

# Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory: A Methodological Contribution Aimed at Social Impact on Youth's Sexual-Affective Relationships

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## Abstract

Methodologies of research aimed at achieving social impact, such as the Communicative Methodology (CM), have overcome the instrumental uses of language. Alongside these, research on memory has shown how this is not a static construct but one that is continuously evolving through social interaction. Research on youths' sexual-affective relationships achieving social impact currently combines these two frameworks. However, from a methodological perspective, what advancements allow for the achievement of such an impact has not been explored yet. The current study contributes a new methodological contribution within the CM, the Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory (DRM). Six interviews were conducted with researchers studying sexual-affective relationships and participants in this kind of study. The results show how both interviewed researchers and participants identify the emergence of the DRM during and after communicative interviews. In turn, this leads to a series of modifications to communicative interviews and opens up possibilities for personal transformation. These findings open new avenues for research with social impact.

## Keywords

narrative, narrative analysis, narrative inquiry, narrative research, methods in qualitative inquiry

## Introduction

### *From Instrumental to Creative: Dialog in Qualitative Methodologies*

The dialogic turn in society has led to the introduction of dialog into people's lives, relationships, households, and institutions. In science, it has established a new way of understanding and constructing reality (Soler-Gallart, 2017). Decades ago, many researchers used subjects as tools or mere objects to obtain their expected results and outcomes. Currently, research funding institutions and citizens increasingly demand dialogic spaces in which researchers and research participants co-create scientific knowledge that contributes to improvements to society (Soler & Gómez, 2020).

However, dialog has not always had this role in scientific inquiry, particularly in qualitative methodologies. When the idea of dialog was introduced in the qualitative methodology, its role was primarily instrumental: language and dialog were

viewed as instruments to retrieve information and get to the truth, which was thought to be *out there* (Crotty, 1998). The main goal was to conduct an objective analysis of the people and the situations being researched.

The notion of conducting qualitative research for social transformation took dialog in qualitative research one step forward. First, action research was developed to improve people's lives and concerns while contributing to social sciences'

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research interests (Liebenberg et al., 2020; Rapoport, 1970). Second, participatory action research then brought new advancements by introducing the idea that social transformation through research required subjects' participation. Nevertheless, dialog was instrumental to achieving such transformative goals.

However, the Communicative Methodology (CM) overcame this instrumental use of language. The CM approach establishes that transformation is not predefined and that transformations are generated in the dialog between the researchers and the participants (Gómez et al., 2019; Gómez González, 2021; Soler-Gallart, 2017). Indeed, language does not transmit a reality that pre-exists but rather one that is created in the very communication. Thus, researchers and research participants establish an egalitarian dialog in which the former contribute scientific knowledge on the studied issue, and the latter bring knowledge obtained from their own experience. This intersubjective dialog allows the co-construction of new knowledge that addresses citizens' concerns, contributing to the body of scientific research with social impact (Aiello et al., 2020).

Therefore, the strategic action in which the researcher imposes their interpretation and intentions for a preconceived goal is replaced by the communicative action (Habermas, 1984). Moreover, the CM not only takes into account speech acts anchored on verbal language, it considers communicative acts. This means that all the elements that make up the interaction, such as gestures, context, the speakers' intentions, or the consequences of the interaction, among others (Searle & Soler, 2005; Soler & Flecha, 2010) are taken into account, overcoming the verbal-body language binary. In particular, it establishes dialogic communicative acts that aim to eliminate, or at least minimize, power relationships to share and co-create knowledge together with the research participants. Through such an approach, research can shed light on issues so complex yet relevant as identifying what constitutes (the lack of) sexual consent to promote sexual freedom (Flecha et al., 2020; Vidu Afloarei & Tomás Martínez, 2019), among others.

### **Reconstructing Autobiographical Memories to Craft Desired Selves**

Research has shown that two types of memory exist: an available memory and an accessible memory. Available memory is all that one can remember, and accessible memory is what one can, at one point, remember and talk about (Frankland et al., 2019; Tulving & Pearlstone, 1966). Autobiographical memory, a specific form of malleable memory, refers to what we remember about past experiences and how we remember them. Not only do our own experiences and interactions shape who we are, but more importantly, autobiographical memories build our own identity and perception of ourselves (McAdams, 2011; Racionero-Plaza et al., 2018). Such memories gain form through the life narratives we tell others and ourselves, influencing our emotions and prospective

thinking (Klein et al., 2010; Racionero-Plaza et al., 2018; Williams et al., 2008). By sharing narratives of our life stories with others, we are co-constructing representations of ourselves that become part of our accessible memory and, hence, our identity (Bruner, 1987; McAdams, 2011).

