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# The Role of Audiovisual Creation in the Strengthening of Intergenerational Memory: The Case of the Village of San Diego, Municipality of Samaná, Caldas\*

[English Version]

El papel de la creación audiovisual en el fortalecimiento de la memoria intergeneracional: caso del corregimiento de San Diego, municipio de Samaná – Caldas

O papel da criação audiovisual no fortalecimento da memória intergeracional: o caso da aldeia de San Diego, município de Samaná - Caldas

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## Abstract

This article presents the results of research based on the experience of training in audiovisual creation led by 15 young people from the village of San Diego in Samaná, Caldas. **Objective:** To show how opening up learning scenarios around the audiovisual language enhances dialogue between different generations and promotes reflections on the meaning of the community's past. **Methodology:** The process is framed within the postulates of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Its development takes place through Create Communication workshops, which have two objectives: 1) to train young people in theoretical, technical, and practical knowledge for audiovisual production through the use of mobile devices with "Smartphone" technology; 2) to link the technical knowledge acquired by young people, their interests with respect to the historical memory, and the collective memory of the township for the creation of audiovisual products. **Results:** The creation of audiovisual narrative content made it possible to facilitate reflections and dialogue between young people and members of the community, as well as generate learning scenarios and foster appropriation of different events that have left their mark on the community of San Diego.

**Keywords:** memory; collective memory; youth; creation.

## Resumen

En este artículo se presentan los resultados de una investigación basada en la experiencia de formación en creación audiovisual, protagonizada por quince jóvenes del corregimiento de San Diego en Samaná, Caldas. **Objetivo:** el objetivo es mostrar cómo la apertura de escenarios de aprendizaje en torno al lenguaje audiovisual potencia diálogos entre distintas generaciones, y promueve reflexiones en torno al sentido del pasado de la comunidad. **Metodología:** el proceso se enmarca en los postulados de la Investigación Acción Participativa (IAP). Su desarrollo se da a través de los talleres *Crear comunicación* que tienen dos objetivos: 1) capacitar a los jóvenes en conocimientos teóricos, técnicos y prácticos para la realización de producción audiovisual a través del uso de dispositivos móviles con tecnología "Smartphone". 2) Vincular los conocimientos técnicos adquiridos por los jóvenes, sus intereses con respecto a la memoria histórica y memoria colectiva del corregimiento para la creación de productos audiovisuales. **Resultados:** la creación de contenidos narrativos audiovisuales posibilitó reflexiones y diálogos entre los jóvenes y los miembros de la comunidad, asimismo, generó escenarios de aprendizaje y apropiación de los distintos acontecimientos que han dejado huella

en la comunidad de San Diego. **Conclusiones:** el proceso de formación dispone a los jóvenes participantes a escuchar a los adultos, y gesta las condiciones para la construcción de memoria a partir de la promoción del diálogo intergeneracional y el fortalecimiento de los vínculos comunitarios.

**Palabras clave:** memoria; memoria colectiva; jóvenes; creación.

## Resumo

Este artigo apresenta os resultados de uma pesquisa baseada na experiência de formação em criação audiovisual, conduzida por quinze jovens da aldeia de San Diego, em Samaná, Caldas. **Objetivo:** o objetivo é mostrar como a abertura de cenários de aprendizagem em torno da linguagem audiovisual melhora os diálogos entre diferentes gerações e promove reflexões sobre o significado do passado da comunidade. **Metodologia:** o processo é enquadrado dentro dos postulados da Pesquisa de Ação Participativa (PAP). Seu desenvolvimento se dá através das oficinas de criação de comunicação, que têm dois objetivos: 1) formar jovens em conhecimentos teóricos, técnicos e práticos para a produção audiovisual através do uso de dispositivos móveis com tecnologia "Smartphone". 2) Vincular os conhecimentos técnicos adquiridos pelos jovens, seus interesses com respeito à memória histórica e à memória coletiva da aldeia para a criação de produtos audiovisuais. **Resultados:** a criação de conteúdos narrativos audiovisuais permitiu a reflexão e o diálogo entre os jovens e membros da comunidade, além de gerar cenários de aprendizagem e apropriação dos diferentes eventos que deixaram sua marca na comunidade de San Diego. **Conclusões:** o processo de formação prepara os jovens participantes para ouvir os adultos e cria as condições para a construção da memória através da promoção do diálogo intergeracional e do fortalecimento dos laços comunitários.

**Palavras chave:** memória; memória coletiva; jovens; criação.

## Introduction

This article focuses on an experience of creating audiovisual content with young people, as a strategy for constructing intergenerational memory. The experience was conducted as part of the "*Hilando Sociedad*" (Connecting Society) research project, which falls under the research program "Reconstruction of the social fabric in post-conflict zones in Colombia." The project aims to develop political capacities for transitioning in different territories.

