 2017, p. 106).

González Rey inspired by aspects of the constructivist and post-rationalist theoretical models, develops the concept of subjective sense, as a symbolic and emotional unit. That unit is not a linear result of the lived experience, but rather a production that results from it. González-Rey & Mitjáns Martínez (2016), in their case study analysis of a person with obesity, state that:

> In the case of obesity, sedentary lifestyle and poor food (…) always expresses symbolic and emotional processes that, through the subjective senses in which these processes are integrated, will be an active part of the subjective configuration of little care for food and of a sedentary lifestyle, something that is expressed through unique subjective configurations in each person (GONZÁLEZ-REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2016, p. 12).

The person's singular life plot comprehended in its relationship with cultural-historical subjective configurations is a perspective that is not explored enough in the analyzed texts and is often regarded by them as a limitation of the study. Authors point out the challenges faced when seeking to understand the individual path of people's subjectivity:

> Undoubtedly, we would need to investigate the intersection of the young Lebanese-Canadian women's socioeconomic status, religion and other elements of their socio-historical background to understand the differences that prevail between our findings and those of studies about other minority groups of women (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014, p. 12).
>
> Emerging patterns in the distribution of each of these body types across age, gender, social class and ethnicity thus warrant further exploration if we are to better understand the role schools play in the vastly different relationships young people appear to be forming with their bodies over time (PIAN, 2012, p. 671).

When analyzing groups and collectives, the singular fabric of the individual's life can be difficult to access. So, within the selected studies the descriptions of types of subjectivities that characterized their subjects, can be reductionistic in their understanding of the dynamic process of singular subjective productions. Mishra (2017) argues that in critical theory, in the work of authors such as Lacan, Althusser and Foucault, subjectivity is conceived as unstable and fragmented. The idea of a fragmented subjectivity, even when considered multiple and everchanging, ends up being categorized into types (worker subjectivity, consumer subjectivity, organic subjectivity, female subjectivity, etc) that express more an idea of a group's subjectivity or an identity or a social representation. In these theoretical construction, the person's singular subjectivity within the varying relations and actions present in their context seems to disappear.

Although actions and relations are associated to social forces, cultural formation, and even individual aspects, they tend not to consider the long-time process of the person's history and experiences that are configured singularly. Experiences are inseparable from how the person acts and relates to others. The singular subjective productions are expressed by the subjective senses produced in accordance with the subjective configuration of the person's experience, as well as with the multiple social subjective configurations that coexist (GONZÁLEZ REY; MITJÁNS MARTÍNEZ, 2017).

Social belonging among groups and communities

Barron (2017) and Cody (2019), in their study on community gardens, discuss the importance of space in developing groups and communities. For Barron (2017), space can be defined geographically, such as neighborhood, or as a community that shares identities. For her, as long as people recognize each other as "subjects" space can be generated and produced, and that enables them to participate, express themselves, and psychologically own those spaces and symbolize them as places. Those places connect people emotionally and materially, enabling experiences that can be a source of meaning, autonomy and an identity. She also presents the concept of commons for the community gardens, as "natural or cultural resources that are shared and oftentimes jointly managed by users", based on communication and cooperation (BARRON, 2017, p. 8). They are not completely public or private and share two other qualities: they are non-commodified, thus, allowing participation, and they are not consumption spaces, but spaces of creation, production and regeneration. Lazoroska (2021), in the same perspective, discusses an open body whose subjectivity is tied to a group, a community. This idea forges an understanding that this open body can feed itself through ritualistic food consumption and is defined in opposition with the modern body of Western society "wherein taste guides decisions on what to eat or not to eat, thus diminishing the role of the communal meal". Related to this idea of a subjectivity connected to social and cultural practices, another concept commonly used in the selected studies was the term identity (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; CODY, 2019; PIAN, 2012; DREW; GORE, 2016; GINGRAS; TIRO, 2008; PROTSCHKY, 2009; TIMAR, 2013; WALL, 2016; WILLIAMS, 2010). There is a plural and diverse comprehension of what constitutes identity present in the texts with regards to the person, a group or a community. Beyond the expected idea of belonging that identity carries (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; PROTSCHKY, 2009; WALL, 2016). Identity was understood as a more rigid framing when compared with the concept of subjectivity (LUPTON, 1996). Other interesting correlations discussed within the selected texts were: individual practices, autonomy, self-control and self-stylization (PUURONEN, 1999; TANKE, 2007); manipulation (GINGRAS; TIRO, 2008), identity

appropriation (GINGRAS; TIRO, 2008), the objectification of the person and the denial (or self-denial) of membership, as well as the construction of alternative identities (PROTSCHKY, 2009; PUURONEN, 1999); community practices and identity formation (CODY, 2019).