The narratives we create are deeply shaped by social interactions and discourses. Along this line, it has been found that there is a coercive dominant discourse (CDD) that associates attraction with violence, imposing among many youths a shared narrative in which people with violent attitudes are portrayed as desirable (Puigvert et al., 2019; Torras-Gómez et al., 2020). The CDD shapes many girls' autobiographical memories and how they interpret those memories, often recalling such experiences as exciting (Puigvert Mallart et al., 2019). For instance, a recent study by Torras-Gómez et al. (2020) showed that all participants who had hooked up with boys with disdainful attitudes felt bad and disgusted while doing it, but that they felt pressured to tell their friends that they had fun to fit into the shared narrative that violent boys are exciting. After repeating these false narratives, they ended up interpreting those feelings of disdain as pleasure. This socialization process has been found to be an underlying factor for future gender-based violence victimization (Racionero-Plaza et al., 2020a). This urgent issue needs to be addressed through research to prevent and eradicate violence victimization (San Segundo & Codina-Canet, 2019).

However, narratives can be transformed and so can autobiographical memories (Racionero-Plaza et al., 2020a). Furthermore, interventions based on social interactions can scaffold individuals' navigation around their memories (Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Wagoner & Gillespie, 2014). When these interventions are implemented based on scientific evidence on the link between attraction and violence (Racionero-Plaza et al., 2020b; Ruiz-Eugenio et al., 2020; Salceda et al., 2020), it is possible to enter the available memory and increase its accessibility. This contributes to reconstructing autobiographical memories in the desired direction and opening up pathways to construct future desired selves.

Moreover, it is not only through interventions that memory is reconstructed. Indeed, the brain, as Ramón y Cajal (1989) showed, is not static. Rather, it is constantly changing and evolving based on individuals' interactions, and so is memory. From the moment of birth, memory is socially constructed through interactions and continues to be constructed and reconstructed through these interactions throughout life. However, interactions do not necessarily remain constant and, when these vary, so does memory. For example, a girl in a toxic relationship might erase violent episodes of the relationship from her memory if the way she recounts such episodes with her friends is influenced by the CDD (Racionero-Plaza et al., 2018). However, if she changes her interactions, a possibility will open for transforming not only her memory of past relationships but also, related to it, the desire and pleasure in future relationships (Torras-Gómez et al., 2020). Therefore, the fact

that individuals can choose with whom they interact gives them a chance to change such interactions and change their memory.

Studying this reality through research oriented toward achieving social impact under the CM has led researchers to identify changes in the CM itself. The current meta-research aims to analyze a new element emerging in research under such design: the reconstruction of participants' memory in communicative interviews. This study pays attention to how this reconstruction occurs as a methodological contribution to the CM and the opportunities that such reconstruction opens for research participants to transform their lives.

## Methods

The current study is framed within the CM approach. Six communicative interviews were carried out to conduct this meta-research (Gómez et al., 2019). Communicative interviews attempt to establish a dialog between the researchers and participants, engaging in the co-creation of new knowledge rather than addressing participants with a series of predefined questions. Therefore, the authors engaged in a dialog with participants who provided their experience either as researchers or research participants in this study.

### Participants

A total of six people participated in this study. Participants can be divided into two groups based on their connection to research on youths' sexual-affective relationships. In the first group, three scientists were interviewed: one female and two male researchers. The three of them lead studies on youths' sexual-affective relationships in the Spanish and European contexts. The interviewed researchers were selected due to their long trajectory of conducting research aimed at achieving social impact within the communicative framework.