The township of San Diego, located in the municipality of Samaná, Caldas, was a territory strongly affected by the armed conflict, especially between 1997 and 2005. The armed conflict in San Diego resulted in both individual and collective victimization, as well as significant disruptions to the daily lives of its inhabitants. These disruptions included feelings of fear, silence, isolation, and a breakdown of social bonds. Today, the people of San Diego continue to struggle for recognition of their rights, as they strive for a dignified life and peaceful coexistence.

The purpose of the project is to foster political capacities for transitioning into different territories. To this end, the project aims to create community scenarios where social organizations, community members, educational institutions, academia, and the State can come together to promote collective learning around conflicts, mediations, peace experiences, and social agency (Cifuentes et al., 2021).

"*Hilando Sociedad*" acknowledges the youth population as a fundamental actor in the construction of peace scenarios. The project highlights the significance of their involvement in developing strategies for understanding the history of their communities, including the armed conflict. The contributions of young people to the memory-building process enhance the understanding of what happened during the conflict and promote dialogue between generations. This, in turn, fosters solidarity, active listening, and the creation of peaceful coexistence scenarios.

This article presents the outcomes of a work experience with 15 young people from the village of San Diego in the municipality of Samaná, Caldas, during the year 2021. The article demonstrates how an audiovisual creation process facilitated both critical reflection on personal and collective memory and intergenerational dialogue. Through this process, recognizing how the youth identity is intimately linked to the community of San Diego, the landmarks that define it, and the events that have had a collective impact, such as the armed conflict was possible. These two issues are made visible through narratives, stories, life histories, and community and organizational initiatives. They demonstrate

that the past is not left behind but re-signified, acquiring new and vital ways of existing and shaping present reality.

### **Conceptual Elements Guiding the Experience: The Relationship between Historical, Collective and Autobiographical Memory**

All memory is a spatio-temporal social construction. Its existence and transformation are possible within the framework of everyday life, through social interaction and relational processes. These processes involve shared experiences that may be more or less enduring and interest groups that may strengthen or fade depending on the levels and intensity of relationships (Kuri, 2017, p. 2). Three types of memory can be distinguished: historical memory, collective memory, and autobiographical memory.

According to Halbwachs (2004), "historical memory" refers to events that occurred before a generation's birth, which serve as a reference for the community and a general framework for situating the era to which one belongs, and supporting shared history. Nora (1984) states that it is something that has ceased to exist, but leaves traces that are organized by a historian, obeying a chronological order.

On the contrary, "collective memory," according to Halbwachs (2004), is that which captures events in which the direct experience of people is involved, and whose memories are associated with facts that link them to a community, to practices prevailing over a period of time, or emotions and perceptions about shared events. Based on Nora's definition (1984), it can be stated that collective memory is affective, emotional, and open to all transformations which escape any control to which historical memory is subject.

Therefore, in this case it is collective because it requires a social group to account for it, based on their personal experiences, common notions, and narratives that legitimize its existence. It is considered multiple because individuals can participate in several collective memories, just as they can be actors in various groups.

Lastly, autobiographical memory is constructed thanks to the permanent interaction of a person with different groups that influence him/her: the family, the school group, the religious group, among others. Therefore, the boundaries between autobiographical memory and collective memory are blurred.

## **Socialization and Intergenerational Dialogue in the Construction of Memory**

the intention of this article is to reflect on how historical memory and collective memory, that is, the meanings of the past, are shared, and how memory is constructed through the relationships and interactions between different generations. According to Jelin (2002), two requirements must be met for this to happen. First, there must be a foundation for a process of identification and an intergenerational broadening of the "we." The second leaves the possibility open that those who "receive" provide their own sense, reinterpretation, re-significance—and subsequently do not repeat or memorize—(p. 126). For the development of this experience, these two requirements are fulfilled by favoring the process of renewing stories and narratives about the historical and collective memory of the township.

Since San Diego is a small population center, the faces of those who live there are known, either because of their common trajectories, community ties, or family backgrounds. In addition to this, cultural, religious, and heritage symbols are constantly revisited in the public sphere, such as school events, memorial ceremonies, and farmers' markets. These symbols are also present in private settings, such as family conversations that evoke memories, traditions, and practices.

This indicates that young people are constantly engaged in an intergenerational dialogue during their socialization process, which strengthens their sense of belonging to the community of San Diego. Through this process, their horizon of meaning expands in their daily lives. According to Halbwachs (2004), new generations build their own memories by incorporating their own experiences and extending new meanings and senses to the past, which is continually reconfigured from their perspective.