Feminist approaches related the subjectivity of the women studied with ethnic and identity contradictions, culinary practices and resistance strategies (WILLIAMS, 2010); female genealogy along with representations and self-representations; motherhood; the symbolism of food and experience, as the desire to be emotionally nourished and eating as a compensation for a lost love, or cooking as a technical performance that connects past and present or as a form of knowledge, action and autonomy (MENOZZI, 1994); as well as the relations between the body and social representations related to beauty ideals and food consumption; and, finally, the creation of alternative discourses (ABOU-RIZK; RAIL, 2014; WOOLHOUSE *et al.*, 2012).

The theory of social representations focuses on communication, ideology and social ongoing practices, but, for González Rey (2015), despite Moscovici's advances when he emphasizes the symbolic character of social representations, he never explicitly defined what that meant. González Rey (2015) goes on to define social representations as complex subjective configurations, arguing that individual subjectivity is part of it and is not dissociated from social subjectivity.

Rise of subjectivity in confrontational processes

The relation with institutions, as government, market or social-economical forces, can provoke resistance. Even though changing the configured context is not an easy task, aspects of domination, use of force are in opposition with the desire for freedom. Truth speaking would be, according to authors inspired by Foucault's perspective, an ethical confrontation with an authority with power, and even if it may put one's life at risk, it is also an expression of self-mastery and agency.

In relation to the hegemonic concept of "agency", González Rey and Mitjáns Martínez (2017) chose to separate the agent and the subject. An agent would be an individual (or social group) that is capable of being active during an experience, even though he or she may not be able to promote change or open new subjectivation processes. On the other hand, a subject is one who can creatively open a new path of subjectivation, changing the normativity of the social space.

This notion of imprisonment and resistance of the body appears in the selected texts that explored themes such as self-starvation and anorexia (ANDERSON, 2010; BARGU, 2022; PUURONEN, 1999); self-harm with lip sewing and self-renunciation and disappearance of the body (BARGU, 2022).

Butler (2017, p. 94) considers that Foucault suggests that the production of the subject occurs through subordination as well as through the destruction of the body – a notion that appeared in some of the analyzed papers (ANDERSON, 2010; BARGU, 2022; PUURONEN, 1999). On the other hand, for him, resistance is defined as an effect of power, as a subversion of it (ANDERSON, 2010; BARGU, 2022; BERMÚDEZ, 2020; CODY, 2019; DU, 2021). Butler, on the other hand, argues that that is a contradiction in Foucault's work, because his understanding that the subject is formed through subjection, prohibition so that the broad psychoanalytical concept of the psyche is reduced to the soul that is imprisoned, implies eliminating the possibility of resistance. This aspect of Foucault's work appears in the selected texts as "docile bodies" that are unable to resist (CRONIN, 2018; BERMÚDEZ, 2020).

Some studies argue that in face of authoritarian institutions, subjectivities are imposed. The production of subjectivity as imposed from the outside appears in the papers as "marketer-imposed subjectivities" (CRONIN; HOPKINSON, 2018, p. 2) autonomous market actor imposed subjectivity (DU, 2021), urbanized peasants imposed subjectivity (DU, 2021); as well as in: "many of the farmers themselves, who hence internalize a subjectivity as poor resource managers" (ERIKSEN *et al.*, 2019, p. 10). In these papers, subjectivity is understood as imposed by an external institution or person. It is the same idea expressed by Butler, present in Anderson (2010), that the source of personal and political agency is not originated from within the person, but in and through the complex cultural interaction between bodies, in which identity is always changing.

Although it seems passive and deterministic, much like Foucault's contradictory approach, authors point resistance as a response to an imposed subjectivity, "the interviews with villagers reveal an unstinting determination to resist the new subjectivity" (DU, 2021, p. 14). This intrinsic conflict is also perceived as below:

> Subjectivities reflect how the operation of power produces social differentiation through the way that people both internalize and contest how they are situated in relation to others as, for example, along gender or ethnicity lines, or as "progressive farmer," "vulnerable farmer," "expert" etc (ERIKSEN *et al*, 2019, p. 3).

Whereas for González Rey (2017, p. 43), "subjectivity implies continuous resistance to and confrontation with the social hegemonic status quo". Post-structuralism, one expression of the postmodern movement, reduced human phenomena to discursive practices and hermeneutic as proposed by Heidegger and further developed by Foucault, Derrida, among others (GONZÁLEZ REY, 2017). The most innovative and critical trends in psychology discuss important concepts like discourse,

deconstruction, power, gender, but omit the different paths of subjectivation, which points to a limitation regarding the conceptualization of complex challenges involving human phenomena.

Action and disappearance of the body

Subjectivities related to the disappearance of the being and the refusal to eat were discussed in the analyzed papers using the phenomenological concept "Dasein", which describe the human experience of being in the world in Heidegger's existential analysis. Anderson (2010, p. 14) cites Heidegger, arguing that for the author the "'Authentic' Dasein" is a life lived in full, which, in turn, depends on death. Life becomes meaningful within the context of dying and allows for the individuation of the person from the group (from the "they"), but also to direct care towards oneself and others.

Presenting a different perspective, Anderson argues that self-starvation is not a form of care, but a perverse practice with institutionally sanctioned forms of treatment (heavy monitoring, psychological counselling, force-feeding). So, for him, this kind of care is actually uncaring and unsympathetic, because of these practices aim to control the difference through the rhetoric of humanity.