The second group was composed of three women who had previously participated as interviewees in scientific studies on youths' sexual-affective relationships. In particular, the three had previously participated in several interviews aimed at providing evidence on the reconstruction of youth's memory about sexual-affective relationships under research framed within the CM. The three women were purposefully selected

because they had manifested that participating in such research led them to transform their sexual-affective relationships, which had consisted of mistreatment and/or disdain in the past. Table 1 presents an overview of the participants:

### Data Collection

This study gained ethical approval by the Ethics Board of the Community of Researchers on Excellence for All (CREA) under approval number 20201202. Participants were contacted purposefully via email. They were provided an information sheet about the study and consent forms. These included information on the aim of the study and the materials and procedures for data collection, a statement informing that participation is voluntary, information regarding the pseudonymization of data, and the explicit statement that participants could withdraw at any time without having to provide a reason. Through the informed written consent form, participants also consented to being audio-recorded and to the publication of their data as part of the results. Participants were given time to read all information and to ask questions. After explaining the study's objectives, interviews were arranged with each of them separately. Interviews were conducted by one or two researchers from this study via the Zoom virtual conferencing platform. All interviews were audio-recorded, as agreed upon by informed written consent.

In the interviews with researchers, the dialog revolved around their experience conducting interviews on youths' sexual-affective relationships. More precisely, the selected researchers were asked to reflect on the interviews they had previously conducted to provide specific examples of how participants' memory was reconstructed and explain how and why such reconstruction occurred. Furthermore, researchers were also asked about the impact that participating in the research had on the participants.

The interviews with individuals who had been interviewed in studies on youths' sexual-affective relationships were aimed at understanding their experiences during and after the interviews. In this vein, participants were asked to recall instances during those past interviews, or even moments after such interviews, in which their memories were being reconstructed as a result of the interactions with the researchers. In turn, they explained how much reconstruction had impacted their lives and relationships.

**Table 1.** Participants.

Code	Profile	Gender	Expertise/level of studies
R1	Researcher	Male	Researcher of national R+D and EU FP projects
R2	Researcher	Male	Researcher of national R+D and EU FP projects
R3	Researcher	Female	Researcher of national R+D and EU FP projects
P1	Participant	Female	MA degree
P2	Participant	Female	MA degree
P3	Participant	Female	MA degree

## Data Analysis

All interviews were transcribed and read several times. Categories were generated from the analysis of the transcriptions deductively in light of knowledge from the scientific literature (Mayring, 2015). Three main categories were established. Within the first category, excerpts identified cover researchers' identification of participants' DRM in the methodology itself, particularly in the communicative interviews and after the interviews. The second category explains how the DRM has enriched the CM by generating modifications. The third category refers to transformations that the DRM enables among research participants. The categorization was conducted through a dialogic process in which the researchers involved discussed the content of the evidence and their classification. A consensus was reached for those cases in which a disagreement emerged.

## Results

Following the data analysis, the results presented in this article outline (1) the main result: the identification of the Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory (DRM) among research participants during and after communicative interviews, (2) the modifications provoked in the CM by attempting to analyze participants' DRM, particularly in communicative interviews, and (3) the possibilities for transformation in the methodology due to the DRM.

### *The Emergence of the Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory in the Communicative Methodology*

To achieve social impact, the researchers interviewed frame their investigations under the CM. However, when researching violent sexual-affective relationships among youth, they observed the emergence of a new methodological contribution within the CM. Drawing on existing evidence that shows how memory is constantly reconstructed through social interactions, the interviewed researchers point to how incorporating this knowledge in their research design has led to the emergence of this methodological contribution. As R1 points out, researchers using the CM have realized that the methodology itself provides participants with new interactions and that these interactions contribute to reconstructing their memory:

The Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory is based on the idea that memory is not static, but it is constantly changing according to a person's interactions. Memory is socially constructed through social interactions. Those interactions do not necessarily remain the same, and as a person changes their interactions, so does their memory. Now, we have ended up introducing this Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory in the very research process. This means that the research methodology has been contaminated, in a good sense, by the object of study. How have we identified this? Because we've seen that in that very research process, new interactions occurred, which collaborated in the

reconstruction of the participant's memory. Hence, we not only study the reconstruction of memory, but the study itself reconstructs memory. (R1)

Following this idea, the three researchers interviewed agreed that interviews need to be based on dialogic communicative acts for this to be a dialogic process. This means that, rather than instrumentalizing interviews to achieve a certain goal—such as obtaining specific information or making participants reconstruct specific memories—interviewers provide a dialogic space whereby participants' memory is reconstructed and transformed in the very dialog between the researcher and the participant. As R1 explains,