Considering the second requirement mentioned by Jelin—and understanding that, as stated by Armella (2015), mobile devices should be integrated into learning experiences because they are transversal elements of socialization—scenarios, the production of audiovisual pieces facilitates the generation of reflection scenarios around topics of interest, in this case, the historical and collective memories of the township which, when explored by young people, leads them to redefine the meanings of the past in the light of their own experiences, thus encouraging its appropriation and reinterpretation among the new generations.

This experience recognizes the reach that mobile devices, especially cell phones, have in youth socialization, as well as their pedagogical potential. According to Rabadán et al. (2015) images generate fascination, the pedagogical purpose lies in being able to move from fascination to critical reflection. In this

process, the use of mobile devices facilitates the capture of images and sounds that are then used to create a collective project. Through this project, young people are able to reflect, dialogue, and reinterpret past events in the context of their present realities.

In this way, the project contributes to the opening of learning spaces that are in tune with the interests and technological resources widespread among young people for the circulation of knowledge and narratives. At the same time, it enables the group's participation in the co-creation of audiovisual products that have as content the memories of the township, such as its foundation, the armed conflict and culture. It also invites linking different generations to establish dialogues on past events, where the community of San Diego has been the protagonist and where young participants can recognize their personal trajectories, and link their biographies in a reflective and critical way.

For the presentation of the experience, in its introductory part, the article contains a reflection on the concept of memory and the requirements that, according to Jelin (2002), must come together for the process of building intergenerational memory to find a place in the communities.

Subsequently, the methodological process of the community experience is described through the strategy of the Create Communication workshops, a training process that provided a scenario for dialogue between different generations around the memory of the township, through which young people created audiovisual products.

Finally, the results of the experience are presented, showing how audiovisual creation facilitates among young people the re-signification, appropriation, and reflection on the meanings of the past. Subsequently, conclusions are presented which show how audiovisual creation promotes intergenerational dialogue and becomes a pedagogical alternative that favors community ties and reflection on collective memory. It is an exercise through which young people are given a voice.

## **Methodological Description of the Community Experience**

With the purpose of identifying research reflections at the national and regional level on community processes related to the experience of the youth of San Diego, a bibliographic review was made, along with the subsequent prioritization of five community processes of construction of intergenerational memory, and of audiovisual creation as a pedagogical tool.

Initially, the work carried out by Ramírez (2020) entitled “Youth Experiences for Peace: Contributions from Audiovisual Narratives for a Culture of Peace”



is highlighted. There, he accentuates the importance of the implementation of pedagogical practices that link the educational community in experiences of audiovisual narratives, and facilitate the appropriation of contents associated with memory, history of the conflict and its peaceful resolution, all of these, within the framework of the Chair of Peace.<sup>1</sup>

Later, in the article “Co-creative Community Experience in the Production of Audiovisual Stories: A Perspective of Young Victims in Norte de Santander, from Action Research” Hernández et al. (2022) propose how Participatory Action Research (PAR) is adapted to different pedagogical strategies implemented among young people and allows the integration of technological devices into educational settings. These devices, placed at the service of audiovisual creation, enable young people to meet, narrate and learn stories and testimonies from their community. In this case, audiovisual creation becomes a mediator that mobilizes critical reflections about the past, present and future of the communities.

Now, in the work “Whispers of Memory, Screams of Memory, Voice of Struggle and Resistance: An Exploration of the History of the Organizational Process of Women from the Youth Approach through the Audiovisual in the Cañamomo Lomaprieta Reservation,” Pardo (2020) analyzes the scope of participatory audiovisual communication tools, when they are put at the service of the claim of the struggles and languages of indigenous women. Likewise, it reflects on how communication tools can transform the relationship of young people with the processes of the construction of collective memory and cultural identity.

Alternatively, in the work called “Activating the Places of Intergenerational Memory of the War: Reflections from the Practice with the Educational Community of La Palma Institution of the Municipality of Samaná,” Ballesteros et al. (2021) focus on understanding the intergenerational memories of the armed conflict present in young people between 15 and 19 years of age in Samaná, through the generation of a pedagogical process of memory with the educational community of the institution of *La Palma*. For its development, participatory methodologies such as social cartography, timelines and life stories were used. This work makes visible the importance of promoting conversations between the elderly and young people of the territory to generate exercises of redefinition of what happened during the armed conflict.

