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Conjunctive Knowledge of environment-related Consumption

A Praxeological Perspective on the Sharing Economy

Zusammenfassung: Die umweltsoziologische Forschung nutzt das Konstrukt des Umweltbewusstseins, um individuelles Umwelthandeln zu erklären. Aus Sicht der Praxistheorie wird dabei jedoch lediglich das kommunizierbare Wissen der Akteure berücksichtigt. Darüber hinaus verfügen diese Akteure jedoch auch über nicht-kommunizierbares Wissen, welches für ihre Handlungspraxis von Bedeutung ist. In diesem Beitrag untersuchen wir, in welches nicht-kommunizierbare Wissen Umweltbewusstsein eingebettet ist und dadurch seine weitere Bedeutung bezieht. In einer Sekundäranalyse werten wir Gruppendiskussionen zwischen Nutzer*innen der sog. Sharing Economy aus, um dieser Frage nachzugehen. Die Sharing Economy stellt hierbei einen speziellen Fall umweltbezogenen Konsums dar, der von ihren Nutzer*innen oft als Möglichkeit zur Reduktion von Umweltbelastungen wahrgenommen wird. Wir verwenden die Dokumentarische Methode nach Ralf Bohnsack, um vier Orientierungsrahmen der Nutzer*innen auszuarbeiten, welche ihr nicht-kommunizierbares Wissen abbilden. Im Anschluss diskutieren wir Gemeinsamkeiten und Widersprüche zu ihrem kommunizierbaren Wissen sowie die Relevanz der Betrachtung beider Aspekte für die umweltsoziologische Forschung.

Abstract: Environmental sociological research uses the construct of environmental consciousness to explain individuals' decisions relating to the ecological environment of humans. From a practice theory perspective, environmental consciousness takes only such knowledge into account that can be communicated by actors. Additionally, actors also have non-communicative knowledge that is nonetheless relevant for their practice. In this article, we ask in what kind of non-communicative knowledge environmental consciousness is embedded and derives its meaning from. To address this question, we use group discussions between users of the sharing economy in a secondary analysis. The sharing economy is a specific case of environment-related consumption opportunity that users often perceive as a chance to reduce environmental stress. Applying the Documentary Method of Ralf Bohnsack, we work out four frameworks that reflect users' non-communicative knowledge of the sharing economy. We point out similarities and contradictions between communicative and non-communicative knowledge elements and discuss the relevance of considering both types of knowledge for environmental sociological research.

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Introduction

One of the major interests of environmental sociology centers on "the deep interconnection between ecology – the study of natural communities – and sociology – the study of human communities" (Liu/Bell 2017: 435). Environment-related decisions of individuals are perceived as consequences of a subjective awareness or consciousness regarding the ecological environment situated in societal discourses around ecological issues. The term of environmental consciousness typically refers to a social-psychological understanding as a multi-dimensional attitude that contains an affective, cognitive, and conative dimension representing knowledge, evaluation, and behavioral intention regarding environmental issues (first Maloney/Ward 1973, Maloney et al. 1975, cf. Diekmann/Preisendörfer 2001, Huber 2011). Environmental sociologists use this construct to explain consumption decisions as an expression or consequence of such pro- or contra-environmental, ideological awareness (Liu/Bell 2017, e.g., Diekmann/Preisendörfer 1998). This perspective reflects upon the attitude-behaviour-gap (Preisendörfer/Franzen 1996), meaning that the attitude towards sustainability does not necessarily result in actual sustainable behaviour or even counteract said expressed attitude. Critics of this perspective (e.g. Shove 2010), point out that the actual behaviour cannot be reduced to an individualistic explanation or even follows subjective values or attitudes (lately: Mock 2020: 239 f.). Consequently, Brand (2011) suggests that a praxeological perspective may reveal the "symbolic-distinctive meaning of consumption and lifestyles" (Brand 2011: 177, translated), that is, the (sub)cultural knowledge of different segments of society that give meaning to specific forms of consumption. Accordingly, we ask in what kind of non-communicative knowledge environmental consciousness is embedded and derives its meaning from. We aim to show that the praxeological perspective reveals this non-communicative dimension of collective knowledge that is important to understand the performative practice of actors. With Bohnsack and Mannheim, we will call this dimension the conjunctive knowledge and suggest its relevance besides the rationally and intentionally accessible knowledge represented by environmental consciousness. When considering individual consumption, this consciousness is associated with the communicative knowledge.

Therefore, we investigate group discussions of users of sharing economy platforms to show how participants use communicative and conjunctive knowledge to state their discursive position. We will show conformities as well as discrepancies between these two knowledge types indicating the distinctive meaning of both forms and the relevance to investigate them together to improve understanding of the performative practice of actors.

1. Sustainability

Environment-related decisions are linked to conscious and rational, as well as unconsciously perceived discursive knowledge. For environmental practices, the strands of the sustainability discourse are of particular interest. In an overview article, Adloff and Neckel (2019) distinguish three main strands of the modern sustainability discourse: sustainability as (1) modernization, (2) transformation, and (3) control. The further focus at this point should be narrowed down to the first two main strands, which have most strongly shaped the sustainability discourse to date (cf. Huber 2011, Neckel 2017).

The strand of modernization, described by Huber (2011) as ecological modernization or *promodal* environmental discourse and associated with the terms Green Economy and New Green Deal by Neckel (2017), is accordingly oriented towards (technological) progress and economic growth to expand the "limits of growth" (Meadows et

al. 1972) and the ecological room for maneuver (e.g., Huber 2000, Jänicke 1993, Mol/Sonnenfeld 2000). In particular, using the example of the financialization of sustainability (Engels 2006, Feist/Fuchs 2014, Hiß 2014), modernization can be described as endogenization (Neckel 2018a) of market problems. Ecological problems resulting from production and consumption patterns geared to maximizing utility, interpreted by others as limits of growth, are transformed into market products and thus integrated into the market logic. By maintaining and strengthening market-centered allocation mechanisms, critics of ecological modernization see their ecological effectiveness as problematic, as they identify these mechanisms as the core of ecological problems (cf. Muraca 2012). The discursively opposing transformation position (Huber 2011: *anamodal* environmental discourse) emphasizes a turning away from the "growth spiral" (Binswanger 2013) by restricting consumption as well as supporting local, sufficient, and subsistence economic production (cf. Adloff et al. 2014, Elgin 2013, Meadows et al. 1972, Paech 2012, Princen 2003, Schor 2010). However, since the central guiding principle of a social transformation aims at the (re)production mechanisms of socio-structural power relations, representatives of the modernization position rate this approach as unrealistic in terms of its feasibility (cf. Huber 2011).

The connection of environment-related practices with the positions of the actors in the environmental and sustainability discourse and the associated knowledge they possess enables a better understanding of the "symbolic-distinctive meaning of consumption and lifestyles" (Brand 2011: 177, translated). Conversely, not only does practice refer to the discourse; in observable practice, discursive claims to the defining power of what exactly should be understood by sustainability are realized at the same time (Neckel 2018b) - in the overview outlined here, sustainability as modernization or as the "right" way of

(non)consumption (Pritz 2018). These normative positions are anchored in the social structure and lifeworlds of society. Consequently, they can be understood as part of the observable practice. In the following section, we will therefore explain our praxeological perspective, which is intended to provide access to the knowledge and discursive positions mentioned here.