In the very communication of the egalitarian dialog, there is a reconstruction, an increase of the memory which had been destroyed, and that's why it has to be reconstructed, not deconstructed [...] It is in that dialog that memory is changing, it's being transformed through a reconstruction. (R1)

As R1 explains, the interactions that enable the DRM give interviews a pragmatic use of dialog toward transformation. Engaging in such egalitarian dialog allows interviewees to navigate themselves by deepening their past experiences during and after the interview process. Such dialog provides participants with the opportunity to become more aware of their own memory, increasing the accessibility to more of it:

In one of my first interviews, the researcher said something, and suddenly I remembered something that I had completely forgotten, and I explained it to her, and then she helped me interpret it. After that, I remember I couldn't stop thinking about it, and 1 day I was on the subway, and suddenly I remembered something else. (P2)

As the participant explained, the dialog with the researcher helped her remember details she had forgotten. Furthermore, she could interpret her memories differently and understand them better, reconstructing the meaning that such memories had for her. While this does not in itself transform participants' lives, it does allow them to increase their self-awareness. Furthermore, they acknowledge that this is a hard but essential process to break free from the consequences of those relationships:

I didn't want to recognize I had been mistreated; I felt like everything was being torn apart. But if you don't demolish it, then that's when everything will be horrible because the consequences will still be there. So knowing this rationally, I work hard to dismantle it, and of course, when I do, everything gets better. (P1)

The participant explains that although she resisted reconstructing the memory of a particular relationship, she knew she wanted to be free and that the only way for that to happen was to reconstruct the narrative she had made up about it. Similarly, P3 acknowledges that engaging in the DRM allowed her to unveil the false narratives she had fabricated,

which was a painful yet necessary step for her to be able to create new narratives and a new identity:

You know that some things are untrue, but the fabrication helps you live with your choices. And then, entering those memories threatens all of that... I remember thinking, “OMG, this has happened to me, I have allowed someone to treat me this way”, and then feeling horrified, ashamed. I thought of myself as an empowered woman, and yet, I realized that such experiences put me as far from that idea as possible. But gaining that consciousness [...] is what really empowers you because instead of creating a façade, you have the chance to become who you want. (P3)

Hence, according to P3, engaging in these interactions has given her the chance to unveil how she truly felt. The dialog allowed her to deepen her accessible memory while reconstructing the available memory by gaining awareness and unveiling the truth. Indeed, this process was also highlighted by the researchers. On this account, R1 asserted:

So what happens when now you see 15% [of a memory]? That when more appears, not only does the memory increase, but the dialog on that memory also increases [...]. Suddenly, we discover 30%, not just 15%, and so on and so forth [...] and what happens when you expand your memory and [...] you have 70%? That it is then that you can be free if you want to because to analyze the determinants of our behavior is an act of freedom. (R1)

Hence, just as memory is continuously reconstructed in interactions, dialogically reconstructing it enables individuals to grasp and expand on previously destroyed memories, allowing more memory to be reconstructed as the dialog on such memory continues. Increasing memory and the dialog around it enables the generation of new interpretations, helping participants better understand their past and decide about their future.

### *How the Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory Modifies Communicative Interviews*

Incorporating the DRM in the CM has led to a series of modifications of the latter. The main modification refers to researchers acknowledging that it is not enough to analyze participants' memory at the moment of the interview. Rather, it becomes necessary to analyze its reconstruction in the dialog of the interview:

The Communicative Methodology has suffered modifications [...]. Up until this moment, in those interactions, we would collect, for instance, participants' memory. But we have realized that it is in the very research process of the Communicative Methodology that we not only collect participants' memory but that memory is transformed, reconstructed. Then, what we modify is that we don't want to analyze participants' current memory, but it is being

reconstructed in the very research process and in other interactions the participant has. We have enriched the Communicative Methodology with that element. (R1)

In this excerpt, R1 introduces the descriptive element in DRM during interviews. He points out that the goal is uncovering what participants initially remember and how this memory is transformed in the interaction. In addition to this descriptive element, other researchers interviewed point out the existence of a normative dimension that is related to the ethics criteria that should be taken into account:

You don't go there [to the interview] with some questions, and that's it. You need to walk in someone's shoes, there's no pre-defined list, it's a dialog. You can know the central issues, but you can't prioritize that, [you need to prioritize] what is really relevant at that moment for that person to explain and remember and reconstruct. If we went there with a paper and [said], “this is what you need to tell me about”, well, memory doesn't work that way. It's a thread from which to pull, but it is the person who pulls from it, and you have to follow that thread. (R3)

In such dialog, grounding the interactions on dialogic communicative acts is indispensable. This includes prioritizing the participant's well-being and freedom as it allows researchers to create a context in which participants feel comfortable and free to share relevant memories from their past while leading it toward a positive stance. This particular issue has also been stressed by individuals who participated in interviews on these issues, as seen in P1's excerpt:

It's very important that you don't feel judged, because if you start explaining something and the person interviewing you makes faces like he or she is thinking “oh my” [...] at the same time, if the orientation is “it's no big deal”, then I'll think that I don't have to change it. If you want to change it, you need to see how hard it is. (P1)

As asserted by P1, the fact that researchers neither judge nor downplay the importance of the matters being recalled contributes to reconstructing what truly happened. Another aspect that the researchers indicated to be of importance was providing evidence and examples obtained from previous research, also following the thread of the conversation:

from the outset, when you asked [...] people did not know what to tell you, but when you explained the situation, giving examples of situations that we knew [...] then yes, concrete situations came to their mind [...]. Then, entering the conversation, [...] you pull the thread, “ok and in that moment, what did you feel?”, and then they remember what they felt, and you continue pulling the thread of the situations they explain. (R2)

As R2 explains, examples allow interviewees to start accessing those memories and explaining such experiences.

Alongside this, the interviewers continue with the dialogic reconstruction by asking follow-up questions, listening to interviewees, paying close attention to the experiences they are sharing and how they are talking about them, and going deeper with the dialog.

### *Opening Pathways for Transformation*

Both interviewers and interviewees emphasized the transformative potential of DRM. The awareness and better understanding of one's own past allows many research participants to incorporate this new knowledge into their everyday lives, leading to new possibilities:

freedom, when exercised in that way, provokes transformation. The DRM does not generate transformation in and of itself; it generates possibilities for exercising the freedom to generate that transformation. If you want to be free, you have to work for it. What the DRM does is "I know myself better, now I can be free if I want to". (R1)

From this excerpt, R1 highlights the potential for transformation generated from the DRM, while he points out that such transformation ultimately depends on the individual. In this vein, P3 asserts that she was finally able to understand why she always found herself in undesired relationships thanks to participating in communicative interviews that allowed her to begin reconstructing her memory. Understanding herself better has freed her from engaging over and over again in the same relationships that she knew were wrong for her, therefore opening up a pathway to change her relationships in her present and future:

I remember thinking, "Why am I either with the wrong kind of person or in the wrong kind of relationship?" And suddenly I felt free, I understood things that I had done wrong... and it gave me the opportunity to change them, to have a different life. If my current relationship is working, it is because I have gained consciousness on the issues of past relationships, and I am working on them. (P3)

The DRM has helped P3 become more aware of the underlying issues in past relationships and prevent them from reoccurring in current and future relationships. As she affirms, that is the reason why her current relationship is working, unlike the ones from her past. Along this line, P2 stressed how the awareness and freedom gained thanks to the DRM was the key to transforming her life:

the change was huge, I could really feel free for the first time in my life. The more things I could remember about the people I had hooked up with and about the things they did to me, the more disgusted I felt about them. I suddenly knew what it was like to really have fun, to feel beautiful things I didn't even know existed. I also felt more attractive. I started making true friends and feeling

that all my dreams were coming true. That's really when my life started to have meaning, before I was dead inside. (P2)

By choosing to be free, P2 explains that working to reconstruct past memories in this new direction positively impacted many aspects of her life. Moreover, participants also shared how choosing to change oneself also had an impact on the lives of people around them:

I have changed some attitudes because I linked them to moments and people who were never good in the first place. I see that I did not always appreciate the people who were good to me, and now I try to. How can you be happy with someone and make that person happy if you keep valuing people who mistreated you? So questioning that and wanting to reverse it brings you healthier and more passionate relationships and more happiness to those around you and to yourself. (P3)

As P3 asserts, being able to appreciate good people and reject those who were not made her feel better and was a key step toward building happier relationships for herself and those around her.