Finally, the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, the Coexistence and Non-Repetition (2019) managed to position young people as key actors, being summoned through initiatives such as Generation V+ and the strategy [i] Viva Voz Scholarship (2022) which shared purpose was to “promote public dialogue from creative languages relevant to each culture, contribute to the recognition

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1 Subject taught in all educational institutions in the country from the promulgation of Law 1732 in 2014.

of the value of communities to name what happened, and resist and overcome the consequences from their poetic acts” (Comisión de la Verdad, 2019, p. 42). This is based on the visibility of initiatives aimed at building peace in various communities, through the creation of community narrative projects produced by young people.

Consequently, the methodological process that is presented following is part of the line of the works previously stated. According to Pinilla et al. (2021), the “*Hilando Sociedad*” (Connecting Society) project identifies in the PAR a theoretical and methodological commitment that contributes to the expansion of community dialogue around the construction of peace, the strengthening of collective ties and the putting into play of the capacities of social and political agency of local actors.

Dialogue implies that the actors involved participate in a collective process of reflection where they discuss their own realities and, consequently, generate scenarios for the exchange of knowledge and insights that can potentially be put at the service of collective construction processes (Figás, 2020, p. 83).

This methodological premise guided the work carried out with 15 young people from San Diego between the ages of 15 and 20. It was guided by the project's communications team through workshops called Create Communication, designed with a double objective: 1) Train young people in theoretical, technical, and practical knowledge to carry out audiovisual production through the use of mobile devices with “Smartphone” technology; 2) Link the technical knowledge acquired by young people and their interests with respect to the historical and collective memory of the village for the creation of audiovisual products.

The objectives were met throughout the process, emphasizing how this knowledge served as a pretext to dispose young people to approach the memory of the village, given that, as Figás (2020) states, they suppose the generation of spaces for reflection around identity, organization, and self-representation (p. 83). According to the author, mastering audiovisual tools becomes an instrument for the formulation of new discourses, as long as they promote dialogue, negotiation, and the generation of common meanings among the groups.

Therefore, by promoting audiovisual creation with young people, an opportunity for them to explore and inquire about their links with the past was sought to be created, and they were invited to recognize in intergenerational dialogue a bridge that, when crossed, enriches with new meanings its own biography.

The development of the process was carried out between April and December 2021. It was divided into three workshops distributed by theoretical-practical sessions: the first one was called the “Photographic Creation Workshop,” in which young people were invited to explore the technical tools that lead to a better use of the camera housed in the mobile device. Young people were encouraged to

understand photography as a tool to communicate ideas, feelings and emotions, and the types of photography were socialized, mainly artistic, documentary, and landscape. To complement these learned lessons, the “*Hilando Sociedad*” project joined the commemoration of the death of Father Daniel (a priest and community leader), with a photography contest. Thus, the practice was framed in a creative process, where the young people combined in their photographic compositions the landscape and the main places of the village with the figure of this individual. This led them to link two types of knowledge: technical and historical. To achieve the objective, they carried out a preliminary investigation of the role of this personality in the history of their community.

In the second workshop called “Sound Creation,” the conceptual and technical elements for the creation of a sound product using the audio from the mobile device were addressed. In this workshop, sound was highlighted as a source of cultural information, to the extent that it marks rhythms, and indicates temporalities, presences, and exceptionalities. Following Schafer (1994), through this source it is possible to appreciate the sonority of a place, identifying characteristics and particularities of the environment in which one lives or travels.

The concept of creation was key in the methodology, since in this gathering, pre-production, production, and post-production steps were incorporated, being framed within the requirements for the production of audiovisual products. The richness of the learning process lies in the fact that, in the first two stages,<sup>2</sup> young people raised their level of participation. Hence, in the pre-production stage, the group was called upon to investigate and plan the what, how, where, and why, content to be chosen. This transcended the technical learning, which was put to the service of a reflection exercise in which reaching agreements on the themes, the identification of key individuals, and the construction of questions, became the definitive step prior to the production process.

Finally, in this workshop “the podcast” defined as an audio piece with a theme and periodicity in its circulation was elaborated. The concept, the types of formats and contents, the way in which the script was organized (rundown) and some mobile applications that could be useful in the pre-production, production, and post-production process were revealed.

In the third and last “Audiovisual Creation” workshop, the contents developed in the previous two were linked (audio and image). It consisted of creatively combining audio, image, and text to communicate or narrate stories through videos. This workshop focused on being aware of the roles, phases, and tools of audiovisual production. In the practical component, an exercise was carried out

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<sup>2</sup> The youth did not intervene in the post-production stage. This process, which was carried out through editing programs, was developed by the communications professionals.

among the members of the group, to whom it was proposed to apply the interview technique to get to know its potential, and to recognize the previous preparation that is required to carry it out and to identify the formulation of questions that focused the matter of interest to optimize their results. The objective was focused on having them participate in the tasks and roles that must be assumed when generating an audiovisual production. Among them: choosing a theme, choosing a source, preparing questions, conducting the interview, and recording based on technical criteria.