2. The Contribution of a Praxeological Perspective and the Documentary Method

With Schütz, individuals choose between plans for an act they perceive to be bound to specific results to make decisions (in-order-to motive, Schütz/Luckmann 1973). These plans are part of a hierarchical system, which includes short- and long-term goals as well as a hierarchy of single steps and partial plans to reach them. Consequently, this model of action follows an understanding of intentional and rational decision-making and implies that individuals can be asked about their conceived motivations.

However, asking for motives includes a post hoc process to give meaning to an act that took place beforehand. Respondents cannot go back to a situation when they had not already decided to act in a certain way. Thus, they can only reconstruct their rules of action, that is, how they happened to make their decision remembering crucial factors. Following Bourdieu (1995), this reconstruction is illusive. It is not identical to the decision process itself as it takes the perspective the respondent has in the situation of reconstructing. Thus, asking for motives may be biased to include post hoc justifications and rationalizations of the respondent's decision.

The approach of Bohnsack (2010, 2017), like Schütz, includes that individuals' decisions are oriented towards knowledge that is deliberately

accessible to them. He refers to this rational logic as *scheme of orientation*. In this way, we understand environmental consciousness as a specific scheme of orientation. But in the sense of Bourdieu, Bohnsack additionally suggests that individuals also have an intuitive and practical understanding of situations based on experience. Although this type of knowledge is non-explicable to others as it is taken for granted, it also guides how individuals act. He calls this the *framework of orientation*. Besides environmental consciousness as a scheme of orientation, our research interest is geared to show the relevance of a wider framework of orientation guiding individuals' consumption decisions.

The theoretical foundation of Bohnsack's approach lies in the work of Mannheim (1952, 1982) and the general distinction of two different levels of knowledge, communicative and conjunctive knowledge. Communicative knowledge represents the level of generalized knowledge actors can communicate. It is reflexively accessible and contains the knowledge of institutionalized processes and schemes. Actors can consciously access this information to explain to others what the social reality is for them (but not how it is produced, Pfaff et al. 2010). On the other hand, the conjunctive knowledge provides an orientation for action to some degree independent from the subjective meaning. According to Schatzki (2005: 11), "[a] central core, moreover, of practice theorists conceives of practices as embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding". Acts are not only understood in the sense of the actors' intentional, *immanent meaning*. Practice theory additionally refers to the social structures guiding acts and being documented within them (*documentary meaning*). This social structure is the 'structure of practice' or the habitus in the sense of Bourdieu (1974) and is anchored in the *everyday life* of actors. To explain the genesis of conjunctive knowledge, Mannheim uses the

concept of *spaces of experience*. Building upon the distinction of levels of knowledge, those who share common experiences in their history and socialization share a mutual, *conjunctive* space of experience. Within this conjunctive space of experience, *milieu-specific,* and in that sense *collective*, conjunctive knowledge is taken for granted and must not or cannot be made explicit to each other easily. Although they relate to different accessibilities, both levels of knowledge are inextricably linked. Actors use communicative knowledge to explicate how social reality appears to them in terms of social categorizations while conjunctive knowledge gives them a practical understanding of how social reality is produced. Together, both types of knowledge enable them to act properly.

Accordingly, the researcher functions as the documentary interpreter, searching for the documentary meaning beyond the literal utterances of respondents. The documentary meaning is the meaning beyond the actor's literal meaning. Thus, the conjunctive knowledge and framework of orientation is the point of interest instead of the communicated generalized knowledge of institutional action. Bohnsack follows Mannheim's distinction when he differentiates orientation patterns that guide individuals' decision making into schemes (communicative knowledge) and frameworks (conjunctive knowledge).

3. Communicative Knowledge about the Sharing Economy in Recent Research

To analyze the interaction of communicative and conjunctive knowledge to form a reference structure in which actors make environment-related consumption decisions, we will rely on group discussions of users of the so-called "sharing economy". This term is often used as an umbrella construct to relate to various services and practices (Acquier et al. 2017, Heinrichs 2013).

The concept entered the wider public discourse around the years 2011/2012 and is highly linked with the success stories of two specific digital platforms: Airbnb and Uber (Martin 2016). Hertwig and Papsdorf condense a minimal consensus of various definitions with "sharing economy as a set of business models, platforms and exchanges, where the participants are individuals (peer-to-peer), who gift, swap, lend or sell resources, services and/or access to things over social-media-platforms" (Hertwig/Papsdorf 2017: 524, translated). We follow their approach as it provides both, a fitting restriction of understanding and a specific openness while including (1) peer-to-peer participation, (2) involvement of digital media, (3) temporary access for usage, (4) a wide spectrum of motivation and (5) reflects the positioning of the sharing economy as a (progressively connoted) alternative towards the capitalist 'old economy'.

We understand participation in the sharing economy as a specific case of environment-related action, that is, consumption. More specifically, sharing becomes relevant as a case of second-order consumption (Hellmann 2004) as it does not meet essential needs and, thus, is socially negotiable in terms of its goals and means. Here, the basic element is their functioning for social distinction (Hellmann 2006): Through reciprocal observation and judgement, actors form short-living consumer communities (Hellmann 2014) that give meaning to different tastes (Bourdieu 2010) and consumption practices (Baudrillard 1998). Sensemaking is based on attribution processes, which either ascribe or revoke value to specific consumption practices (Campbell 2018).

From the perspective of environmental consciousness, recent studies on the sharing economy suggest that users think of the phenomenon in a promodal way. Following Huber (2011), promodal environmental consciousness draws a line between the environment and human beings, with the former getting used to fulfil the interests of the latter (instrumental approach). This includes a progress-oriented and technology optimistic attitude urging to adjust the means towards the given consumption goals (e.g., Huber 2000, Jänicke 1993, Mol/Sonnenfeld 2000). Contrarily, Huber characterizes an anamodal environmental consciousness as more egalitarian as it integrates human beings into their environment as an equal part among others. This mode is more critical towards technical modernization and its promises aiming at limiting growth and consumption (e.g., Adloff et al. 2014, Elgin 2013, Meadows et al. 1972, Princen 2003, Schor 2010).

Recent studies argue that users of sharing services perceive these platforms as an innovative technological solution to provide additional and individualized consumption opportunities (e.g., Dall Pizzol et al. 2017, Davidson et al. 2018, Forno/Garibaldi 2015, Mody et al. 2017, Wu et al. 2017) under the paradigm of sustainable resource usage (e.g., Aptekar 2016, Germann Molz 2013, Hwang/Griffiths 2017). Furthermore, the sharing economy represents central functions of the consumer logic as it provides an opportunity to improve one's social status, prestige, and power as well as the expression of that status through, for example, competence and, thus, forms a basis for social distinction (e.g., Dall Pizzol et al. 2017, Davidson et al. 2018, Martin/Upham 2016). However, the larger part of these studies investigates intentional instead of past action. For instance, questionnaires ask respondents to rate if they are willing to use certain platforms (e.g., Hwang/Griffiths 2017) or share word of mouth (e.g., Mody et al. 2017, Wu et al. 2017). Additionally, the current state of research almost entirely relies on the communicative and explicable knowledge as well as on rational decision-making as analyses are restricted to the actors' intended meaning. Our approach to investigating the interaction of communicative and conjunctive collective knowledge expands the understanding

of the role of environmental consciousness and the logic of consumption by including the documented meaning of users' decisions to take part in the sharing economy.