The disappearance practices of self-starvation presented in Anderson (2010), Bargu (2022) as well as Puuronen (1999) connect subjectivity to performance. As stated by Anderson (2010), those discussions propose that the disappearance of the body is not related to Foucault's notion of subjectivation (as a way of freely accepting the submission or subordination to the state power), nor is it a mere acceptance of death as a radical experience for an authentic existence of being-in-the-world (Dasein). Hence, self-starvation is not understood as neither disorder or disease, but rather as a performance, that can involve aesthetic, social and political significance.

Maldonado-Torres (2007), using Levinas, criticizes Heidegger because of his support to Nazism, and his complicitness with violence and power. This blindness in relation to dehumanization and suffering led Levinas to center his thought on ethics and relationship, inspiring a critical philosophy of Being in his encounter with the Other. Those concepts are prior to the development of the concept of coloniality of being formulated by Walter Mignolo, discussing relations marked by power coloniality and knowledge coloniality. Maldonado-Torres, discussing Franz Fanon's concept of Damné (condemned), remembers that the absence of a reflection on coloniality allows for the European concept of Dasein without proper critical reflection, at the cost of forgetting the condemned and the coloniality of being. To ignore this relation of the individual with the Other means, not only a lack of authenticity, but the renunciation of justice and radical responsibility towards the other.

Hietanen's (2021) and Stoneman's (2009) studies elected Levinas as their guiding approach, while Williams (2010), Protschky (2009) and Abou-Rizk (2014) used post-colonial/ decolonial perspectives, which González Rey (2016), in his critical psychology, also dialogues with.

It is important to notice that our study has as limitation the fact that this scoping review aimed to map the definitions and concepts used in food studies, so it did not aim to assess the quality of the available documents. Another important consideration is that the results are associated to the previous criteria adopted, such as no date or place limit. Other connections can be pursued by future studies.

FINAL REMARKS

Among the selected papers there was diversity of ways of understanding and defining subjectivity. Two main categories were identified related to the use of the concept of subjectivity in food studies. Firstly, related to the experience of the person's body. Those processes were associated to sensual experiences, to the meanings generated by the person, as well as the understanding of the psyche as a dichotomized internal and external process. The second category refers to a concept of subjectivity that embraces social interactions. Those authors discuss identity formation, resistance, rise of the subject, capacity to act (or not).

The diversity of concepts used can lead to doubts with regards to which approach should be used to understand subjectivity and what is at stake when one is chosen. Some questions could be asked: how are those approaches managing to understand subjectivity in the actions and relations in the singular cultural-historical context of individuals or groups? And, how are the interested individuals or groups being involved in the decisions about themselves and their communities in relation to Others? Any chosen approach will be limited and will not represent an ultimate truth. Any approach will always be permeated by indetermination, tensions, contradictions and doubts.

Subjectivities and food are connected beyond the individual field or the pursue of nourishing the body to satisfy daily necessities and promote self-care. The connection involves actions and relations and sensual experiences through which subjective senses of symbolic-emotional nature are produced. Understanding how subjective senses are formed in association with one's singular life plot is essential, as well as identifying the singular subjective configuration of subjects that creatively transform the social space's normativity, forming new paths of subjectivation. These subjective senses and the subjective configuration may contribute to develop a better comprehension of the stances taken, such as resistance to market, food policies, food choices, etc.

Based on the findings of the review, some main recommendations for future research directions are now presented. First, the analysis on the process of subjective production should consider more than discourse, including its various forms of manifestation, conscious or unconscious, present in individuals' actions, relations and bodies. Another recommendation is that subjectivity is more than general types of subjectivity or social representations. It involves singular configurations of subjective senses that emerge due to the individual's story interconnected with the cultural and historical experiences.

Subjectivity is symbolic and emotionally connected to one's relations and actions. Those relations and actions can include daily practices of production, preparation, consumption of food, but also resistance and confrontation of social hegemonic forces, transforming them or not. A subject emerges when new paths of subjectivation are presented transforming the social normativity of the space.

Some studies considered that subjectivity could be imposed and internalized from the outside. We propose that individuals generate subjectivity without the need for mediation of food or other objects, symbols, others' subjectivity or institutions' subjectivity.

Finally, subjectivity is a concept that goes beyond the individual or micro-groups relations. It is important to consider how autonomy relates to the responsibility for the Other, and how it is configured.

In conclusion, we believe that such recommendations will be interesting and useful for several professionals, academics and researchers, avoiding possible eclecticism. Still, given this diversity of theoretical possibilities, the discussion presented can support the construction of an approach for future researches based on the knowledge about the limitations and possibilities at stake. Understanding the connections among subjectivity and food and how they can relate to individuals, groups and communities regarding food policies and programs can also contribute to decision-making. So, the broad comprehension of subjectivity and food brought by the study also allows its use by food security stakeholders such as governments, practitioners and policy-related actions and evaluations.

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