In this way, the workshops offered young people technical and practical knowledge that invited them to approach their daily life in a different way, investigate it and examine it from the use of the given resources and tools. This paved the way for the PAR practice that, taking up Pinilla et al. (2021), is inclined toward collaborative gambles through intersubjective dialogue and the recognition of the plurality of knowledge as a path to understanding reality. All of this is put into play through audiovisual creation as an exercise in collective construction.

However, the potential of audiovisual creation lies in the fact that it integrates the use of mobile devices into meeting and learning scenarios, where young people have the opportunity to question their past and the different memories of the village that leads them to reassess and understand their own experiences and references in the light of a critical look. Halbwachs (2004) states that ideas or reflections, which are acquired over time, lead people to react to their own memories. For this author, “Memory is a reconstruction of the past with the help of data taken from the present” (p. 71).

Therefore, the objective of the experience was oriented so that the group of young people discover in this learning experience an opportunity to explore their own interests, activate their sensitivity through capturing images, voices, testimonies and, in this way, generate the interest and willingness to broaden their gaze on the village and the place that their predecessors have had in its construction. This with one purpose: to facilitate memory transmission exercises through the mobilization of listening and dialogue scenarios, where there would be an opportunity to meet other members of the community to broaden knowledge and feelings, as well as strengthen the path toward identification with a common past.

## Results

The Create Communication workshops mobilized among young people the search for themes associated with the historical and collective memory of the

Village: identification of referents, landmarks, and places. This allowed young people to activate their concerns and interests around the village's past. They search intuitively for other types of memory: family, religious, armed conflict, linked with places such as natural heritage, or for those more general frameworks of memory that, as Halbwachs (2004) proposes, have to do with temporality, spatiality, and language.

### **Milestone I: Commemoration of the Death of Father Daniel María López (1865 – 1952)**

In the history of San Diego, Father Daniel is attributed as a founder, a spiritual guide and promoter of progress in the early years of the town. For his importance to the community, between 26 and 31 July 2021 tribute was paid to his work through a memorial event<sup>3</sup> that convened different stakeholders such as the “Father Daniel’s Pro-Life Committee” and the main authorities: the local government, the Félix Naranjo Educational Institution, the police, merchants, community leaders, and members of the community in general.

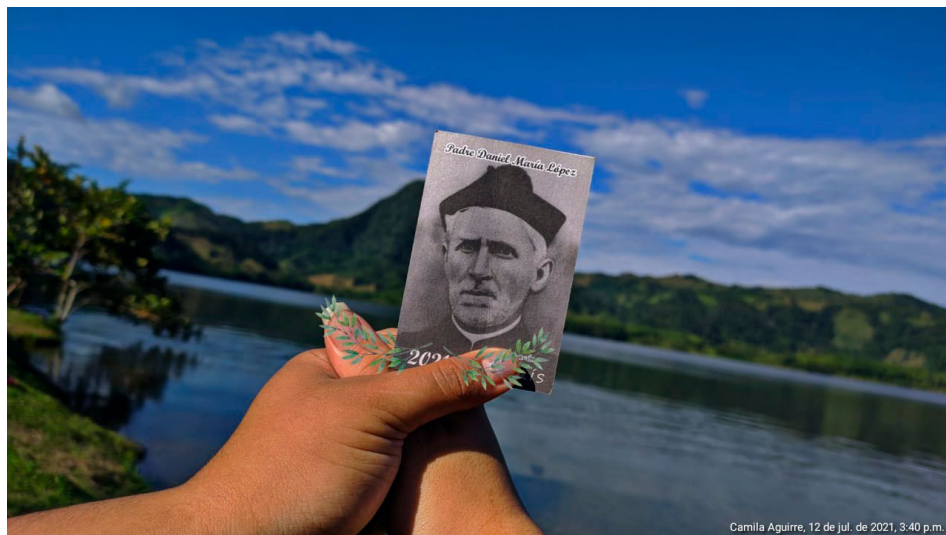
“*Hilando Sociedad*” was added to this collective effort through Create Communication. In this commemoration the project found an opportunity to connect young people with the dynamics of village and to enable the construction of a relationship with historical and collective memory as they put into practice the knowledge acquired from the workshops.

The first reflection carried out within the commemoration of the death of Father Daniel was a photography contest. It aimed to motivate young people to inquire about the figure of this individual, and to link it to different places and emblematic landmarks of the village. This contest was part of the commemoration week and the photographs were exhibited to the public.