4. Method and Data

Our analysis is based on group discussions gathered in a research project about the sharing economy (Ranzini et al. 2017)[1]. For this paper, we conduct a secondary data analysis of the material obtained within the project. The data corpus consists of three group discussions held in early 2017. The interviews were semi-structured including a rough outline of topics and open discussion parts. The latter will be of special interest for our analysis employing the documentary method.

Originally, group discussions in the project were meant for summarizing sharing users' opinions on their understanding of the phenomenon, participation intention and history as well as privacy and regulation issues. For this study, we use the group discussions to analyze how participants use communicative and conjunctive knowledge to state their discursive position. The material fits this purpose as the sharing economy is strongly related to environmental issues (see the previous section). Furthermore, respondents were encouraged to focus on different aspects or perspectives autonomously. This also included how the respondents wanted to discuss the interviewer's questions, e.g., by describing own experiences as well as arguing from certain perspectives based on their own lifeworld. The role of the interviewer is to stimulate and moderate the discussion without inducing or supporting any particular perspective and therefore support the openness of the discussion as it

provides the respondents' subjective relevancies. The running time of the discussions slightly varies around one and a half hours.

As the transcription of interview material for the documentary method needs to include several (para)linguistic details (see appendix), the discussions were not fully transcribed. Instead, we reconstructed the topical order of the discussions and chose coherent discussion sections promising to reveal users' orientations towards the sharing economy most clearly through descriptive and narrative speech acts and containing multiple discourse movements to show up boundaries of upcoming orientations. We selected topics centering on the general attitude towards and motivation (not) to use sharing platforms to be most appropriate for our analysis. According to the main difference in understanding and interpretation based on the actor's knowledge, the research process of group discussions contains two key steps (Bohnsack 2004, 2010). (1) We translated the spoken into plain written language decoding jargon and slang, but without any further interpretation to summarize the immanent meaning, which is the schemes of orientation (formulating interpretation). (2) In the reflecting interpretation, we reconstructed the frameworks of orientation. This includes the analysis of the discourse organization, that is, how singular discursive contributions are related to each other and form discursive movements to identify collective orientations (Przyborski 2004). Additionally, we analyzed the single sequences of each contribution comparatively to reconstruct the content of the orientations identified differentiating communicative (schemes) and conjunctive knowledge (frameworks of orientation) (Nohl 2017). Accordingly, these two working steps represent a step-up-step distancing from the literal meaning of the respondents towards the documentary meaning. To reveal the commonalities of the participants and their relevance for the interaction and the discourse, the analysis requires

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1   In that project, the group discussions are called focus groups. Often these terms are used synonymously (Bohnsack 2004). We will stick with the term group discussions in this paper following the understanding of Mangold (1960).

a comparative (case-intern and case-wise) and multidimensional empirical procedure resulting in an ideal type formation of orientations and their attribution towards their social genesis[2].

For the participant recruitment, a short online questionnaire was sent out to a student audience, asking for experiences with the sharing economy (e.g., usage frequency, what services were used, status as provider or consumer). We sought to reflect on the characteristics of main user groups participating in the sharing economy. As a survey conducted within the research project showed, the main user group of sharing platforms is between 25 and 34 years old as well as highly educated (Andreotti et al. 2017). Table 1 gives an overview of the composition of the three discussion groups by gender, age, regional origin, parents' educational background, own field of study and own sharing experiences. According to the sampling strategy, (master's) students were recruited for the group discussions so that the age/year of birth shows little variance. Most of the respondents were recruited from the social sciences. Students participating in the discussions primarily come from the western German federal states. They also have similarities concerning their experiences with the sharing economy. Almost all of the discussants have used both BlaBlaCar and Airbnb, and Uber is more common as well. Moreover, all three groups have very similar orientations, so that the following part will not aim at the formation of a typology referring to their social genesis. Instead, we will focus on the elaboration of a typology of frameworks of orientation.

ID*	Year of Birth	State of Birth	Academic Parents	Field of Study	Sharing Use (open text field)
Group 1					
Am	1991	Bavaria	one	Social Sciences	Uber, MyTaxi, Airbnb
Bm	1991	North Rhine-Westphalia	none	Humanities and Linguistics	BlaBlaCar, Airbnb
Cm	1993	Hesse	none	Social Sciences	Uber, MyTaxi, Airbnb, Wimdu
Dm	1992	Bavaria	none	Social Sciences	Airbnb
Ew	1994	Lower Saxony	both	Social Sciences	No response
Group 2					
Fw	1992	Schleswig-Holstein	both	Social Sciences	BlaBlaCar, Airbnb
Gw	1992	outside the FRG	both	Social Sciences	No response
Hw	1993	Rhineland-Pfalz	none	Social Sciences	Uber, BlaBlaCar, Airbnb
Group 3					
Iw	1993	Lower Saxony	none	Humanities and Linguistics	BlaBlaCar, Airbnb
Jw	1994	Hesse	none	Social Sciences	BlaBlaCar, Uber
Km	1992	Lower Saxony	one	Social Sciences	Uber, BlaBlaCar, MyTaxi, Airbnb, Couchsurfing
Lw	1993	Thuringia	both	Social Sciences	BlablaCar, Couchsurfing, Airbnb, Friendsurance
Mw	1990	Bavaria	none	Social Sciences	BlablaCar, Bessermitfahren, Uber, Airbnb, Couchsurfing
Nw	1991	Hesse	one	Humanities and Linguistics	No response
Ow	1993	Hesse	none	Social Sciences	flinkster, BlaBlaCar, Airbnb

Table 1: Summary of Group Discussion Participants

*Note: Data from standardized pre-screening online survey. *m/w=man/woman*

2   Examples of these dimensions: gender, age, milieu, class or migration.

5. Results

In the following section, we will show different aspects of the schemes and frameworks of orientation along the discussion that unfolded in the groups of users. For every orientation, we present central components as well as the related schemes, that is, literal meaning representing communicative knowledge revealing in the discussion. For every component, we argue beginning with an example from the discussion followed by the two steps of formal and reflective interpretation, the latter including discourse order and gearing towards the level of a-theoretical knowledge of interviewees resulting in an abstracting summary.[3]

Frameworks of orientation	Main aspects
(1) Sharing as a means to an end	Sharing as an interchangeably mean and of instrumental meaning. Further, sharing is related to the social situation (e.g., student).
(2) Conscious consumption	Sharing as a conscious consumption decision and thus opposing orientation.
(3) Sharing as social distinction	Sharing as a second-order consumption choice for distinguishing purpose (e.g., between generations).
(4) Sharing as market pressure	Sharing as liberalization of markets, applying pressure to established economic actors and thus further consumption options.