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3 M. Halbwachs argued that within the social frameworks of memory exists the religious, to which he attributes the possibility of social cohesion among the members of a religious group from the transmission of dogmas and knowledge, which are updated through the celebration of important dates and rituals (García, 2011).

**Figure 1.** Second place in the contest held in the commemoration of the death of the Priest Daniel María López (C. Laguna de San Diego, Corregimiento de San Diego).



Source: Photo taken by Aguirre in July 2021.

During the commemoration, the group of young people became the communication team of the event, this motivated and engaged them. Commissions were organized according to the agenda to cover their development and record the main moments of the week through photographs, videos, and interviews prepared by them.

There was the need to ask for the authorized sources to talk about the life and work of Father Daniel. It was a methodological route that facilitated meetings and dialogue between two generations from the interest that this experience generated among young people to want to deepen the examination of this personality's work. This corroborates Halbwachs (2004), in the sense that meetings and dialogue serve for enriching memory with new contributions that allow for a clearer significance of past events.

The group's participation became a demonstration of how the cellphone can be optimized in its use and put to the service of a collective creative work. Based on this, interviews were conducted asking about one of the most representative personalities in the history of village. Likewise, in the photography contest, this tool allowed young people to explore their territory in search of possible images, compositions, and planes that had the explicit intention of telling a story.

The spread of this event was made through a video that compiled the main activities carried out. Thus, this group ended up mixing the use of their cell

phones, the commitment assumed as being part of the communications team, and the interest they identified by recognizing this personality as part of their history as a community.

Milestone II Lagoon of Memories: “Knowing the Roots of San Diego and Building New Memories”

In this second phase, a reflection was promoted that helped prioritize the topics of interest of the group. These were the departure for designing a plan that included: selection of themes, interviews, identification of actors, and work routes to deepen the topics and identify interests. As a result, the topics selected to be addressed were: foundation history, myths and legends of La Laguna of San Diego, and the armed conflict.

This activity aroused young people’s curiosity for the past. As this was done, they felt that establishing dialogue with older adults and other members of the community could be fruitful; as they understood that, due to the long history, they have numerous anecdotes about events, stories heard in their youth, or concerning people who were witnesses to the community’s past.

After this activity, the team gathered around a collective building project: a series of podcasts with three episodes that expanded the chosen topics. According Rabadán et al. (2015), methodologically, the production of a podcast fosters a special way of participating, because it allows for narrating stories collectively and understanding the need for communicative actions. Through tasks such as: the construction of the script, search and definition of musicalization, inclusion of voices and interpretation, and selection of actors of interest, it promotes the exchange of knowledge and memories that enrich the debate and the circulation of knowledge on the community’s historical and collective memory. The episodes promoted this dialogue and generated meeting scenarios with community actors. Young people asked questions and listened to narratives about topics they had previously selected.

In addition, as their families were victims of the armed conflict, or were regular visitors to La Laguna, they knew fragments of the life and work of Father Daniel. They were curious to find out what lay behind these topics, to spread knowledge about them, discover new meanings that would allow them to integrate these memories into their own life trajectories, and to make new sense within the framework of their reflections, experiences, and exchanges. Halbwachs (2004) stated that the dialogic exercises make the continuous development of collective memory possible; it extends and transforms, and keeps it renewed.

**Figure 2.** Production Podcast on the foundation of San Diego.



Source: Photograph taken by Moreno in September, 2021.

Regarding this type of training Rabadán et al. (2015) stated that:

The function of audiovisual tools and media is to promote work projects to live the diverse culture of the community through the production of narratives that lead to perceive, analyze, contrast points of view and reach agreements on the narrative's contents. (p.52).

This characteristic of the creation of audiovisual narrative content enabled conversations and reflections between young people and community members. It also generated scenarios of learning and appropriation of the several events that leave their footprints on people, and the way those people take part in those stories.

In the meeting on the podcast topic, the content of the first episode was discussed. The brainstorming led to the construction of the title and its slogan: "Laguna of memories: Knowing the Roots of San Diego and Building New Memories." In the definition of keywords, young people referred to the territory "*La Laguna*" as the natural heritage that identifies them, and the name of the



village “San Diego” as a territory in which they are located; this evidences the significant relationship, the link that young people have with the territory. One proposes:

The Laguna is what we always want to show, it is the place to visit, the most beautiful of this village, it is useful for the slogan to associate the idea of the lagoon because it has a background we do not know. (Personal Communication, July, 2021).

It allows showing that “the territory is a physical space with geographical and ecosystemic qualities, and also corresponds to a process of social construction of the sense of spaces” (Commission de la Verdad, 2022, p. 19). It reflects the importance for young people in their building of individual and collective identity.