Table 2: Frameworks of orientation

In summary (see also table 2), we find one central orientation "sharing as a means to an end" that is broadly shared in our three discussion groups. Additionally, some participants introduce further orientations that provoke discussions to what degree they can be aligned with "sharing as a means to an end". Within these discussions, three boundaries of the latter orientations become visible: (I) "sharing as social distinction", (II) "conscious consumption" and (III) "sharing as market pressure". While "conscious consumption" offers a new perspective on sharing that mostly differs from "sharing as a means to an end", "sharing as social distinction" and "sharing as market pressure" are compatible to the latter under certain circumstances.

Sharing as a Means to an End

Y1:   Although when you somehow say among friends I (.) have whatever (.) traveled with BlaBlaCar or so:: had a ride or took Uber if you like or an apartment at Airbnb is that something (.) something (.) in a way <u>acceptable</u> is that (1) °cool is that°

several: ∟ @(2)@

Y1:   ∟ among young <u>people</u> as yourselves

several: ∟ @(2)@

Y1:   ∟ or is that something where you say somehow °yes well I know actually that is not such a good company but (.)°

Bm: ∟ No:: I wouldn´t sa- well=um (.) I think (.) d- driving with BlaBlaCar[4] or especially Mitfahrgelegenheit[5] is just I mean we (.) in our:: <u>biotope</u> are actually only well you come together with people who also came together for studying::like it=s we are all studying (.) and all of us are not from here but (.) thereabouts and @farther@ afar as well (.) and (1) then it=s

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u::m:: (.) yea I don´t know if you can say that is super <u>cool</u> or like that but=it is simply=a means to an end but=it is definitely not negatively afflicted (.) so when somebody says ok I take a ride with (.) someone (.) by Mitfahrgelegenheit ( ) or I give someone a ride (.) um (2) then (.) it=s um:: a=little bit the common <u>way</u> because I just think (.) um without (.) being an extreme train rider bu:t I also just think that (.) the <u>train</u> (.) at least (.) in part (.) err already:: has quite high prices and it is just like (.) the cheaper (.) alternative to:: (.) regular transport- or (.) to typical transportation.

(Group 1: 18:15-19:40)

As in this first example, the discussions around sharing often center around a purpose sharing users follow by using specific services. Answering the question of the interviewer (Y1) about the acceptability of sharing services among peers as a reason to use them, respondent Bm instead describes the distance between his place of study and where his family lives as a relevant circumstance to use car sharing. Additionally, Bm points at car sharing as much cheaper as other means of traffic and travel.

Beyond this communicative knowledge, Bm is oriented towards sharing as a means to an end to meet one's own needs. Hence, sharing is interchangeable as a means and primarily given an instrumental meaning. This is impressively demonstrated by Bm as he rejects the propositional content contained in the interviewer's question that the image of sharing platforms would be relevant for "young people" and, instead, emphasizes its everyday relevance. The pursued needs are oriented deterministically towards the social situation. Relevant dimensions of the social situation here are being a student, infrastructural differences between urban and rural areas as well as

the social background from an urban white-collar milieu. On the one hand, there are claims for commuting, relocation, or vacation that make sharing attractive as a means in the social situation. These claims have the significance of social participation or empowerment to act as well as the expansion of their own abilities and competencies (e.g. language skills or intercultural competencies).

Am: But um (.) now um example um when we planned the trip to the USA:: it was (.) absolutely not open to debate that we (.) well that we book the accommodations <u>not</u> with Airbnb (.) um (.) or (.)

Bm ∟Yes.

Am: ∟ s i m i l a r platform.

Bm: ∟Although we have even:: checked what hotels:: (.) cost.

Am: ∟Yes for:: yes a moment @( )@

Bm: ∟**For a moment we have checked it and then @ turned it off very quickly@ @ (4)@**

?: ∟You never know.

(Group 1: 21:05-21:27)

Building on the former example, Am and Bm now recall the decision-making process for the choice of accommodation using the example of their last trip together. More precisely, Am and Bm differentiate a primary reference point that the hotels representing the "old economy" occupies from a primary usage orientation towards the "new economy". Furthermore, the collective knowledge, offers of the old economy are considered as obviously too expensive, gets confirmed as every attempt to convince oneself to the contrary is marked as suggestion of little severity

("You never know."). Overall, there is a consensus that they understand sharing as a "common way" in the life situation of students. In the discussion of their joint experience, it becomes clear that there are restrictions like scarce money and time resources, or remoteness of the hometown from the place of study in the sense of social deprivation. These restrictions emerge from the social situation. Am and Bm consider sharing as a common way to meet these everyday needs under the given restrictions. For this group of users, that is the relevant characteristic of sharing services compared to the old economy. The old economy is framed as less flexible and hindering, e.g., in costs, time (timetables) or space (detouring, changing of transport) and, thus, problematic towards fulfilling their needs.

> Y1:   Let us get to the topic of <u>motives</u> so <u>why</u> have these platforms been used.
>
> (4)

[…]

> Am: […] um yes but (.) especially on Airbnb (.) yes and on um on Airbnb as=well um the factor (.) that you (.) um get in <u>contact</u> with <u>locals</u> (.) um I would say who: are <u>living</u> in the c- city (.)
>
> Y1:   ⌊ Hmm.
>
> Am: ⌊ directly (.) um often they prepare well at least that=was the case <u>with me</u> that (.) um when I went on <u>vacation</u> somewhere und used Airbnb (.) they wrote you a <u>list</u> where you can go um to for <u>dinner</u>::: to <u>party</u> in the evening::, to go <u>shopping</u> (.) um what you (.) well also especially made for young <u>people</u> u- that is always very handy, what you would

defiantly not get in a hotel or so in <u>that</u> way yes.

(Group 1: 38:58-39:05 […] 39:37-40:01)

In response to the interviewer's question for the use motives of the discussants, Am describes the convenience of sharing platforms: Compared with hotels, the use of Airbnb providing contact to "locals" affords better information about local infrastructure and opportunities like leisure activities.

In both cases, it is therefore about a qualitative improvement of consumption options through a better adaptation to individual needs. "Contact with locals" implicitly raises the narration of authenticity that becomes the central distinguishing feature between Airbnb hosts and, for instance, hotel receptionists. We interpret this distinction as an extension of the degree of institutionalization of hotels: Am perceives standardized infrastructures as less able to provide individually adapted information than strongly standardized infrastructures. Contrarily, it could be assumed that hotel employees can also provide local knowledge and their work context does not prevent the information from being passed on. Then, authenticity becomes relevant primarily as an effort reduction, if the comfort service instead of special knowledge forms the decisive basis for differentiation. Thus, other users are seen as helpful when they provide useful information with a low threshold. Conversely to the helpful character of other users, additional burdens arise within the sharing economy, for example, from the actions of others when they make demands in the sense of undesired social interactions and negotiations.

> Y2:   And (.) when consider have you perhaps ever <u>used</u> a sharing platform in the <u>past</u> and sometimes later
>
> ?w: ⌊ ((hrumph)) |

Y2:   ⌊said ok, actually I <u>don=t</u> need this anymore? (.) so that you <u>stopped</u> using such=a thing? (.) °such a <u>thing</u>.° (.)

[...]

Gw: I think they le- those um those who are booking are bothered about the idea that now someone means to must have to cash in on something that originally is such=a (.)

Fw: ⌊ Non-profit thing.

Gw: ⌊Exactly.

(3)

Fw: °No but quitting elsewhere.°

Gw: ⌊ W h e r e you know especially <u>younger</u> (.) <u>people</u> (.) after all (.) are doing that (.) so (.) well maybe some <u>elders</u> too bu:t essentially I think that these whole Mitfahrgelegenheit (.) things are from <u>younger</u> people or I think of these many more are upset about why have to charge them @of all people@ additionally (.) three four Euro or so (.) |

Hw: | ⌊ (   ) |

Gw: ⌊to rip them off. But anything else?

Fw: ⌊Indeed they have I think (.) um BlaBlaCar <u>bought</u> Mitfahrgelegenheit (.) as Mitfahrgelegenheit as well established sort of <u>fees</u> yes as they did that as well they said (.) BlaBlaCar said (.) well now come to <u>us</u> and all we do <u>not</u> establish fees and Mitfahrgelegenheit is very <u>stupid</u> (.) and everyone switched to BlaBlaCar and signed in <u>there</u> and <u>searched</u> there and now they do exactly the same thing and I think that is=a little bit what (.) what goes against the grain of the people, (.) that (.) it <u>annoys</u> you that they also follow the same principle and again this this nonprofit idea gets lost because somebody in the back holds one´s hand out.

Hw: ⌊Hmm.

(Group 2: 13:07-13:21 [...] 14:43-15:38)

In this longer section, Gw later differentiates the consequences and concerns from the commercialization of platform offerings between "younger people" and "elders", with the focus on the former. In these cases, economic exploitation is particularly dramatic ("of all people"), as they seem to have less economic capital or alternatives and are therefore particularly vulnerable to price increases. Thus, the discussed price policy receives a morally reprehensible expression, as it seems to them that this - contrary to the conventions represented here – hits the poorest hardest. Fw picks up the differentiation of Gw and elaborates it further. In a narration, she describes the introduction of fees by Blablacar as thoughtful and strategically motivated to lure customers away from competitors through deliberate deception. Gw presents such an approach as generally unfair, due to its opaqueness for the users and the undermining of the assumed "nonprofit idea".

In the sense of commercialization, this group considers the introduction of user fees as inadmissible as a previously free offer becomes monetized. Online platforms represent a kind of public infrastructure that is supposed to be open for free use. A financial fee is not acceptable in this view and criticized as problematic. However, other

costs - such as advertising, collection, storage, and processing of private data - are not discussed. Contrarily, financial costs incurred for the non-digital services (like accommodation or ride) are accepted, so that the special status of digital infrastructure as barrier-free is particularly obvious. The sharing users themselves are degraded to passive, market-determined participants who are unable to make own decisions beyond structural constraints. This is precisely what constitutes their deprivation, as suggested by Gw. By being unable to question and avoid the actions of the organizational market, they are dependent on the goodwill of the latter. In this vein, this group perceives additional burdens due to the actions of others as unfair if they increase or double the disadvantage of a given social situation and, thus, dissolve the assumed win-win situation for all involved. As a result, the restrictions imposed by the social situation are more pronounced, as the Internet can no longer be used as a free information infrastructure. A doubled disadvantage is emphasized if the weakest user groups identified by their social situation are particularly burdened by the fact that they cannot avoid these costs on their own.

In summary, the connection of this orientation of sharing as a means to end and sustainability is rather implicit and the most accurate description would be sustainability as an optional factor for sharing. The primary purpose of sharing services tends to be an additional consumption opportunity, bound to the social position (as young people with scarce resources), and sustainability aspects only at the communicational margins. Considering the attitude-behavior-gap (e.g. Preisendörfer/Franzen 1996), the reference to any sustainable aspects is only communicational rather than action-guiding as these aspects do not come into play throughout the discussions. Sharing services appear in the light of an ecological modernization (e.g. Huber 2000, Adloff/Neckel 2019) as they provide more consumption

options with ecological side aspects. Further, the platform organization as one of the basic principles leans heavily towards a technologically expanded resource distribution to address, among others, ecological problems (like overconsumption) and is presented as favorable by the respondents.

Sharing as Social Distinction

Y2:   So we have already spoken a=little bit about the topic, (.) uhm I think w:hen you said that your parents right, they are a=little bit <u>critical</u> of this whole thing, (.) uhm how would you see that <u>yourself</u>, are (.) <u>generally</u> speaking:: sharing platforms a <u>good</u> or more a <u>bad</u> thing? where would you classify them roughly? (2)

Fw: ∟ Well (.) so I think it=s basically a really good approach because well (.) like Gw said in the beginning

Gw: ∟ °Hmm° |

Fw: ∟ there=s this thought, that not everyo:ne need to possess everything, and not everyone kinda: needs everything but that a lot of things simply (.) can be shared as well and that=s just a win-win situation for everyone (.) when it just (.) makes sense somehow, (.) when you live in a city you don=t need=a car every day, and then maybe <u>sometimes</u> you drive to IKEA or <u>sometimes</u> you have a run in the country for a weekend or so, but you simply don=t need it, and insofar it=s simply much more sensible for (.) nature, for your pocket book for (.) the parking lot situation for <u>everything</u> actually (.) and that=s why (.)

I would (.) say that there is=a quite (.) positive idea behind that, (.)

[...]

Gw: Yes (.) perhaps this is also a=little bit (.) grown out of history so to speak what I think our parents were s- (.) great (.) o- or were the generation that (1) that was proud for possessions (.) they acquired or (.) to possess and I think for us that does=n=t matter that much (.) simply because we have already (.) grown up in=a- a relatively (.) uhm peaceful and uhm (.) wealthy=uhm society somehow the::re (.) well today it=s maybe more in line with the <u>trend</u> o:r (.) <u>cooler</u> to say uhm I (.) don=t necessarily need (.) possessions so (.) it=s just a kinda (.) <u>lifestyle</u> (.) <u>thing</u> (.)

Fw: ⌞Yes that=s true.

(6)

(Group 2: 27:55-28:56 [...] 31:24-32:00)

When asked how the respondents would rate the sharing economy as a whole, Fw presents it as something fundamentally positive. Based on references to car and ride sharing, she elaborated that sharing represents an alternative to the necessities and burdens that come with the functional accumulation of possessions ("need", "have to" vs. "simply"). Instead, sharing represents a "win-win situation for everyone" referring to shared environmental and urban space distribution advantages (parking lot situation) as well as individual cost reduction. These advantages make it unacceptable for Fw to view sharing as something else as positive and progressive on a rational-logical level ("simply much more sensible"). After both, Gw and Hw, recount and, thus, confirm

Fw's contribution to the discourse in a paraphrasing manner, Gw again refers to the proposition raised by Fw to expand upon it. The added background construction essentially follows a value change thesis. She argues that the generation of their parents would have not lived in a free and prosperous society as the respondents themselves would nowadays. Accordingly, she sees intensive accumulation of property as a sensible strategy to reduce life risks. Due to improved societal circumstances, the respondents nowadays would focus on non-ownership.