The association they make with the roots can be interpreted as the interest that young people show to learn about the origins of the village; it is also linked to the root of the territory and the idea of the depth to which La Laguna refers. “With the podcasts, we are going to recover voices from people who have been living in San Diego for a long time and who can tell us how things were before” (Personal communication, October 22, 2021).

Likewise, when the youth refer to new memories, there can be a tacit recognition that their gestation is a consequence of the dialogue that is allowed with others on topics of interest. In this way, memory is constructed in relationship and reflection that young people are establishing between knowledge, practices, and traditions acquired in socialization, in the exchange of interests, narratives, new interactions, and motivations. The memory is constantly renewed, it is building according to the current contingencies.

According to Jelin (2002), communication must be fostered and passed from generation to generation to continue building collective memory. The word, meeting, and listening to the other is part of the relationship dynamics in everyday life, Halbwachs (2004) calls “the living bond of generations.” It refers to the permanent contact within the family, and how in this dialogue, in the traditions and experiences that are shared, children and adolescents are taken to different times, to distant scenarios that realize ways of being and thinking that —although do not correspond to current practices or feelings of young people— are assumed as an integral part of family stories. In this dialogue that takes place organically, the one that is perceived as distant it is also appropriated through everyday relationships.

The experience of meeting and exchange among 15 young people, under the excuse of audiovisual creation, generated a space for reflection on the historical and collective memory of San Diego. It placed them in a dimension in which

memories, experiences, reflections circulate and relationships between ideas and knowledge of each participant and the group are discovered. According to Ortega et al. (2014), it shows that:

Younger generations are critically examining their historical inheritance in light of its impact on the present and future. Through analysis and reading, they are developing new meaning scopes that support the process of identity construction and ethical and political orientations. (p. 67).

Young people engaged in dialogue and shared their perspectives with individuals of their own generation and those of others. Aspects such as the armed conflict, and how it is remembered holds a distinct significance, serving as a reference point. This is further enhanced by the stories and experiences of others allowing for the construction of meaning.

Regarding the period of armed conflict between the late 1990s and the beginning of 2000, a time predating their births, young people engaged in dialogue with their parents at home by asking questions and listening to anecdotes. This was driven by the topic addressed in the workshops: “I asked my mother about the conflict and she told me everything, she told me about a commander Karina and about a guerrilla takeover here in 2002” (Personal communication, November 2021).

In addition, their active participation in the week-long commemoration of Father Daniel and the photo contest allowed the youth to acknowledge his role in the founding of the town. Throughout the course of the week, they were able to listen to the perspectives of older adults, community leaders and other members of the community, as well as to the testimonies that highlighted Father’s Daniel missionary work and his leadership for the community’s welfare. As stated by one of the young women:

While it is meaningful to walk past the statue of Father Daniel<sup>4</sup> with knowledge of his legacy, to pass by without understanding who he was is another thing; therefore, one must take advantage of the old people who knew him to know his history. (Personal communication, July, 2021).

Young people’s interest in the past will endure if they give new meanings to what they are told about the past; not merely repeating it, but rather using it as a significant reference point for their present goals and life project. The audiovisual products described here have helped to gradually expand young

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<sup>4</sup> The statue is located in the town’s central square.

people's knowledge of historical memory and encouraged them to reflect on the necessary bonds between the township's collective memory and their own identities.

The topics selected by the young people demonstrate a merging between personal and collective memory as they draw upon a plethora of memories and knowledge associated with their experiences. This comprises stories about significant milestones, remarkable individuals, and their parents' displacement which were shared by relatives, teachers, and community members. The exploration of these topics with different community members led to the expansion of the meanings and implications of these memories. Older adults were acknowledged as bearers of extensive knowledge of the origins of San Diego and their active involvement within the community through intergenerational dialogue and questioning by young people.

Similarly, the reactivation of memories was observed through dialogue among young people and between young people and community members, as well as by walking past the town center and nearby villages. Young people have shown the willingness to perceive the places from a fresh perspective, thereby making them a reference point for evoking their own experiences or those of others. This is significant because such places hold a collective memory of various events which happened there and can be discovered and understood in their present context. The comments made by participants regarding the events of the armed conflict reveal the lasting imprint of these places on young people and the ongoing construction of meaning.

During a visit to the village of Venecia, a participant said: "they say this was a paramilitary base, one can still see the bullet traces. Now it is used as a site for drug consumption" (Personal communication, September 2021).

The previous testimony was part of a spontaneous dialogue while visiting an old, ruined building in the village of Venecia (see Figure 3) which displayed wall markings associated with the events that occurred during the armed conflict. Similarly, it is evident that the site has recently been utilized for drug consumption, a matter of concern acknowledged by community members and the young people themselves.