On the level of conjunctive knowledge, the conclusion drawn by Gw makes it clear that sharing usage represents a kind of second-order consumption with the purpose of social distinction. Crucial is the rejection of standardized ways of consumption (mobility via own car, but also mass tourism: sightseeing tours, tourist areas) on behalf of a generational distinction. This rejection can also be described as emancipation, here in the parent-child relationship, through good taste and lifestyle. Based on their origin in societal circumstances, they portray their counterpart as passive and old-fashioned. Their own identity finds its exaltation in an active role searching for individual experiences and changing the world. From this example, the orientation towards social distinction can represent a specific claim of "sharing as a means to an end" based on societal circumstances that are experienced as given social structures imposing ever changing styles of consumption.

Cm: I think in summary you canno:::t (.) well say in <u>general</u> (.) that (.) <u>Uber</u> is for example very <u>negatively</u> connoted, (.) but still has the biggest coolness factor if=you well ca- well now you cannot use=it anymore but when you say like um ah (.) I go by <u>Uber</u> instead of taxi (.) similarly on Airbnb it=was still kinda (.) um insider tip so (.) you tell about like I

paid so and so much for=a hotel <u>oh</u> don´t you know <u>Airbnb</u> look there is supe::r (.) it=s still like=a little bit I tell you something new cool (.)

Y1:   ∟ Hm. |

Cm: ∟   I would say (.) still, (.)

Ew: ∟ Hm.

Cm: ∟ on BlaBlaCar for example is really like ok you have no money so you go by BlaB-laCar.

several: ∟ @(3)@

Cm: ∟ Roughly said.

(Group 1: 21:35-22:08)

In opposition to Bm's proposition of "sharing as a means to an end", Cm takes up the topic "image" introduced by Y1 (see the first example of this section) and continues to differentiate into "cool" services like Airbnb or Uber and mundane services like BlaBlaCar. He credits the "cool" services with the character of an "insider tip", but also regards a financial advantage.

Sharing as an insider tip implies Bm´s role as an information broker, who has distinguishing knowledge to create prestige as a form of social appreciation. BlaBlaCar stands on the other side of the profane, as Cm perceives it useful mainly for financial reasons („you have no money so you go by BlaBlaCar"). Once again, sharing serves as a second-order consumption to distinguish between reference groups through their taste and knowledge. In this example, Bm´s perceives sharing in the light of new technological possibilities and new (US) trends. He makes a distinction by taking a pioneering role as he acquires exclusive knowledge to present it to others.

Bm: Do you think so::? (.)

Cm: ∟ Well (.) of course it=s legit.

Bm: ∟ I- I- I don´t.

Cm: ∟ I rather fall

several: ∟ @()@ |

Cm: ∟ back on the intercity bus then for example instead of BlaBlaCar (.) am not the biggest fan of them as well; um (.) bu::t um:: (.) well I just think there=s also kinda (.) when it comes from the US and kinda little bit (.) from the undergrou:nd @like@

several: ∟ @(2)@

Cm: ∟ not so well established then (.) it=s maybe also a bit different (.) um but (.) in general the negative aspects (.) except maybe a=little bit for Uber (.) don=t matter much.

(Group 1: 22:09-22:35)

Following the former example, Bm questions the implication of the profane. The problem here is not the differentiation, but the associated devaluation by Cm. Bm pressures Cm to justify his position by repeatedly asking questions instead of relying on the attempt to conclude by Cm ("of course it=s legit"). The attempt to conclude is to try to appease Bm by referring to the subjectivity of Cm's statement. At the same time, he generalizes his previous remarks. In this context, the "cool" is associated with the US as a picture of freedom and a supposed rebellion against existing structures ("from the undergrou:nd"). The laughter of the other respondents makes the exaggeration of Cm's description clear. In this way, however, the social distinction can overstrain the purpose-rational logic in its possibilities (see also

on conscious consumption below). If, for example, individualized experiences exceed the limitations of the social situation, a strong tension arises, in which the purposive reasonable needs to defy the good taste not to be portrayed as profane.

In short, we found a twofold meaning of distinction within the orientation of sharing as social distinction. First, the distinctive meaning of sharing is a generational topic. Referring to changing values implies a transformational idea of sharing. The respondents refer to their generation as accustomed to sharing and relating to questions of ownership in a more "modern" way ("sharing instead of owning"). Opposing, the older generation is characterized by materialism and the accumulation of goods. This is a stereotypical view to mark their actions and values as desirable within the cultural field of competing lifestyles (Neckel 2017). The second meaning of distinction, as presented by one respondent and rejected by the others, refers to the image of using sharing services. In either case, the social distinction does not rely on a discursive position concerning sustainable consumption.

Conscious Consumption

Y1:   Hm, nevertheless would you say, that sharing economy: is something positive from your perspective, is a positive development o:r (.) uhm (1) °what are you judgem- uhm° or your attitudes towards that?

[...]

Dm: I think that=s more like=a second pillar this whole car sharing offers because I have I think the Future Director of (.) Mercedes or so he (.) just suggested (.) that there would be car sharing offers of course (.) they are used short-term or so but nobody dispenses with one´s own

car so everyone is still u- having a pr- private car (.) but like for shorter distances in the city or so you would probably use car sharing offers (.) additionally to your own car (.) that you may use then for (.) Sunday trips or bi- (.)

Am: ∟You would have to look if people then (.) compared to the time before (.) did that by bicycle and now by car sharing car

?:   ∟   @ (Right.)@

Am: ∟or if they (.) um (.) use their own car (   )

(Group 1: 14:27-14:40 [...] 16:16-16:53)

In this example from the very beginning of this discussion section, Dm highlights the difference between one's own car and car sharing offers. Starting from a corporate position ("Mercedes"), he understands car sharing to create new needs and heels as an urban phenomenon for short distances, while the own car does not lose importance, but is only supposed to be used otherwise ("Sunday trips").

Overall, Dm appears distanced from the phenomenon, since he opens no originally own perspective, but that of a company. He perceives sharing as a consumption opportunity consciously staged by companies. Therefore, sharing is one of many market offerings and does not serve any higher social ideal. Am responds to this starting a ritual synthesis that is to check which means of transport have been displaced by car sharing. Here, Dm and Am talk at cross purposes, as Dm refers to the function of sharing offers on a corporate strategy and reveals the logic he suspects in it, while Am addresses this logic itself. Formally, we recognize the ritual synthesis in the shift towards

the supposed verifiability to clarify the issue, while Am and Dm remain in their positions.

> Dm: […] but I really think that in the main at least in my sociotope it would be already (.) more likely the <u>first choice</u> (.) instead of falling back on the train and also especially (.) Airbnb that you say, (.) we don=t look for a cheap <u>hotel</u>, for cheap hotel offers but we look for Airbnb first (.) and so the rankings have changed then (.)

> Bm: └Whereas I just noticed that many (.) um primarily (.) who really plan kinda drive home or such, actually at first look fo::r um (.) ho- w- what costs a <u>train ride</u> there **so that´s already the <u>fi:rst</u>** I think the firs- the first glance to (.) check and then say (.) oops @(2)@

> several: └ @(4)@

> Bm: └ maybe that´s a bit @ pricey@ after all (.) and then actually:: (.) to bother about oth- about alternatives so be=it Mitfahrgelegenheit or now this (.) intercity bus system is also quite go:::d (.) already:: (.) seen from the structu::r acceptable so that you can also travel with them quite well at least (.) but (.) ther- well (.) in <u>my</u> opinion you can correct if you like but that=s what I have noticed.

> (Group 1: 19:52-20:49)

Dm takes up the idea of sharing as the "common way" from Bm, attributing the prioritization of sharing services over the old economy ("first choice") to his social environment. Unlike Dm,

Bm points out that Deutsche Bahn[6] as an example from the old economy still serves as a reference for the costs. Thus, a differentiation in reference ("first glance") and use option ("common way") is established. Bm refers to the collective knowledge (confirming laughter of several respondents) of the "pricey" train rides, which should, therefore, be avoided. However, Dm takes a reflective perspective as he points to the one-sided fixation on the new economy claiming that it is generally cheaper and therefore preferable so that, according to him, nobody seems so look after further alternatives any longer. The reference to such a changed ranking takes up the understanding of the sharing economy as a transition from the old to the new economy and rejects it at the same time as Dm´s orientation assumes a juxtaposition of both forms. Furthermore, Dm questions sharing offers regarding its intrinsic logic and consequences. This requires distancing from the phenomenon in order not to succumb to staged hypes and narrations. By making the conscious consumer a distance to the object and to necessities of a specific social situation to question the conditions and consequences of action, the logic of conscious consumption appears to be incompatible with "sharing as a means to an end". At this point, there is a first indication for an opposite orientation. In the example, Bm defends himself against the implication to be an uninformed consumer. Once again, the role of sharing platforms is emphasized as a means to an end in Bm's pragmatic orientation. The perspectives of Bm and Dm seem to correspond here as both claim to make informed consumer decisions. However, due to the perpetual attachment of "sharing as a means to an end" to the needs and limitations of one's social situation, it lacks in the degrees of freedom to transcend its initial perspective.

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6   Major German train company

In total, consumer decisions are supposed to be made on an informed basis. The "conscious consumer" tries to reflect mechanisms of production and consumption as well as social and ecological outcomes of consumer decisions. Although this orientation appears only at the margins of the discussions, it comes closest to the transformative ideology of sustainable consumption (at least at the level of communicative knowledge).

Sharing as Market Pressure

Cm: To briefly return to the question once=again (.) um (.) I @think@

several: ∟@
        (3)@

Cm: ∟um (.) on one side of course they serve a kind of (.) a: need that (.) exists and <u>could</u> not be served completely before for example, well (.) um (.) lot of people would (.) g:go by cab if it wouldn´t be so expansive for example there Uber jumped in (.) um (.) and if they don´t really serve this (.) w:welfare idea, then in any case they put pressure on the established providers (.) like the taxi sector does it they need to position themselves anew maybe the hotel industry as well (.) um for break- um breaking up the set structures there a=little bit and cause for=a little bit (.) for=a little bit movement in the market and even for that it=is ((breathe in)) valuable.

(Group 1: 16:54-17:33)

In opposition to the proposition of Dm, Cm embraces the earlier discussion about the benefits of car sharing. In his proposition following Y1's question for the respondents' attitudes towards

the sharing economy, he describes the benefits as "welfare idea". However, the meaning of this term remains vague (previously posed in the form of less traffic congestion as well as support for rural areas through sharing platforms as a new kind of new infrastructure). Even if the public interest would not be implemented, an opening of the market would be remaining as a positive effect.

In this orientation, sharing is a liberalization of markets, which challenges monopolies and puts established suppliers under pressure to act and adapt. This principle primarily serves to spread economic wealth in the sense of easier-to-implement action or consumption options. This economic-liberal view is further supported by a repetitively used figure of speech in different words ("breaking up the set structures", "movement in the market") and a significant pause to emphasize (breathe) the market as "valuable". This orientation is compatible with "sharing as a means to an end". In this relationship, market logic is a mechanism by which the specific needs of a social situation can be implemented in accordance with existing restrictions. Because sharing in accordance with this logic generates market pressure, opportunities for action to solve individual and social problems become available.

Am: Although=it partly becomes really (.) um problematic (.) um especially=in cities (.) when (.) um (.) where space for living is already very scarce and then additionally many people (.) instead just (.) um (.) subletting their room normally (.) um or their apartment (.) just normally rent that long-term (.) um that means putting an Airbnb offer only on the Internet (.) um of course exacerbates the whole situation (.) that would be the question (.) that

Cm: ⌊ Of course and also on Uber (.) that there are (.) um non-licensed (.) drivers and things like that (.) of course, (.) um (.) they shouldn=t do that so easily, but, maybe for now have to think one step (.) too far (.) and then (.) break some rules so that you can maybe agree on=a joint codex later on.

Aw: ⌊ Hmm.

(Group 1: 17:34-18:13)

Am responds to the proposition of Cm by shifting the topic towards home sharing. He sees the situation in big cities as problematic. Home sharing is at odds with the "normal" use (subletting, long-term housing) of a total of scarce housing. Thus, he negates the orientation of Cm, according to which sharing is already considered positive when it pressures market prices, and instead places a focus on the common good as a priority. Especially because negative social consequences are discussed, Am cannot perceive sharing as positive in general. Cm agrees with the problem description of Am, supplemented by another example (Uber).

However, the importance of these circumstances is invalidated by their negotiability ("they shouldn=t do that so easily"). He also rejects any external (public) regulation with the reference to voluntariness and negotiability. Responsibility for dealing with the mentioned problems is no longer assigned to a social collective but the market. Social problems are individualized and accordingly assigned to individual responsibilities. The circumstances are hidden or subordinated to the market as a general structuring entity. In the discourse, the market is not presented openly as a general structuring authority. Accordingly, the relevance of social reciprocity as well as social and environmental consequences of consumer decisions are only discursive, and often anticipatory.

Consequently, the compatibility of market logic and sharing as a means to an end encounters limits when the social framework (social situation) in the form of preconditions of action is ignored by market logic as a generalized structuring principle. In this case, the market is given absolute freedom and power to optimize social issues through the law of supply and demand. However, this negates the intrinsic logic of the former rationality, which refers precisely to the existence of certain social conditions that are considered given and unchangeable.

In essence, the orientation of sharing as market pressure completely relies on the idea of an all-powerful market to distribute resources and negotiate varying interests of social groups via price-setting functions. The possible environmental or ecological impact of the sharing economy is supposed to be realized through the market by consumption choices rather than any form of regulation by other institutions. In line with the discursive position of ecological modernization and "green economy", sustainability is perceived only as a side consequence of a liberalized market that can be solved via its implementation into the market (endogenization).

6. Discussion

In the previous analysis, we distinguished between the formal aspects of communicative knowledge (orientation schemes) and the underlying aspects of non-communicative or conjunctive knowledge (orientation frameworks) and summarized the respective orders of knowledge using examples from the group discussions.