Kuri (2017) states that sites serve as anchors and tangible supports for the act of remembering and as markers that bear witness to different historical periods. These sites may coexist in the present time and evidence how the sensory experiences they evoked may overlap and complement each other depending on the relationship established with them over time. In this regard, the memory constructed by young people on the ruins invokes the collective memory of the town center and the contemporary experiences indicating a shared sense of concern within the community that shapes their relationship with this place.

**Figure 3.** Old Military Base, Village of Venecia.



Source: Photography taken by Moreno in September 2021.

Furthermore, the workshops underscore the importance of the storytellers and their pivotal role in shaping collective memory as bearers of history and experiences that are meant to be shared. When questioned about the participants to be interviewed, they mentioned: “I chose teacher Carmen<sup>5</sup> because in class she told us stories when she lived in El Congal” (Personal communication, October 2021). “We chose don Pedro and doña Antonia because they are among the oldest people in town and they know a lot of stories” (Personal communication, October 2021).

The young people’s topics of interest were broadened through community members whom they had previously interacted with in social gatherings where these community members shared stories about both the town’s history and recent memory. For creating the audiovisual products, young people relied on mentors who had inspired them. These mentors, who share their experiences in formal and informal settings, unintentionally triggered interest and curiosity in this population.

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<sup>5</sup> To preserve confidentiality of the source, the original name was replaced by a pseudonym. Hereinafter, the names used obey this same criterion.

## Conclusions

The Create Communication workshops served as a pedagogical intermediary, fostering intergenerational dialogue and equipping young people with tools to deepen their reflections on the topics they chose and explored. As a result, anecdotes served as information sources that could be arranged chronologically, expanded, and understood through new logical frameworks, while also being adapted based on their own experiences.

Knowledge settings for historical and collective memory, which are vital in San Diego, enable young people to understand how their biographies are constructed through memories, experiences, and practices that are anchored to this experience; it endures over time through their own process of resignification. According to Halbwachs (2004), individual memories are integrated into collective memory through their relationships with others.

This training experience highlights how intergenerational dialogue contributes in the construction of new interpretations of the past, revealing the relationship between pedagogy and memory. Ortega et al. (2014) argue that “[...] it is based on otherness, that is, on the recognition of and respect for the other within the framework of a democratic, contextual, and transformative practice, thus interweaving past, present and future” (p. 67). This approach allows for the construction of new narratives that position young people as active agents in the present with the potential to impact their own future.

Encouraging dialogue among young people, older adults, and community members on significant and sensitive topics contributes to the construction and resignification of the community identity in San Diego, as well as values the memories of older adults, attends to their perspectives, and recognizes them as sources of meaning for the younger generations. These dialogues and experiences serve young people in reflecting and broadening their view of the territory, history and events of collective significance. According to García and Bernard (2011), it is recognizing that “[...] their identity is constructed on what their predecessors did” (p. 12).

Sanchez (2009) states that intergenerational dialogue can occur through the promotion of spaces that facilitates meetings and exchanges. Within the framework of curiosity and discovery, such spaces can foster the creation of bonds between individuals from different generations resulting in the emergence of common interests that serve as a unifying force. This concept elucidates the idea that the transmission of past memories to younger generations is not a matter of a simple transfer of ownership, but rather of a construction that occurs in an intersubjective space, as stated by Reyes et al. (2015).

Hence, the experience can be viewed as a process that enables the construction of intergenerational memory. Such relationships contribute to dialogue, sharing, learning and supporting among generations. This gives rise to what Jelin (2002) terms “the intergenerational broadening of the we,” where young participants assimilate new knowledge about their community and incorporate it into their own experiences and expectations, through audiovisual media.

Additionally, it is noteworthy that in this experience, the mobile applications in their devices proved to be useful tools for facilitating interaction, reflection, and the assimilation of historical and collective memory events due to their proximity to young people. The use of mobile applications became a pretext for exploring the environment and encouraging reflective activities to inquire about various topics, positioning it as a viable pedagogical alternative tool.

The methodology used in this project developed by the Participatory Action Research (PAR) enabled young people to respond naturally to the invitation of traversing the paths of the past, by means of the voices of preceding generations that are acknowledged as bearers of knowledge that supplement the learning of the memories of the territory, as well as of their understanding of who they are as young people and community agents.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that memory is constructed in daily dialogue and when addressed as a subject for reflection, young people establish relationships with their own biographies. They shift from being passive spectators or responders of narrated stories to becoming active authors of content which they can recreate in response to the audiovisual creation process through their new understanding.

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