On the side of *communicative knowledge*, interviewees described the sharing economy as a solution to problems in the ecological environment and pointed towards its transformational power. In addition to social problems, this also includes the reduction of environmental pollution

through, for example, a reduction in traffic density and more efficient use of resources through car sharing. The principle of "sharing instead of owning" was repeatedly referenced. That means, for instance, that usage times for cars can be optimized. This principle implies a temporal horizon by the idea of a transitioning phase, in which the change from owning to sharing is supposed to take place. Based on existing ideas about possible forms of environmental consciousness (cf. Huber 2011), these references can be assigned to a pro-modal focus: it is less about reducing consumption demands, as it would be the case with more ana-modal forms of environmental consciousness, but rather an expansion of scope for action through the choice of means for consumption. In this respect, our data points in the same direction as the state of research on the (communicative) motives of sharing users (e.g., Dall Pizzol et al. 2017, Forno/Garibaldi 2015, Mody et al. 2017). Accordingly, this characterization as ecological modernization should not be mixed up with post growth approaches (Mason 2015) that suggests sharing as a limitation of global production and consumption cycles (Paech 2012). Accordingly, the communicative knowledge elements, which understand sharing as an innovation and a new market challenging existing supply structures, could be classified as part of the same promodal orientation of environmental consciousness (endogenization, Neckel 2018a). Again, the goal would be to expand the ecological capacities of the environment on a technological or managerial level of resource distribution via online platforms. On the communicative level, these online platforms are more closely associated with the idea of pressing prices through increased competition and thereby quantitatively expanding consumption options. Together with knowledge elements that picture sharing as an opportunity for cheaper and more convenient consumption to provide mobility as well as esteemed experiences through the consumption of particularly prestigious services,

these schemes can be assigned more likely to the social logic of consumption according to Baudrillard (1998), in which "growth means affluence" and "affluence means democracy" (p. 52).

The *conjunctive elements* of knowledge indicate both similarities and contradictions to the communicative aspects. On the one hand, they correspond particularly according to the social logic of consumption. Like the communicative knowledge of the sharing economy as a new market (lowering prices and increasing consumption opportunities through competition), the related conjunctive knowledge stating that resource distribution according to market principles serves a general welfare and gets on without external regulations aims in the same way at a society of affluence and prosperity that can be created by economic growth, representing the ecological modernization perspective (Binswanger 2013). Similarly, the formulated purposefulness of using sharing services is compatible with the conjunctive knowledge elements of an action-structuring social situation, from which needs and restrictions of action originate (Blühdorn 2016). Finally, the communicative knowledge about the image of sharing offers as a way of consuming special experiences stays in line with the conjunctive knowledge of using sharing as distinctive consumption (Baudrillard 1998).

On the other hand, contradictions occur regarding promodal environmental consciousness schemes and the related orientation frameworks. In contrast to communicative knowledge, the analysis presented here indicates that the framework of social distinction is used when reference is made to the sharing economy involving environmental problems. In this respect, interviewees can formally and discursively associate sharing with these problems, but in the specific role of differentiating their consumption style from that of other consumption groups, here, in particular from their parents' generation. Thus, the sharing economy is more likely to have a meaning in the

sense of distinctive consumption (Neckel 2018b) and less in an actual solution to environmental issues so that decisions that users make regarding the use of sharing offers primarily originate from the former. Therefore, there are promodal schemes of environmental consciousness on the communicative level, but they are not present as environmental frameworks on the conjunctive level. Still, the conjunctive level is equally relevant for decision-making. The meaning of sharing as part of the modernization discourse indicates that it reinforces the tendency to reintegrate negative outcomes of market systems as new market products without disturbing the social and economic order. From the perspective of the transformative discourse, the sharing economy deals with a "weak" understanding of sustainability (e.g. Görgen/Wendt 2015) that centers on the longevity of production and consumption interests (Blühdorn 2016, Muraca 2012).

A second contradiction concerns the orientation framework, which approaches sharing as conscious consumption. Since this orientation framework only appears marginally in the discussion and is not compatible to others considering the discourse organization in the respective group, it is not expanded further and only remains as a counter-horizon. It remains unclear whether this represents a promodal or anamodal environmental framework. Considering this opportunity, however, schemes of communicative knowledge are used that speak of a new market and (suspecting the perspective of the automotive industry) the purpose of a new sales market as well, in short: growth, modernization, and financialization (Neckel 2018a). With all caution, this could be a contradiction of the opposite conditions, in which on the side of conjunctive knowledge there could be an anamodal environmental framework of orientation (at least a critical stance towards the makeups of growth), while on the side of communicative knowledge terms from the logic of consumption are used.

7. Conclusion

The praxeological perspective allows distinguishing between the existing institutionalized, communicative knowledge that respondents can refer to (e.g., sharing as sustainable) and the conjunctive knowledge guiding their action. Both guide what people actually do, but are not necessarily accessible to them. According to Mannheim (1952, 1982) and Bohnsack (2010, 2017), this distinction between communicative and tacit knowledge reflects the location of practices between the levels of action and structure (Brand 2011) that helps to better understand the complex social meaning of environmentally related social practices like participating in the sharing economy. Furthermore, the differentiation between the mere reference to specific knowledge, like sustainability, and what moreover guides the action of respondents can be worked out. With our research we aimed to show how some of the main user groups of the sharing economy refer to its sustainability and what actually guides their action. To do so, we employed a praxeological perspective to show how communicative and conjunctive knowledge may coincide and differ. The attitude-behaviour-gap points in the same direction, but according to, for example, Mock (2020) or Shove (2010), this perspective falls short to consider that actions are not individually explicable and are not only based on personal values or attitudes. Here, the praxeological approach offers a theoretical shift towards social practices and how they are embedded into everyday activities. Thus, the focus lies on structural aspects instead of individual's attitudes (Mock 2020: 239 f.). In our study, on the communicative level, most of the respondents tend towards a promodal or modernization perspective while participating in the sharing economy. On the conjunctive level of knowledge and their actions reported, their orientations contain little or no effort to include environmental considerations at all.

For this study, we used interview material from an existing data corpus focusing on the main user group of the sharing economy implying their usage is relatively regular. Further research of the collective orientations of users should consider other groups like less frequent users, elderly people as well as people living in rural areas and with a non-academic education. Considering a wider scope of age, employment and social status could contrast the findings we made with our study. Furthermore, taking non-users of sharing platforms into account could contrast the characteristics of users even more.

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Disclosure statement

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Appendix

(.)	Short break under one second
(3)	Break with length (seconds) in parentheses. Breaks longer than three seconds are noted in an extra line
<u>no</u>	Emphasized
no	Loudly spoken in relation to the speaker's normal level
°no°	Quietly spoken in relation to the speaker's normal level
.	Strongly declining intonation
;	Slightly declining intonation
?	Strongly increasing intonation
,	Slightly increasing intonation
mayb-	Broken off word
a=little	Slurred words
ye:s no:::	Stretched word with number of : equal to the length of stretching
(but)	Difficult to understand
( )	Incomprehensible
((breathing))	Para-linguistic expression
@no@	Spoken laughingly
@(.)@	Short laughing
@(3)@	Longer laughing with length (seconds) in parentheses
∟	Start of an overlapping or immediately following speech
Capitalization	Every new approach of a speaker is capitalized.
Time stamp	For a better orientation, every example has a time stamp that represents the timespan when the transcribed speech was spoken within the steadily proceeding discussion from the very beginning.

Table A1: Transcription