## **Discussion**

The current study aims to analyze a new element that has emerged in the CM through research on youths' sexual-affective relationships oriented toward achieving social impact. The results of this meta-research highlight researchers' identification of the DRM among participants in the methodology, particularly in communicative interviews. Along this line, the results point out how identifying and analyzing the DRM of participants has contributed modifications to the CM. Furthermore, it reveals the possibilities that engaging in the DRM has for participants, allowing them to transform their memory, desires, and sexual-affective relationships.

Researchers in the study revealed that as they analyzed the reconstruction of memory among youth, their interviews became the object of study. Based on scientific evidence from fields such as neuroscience and socioneuroscience on brain plasticity (Puigvert Mallart et al., 2019; Ramón y Cajal, 1989), they identified that the interactions in which they engaged with participants were, like any other social interaction, contributing to reconstructing their memory. Depending on the interactions the person is having, such reconstruction might occur in different directions. If the CDD influences the interactions, the reconstruction will reinforce the memory of violent episodes as exciting and will therefore socialize her toward linking attraction to violence (Puigvert Mallart et al., 2019; Racionero-Plaza et al., 2018). However, the CM aims to co-construct the reality desired by research participants and citizens (Gómez et al., 2019; Gómez González, 2021). Hence, because it is dialogic, the DRM offers participants the possibility of reconstructing their memory in their desired direction

during communicative interviews. This is evidenced by the participants interviewed.

This aligns with other research framed within the CM aimed at generating social impact (Gómez et al., 2019). These studies show that overcoming the hierarchical gap between researchers and participants provides an understanding of the reality that allows for transformation to potentially take place. However, in the study of the reconstruction of memory, the identification of the DRM in communicative interviews has led to modifications that advance the dialogic basis of the CM toward the reconstruction of memory. This means that, instead of only analyzing participants' memory during the interview, researchers who consider the DRM move to analyze the reconstruction during the interview. Hence, elements of the CM, such as not imposing the researchers' views or intentions on the participants' narratives, not judging participants, or engaging in conversations rather than asking prespecified questions, are directed bearing in mind that the participant's memory is being reconstructed.

Along this line, the dialogic process on which the DRM is based entails that the researcher listens and responds to what the participant is sharing by providing scientific evidence and examples and scaffolding the memory reconstruction. In line with previous research on the reconstruction of memory, such scaffolds include providing retrieval cues that ease individuals into accessing available memory (Frankland et al., 2019; Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Tulving & Pearlstone, 1966; Wagoner & Gillespie, 2014). Therefore, for this dialog to be constructed, knowledge from both the scientific community and the participants' lifeworld is needed.

Research has shown that dialogic interventions aimed at social impact offer participants who have suffered violence the opportunity to reconstruct their memories of past violent episodes. This enables them to access and recall more critical memories and negative feelings toward violent relationships, allowing them to freely choose the relationships they desire (Racionero-Plaza, et al., 2020a, 2018). Moving one step forward, this study contributes new evidence on how this reconstruction occurs in communicative interviews by analyzing youths' sexual-affective relationships through more than just intervention programs. In this way, the DRM opens the arena for the researcher and the participant to construct a shared understanding of the reality being studied, promoting the possibility for the participant to achieve the desired reality (Soler & Flecha, 2010; Soler-Gallart, 2017). One participant asserted that having more knowledge about undesired issues from the past allowed her to transform herself and prevent them from happening in her present and future relationships. Some participants affirmed the findings from the study conducted by Torras-Gómez et al. (2020). For example, P3 explains that she can now feel freedom, happiness, and pleasure in an egalitarian relationship through these dialogs. Importantly, the impact of the DRM goes beyond the participants themselves, improving the lives of those around them.

This research presents some limitations and opens up new avenues for research. First, the results obtained in the current study have not been explored longitudinally. Thus, the current article does not provide evidence of whether the social impact of this kind of research is maintained over time. Future research should explore the sustainability of the social impact of DRM. Second, the current study presents a methodological contribution within CM, the DRM, and how it modifies and enriches communicative interviews. Further research should analyze how the DRM contributes to other data collection methods, such as daily life stories or focus groups. In addition, future research should explore how the DRM occurs in the methodology in different contexts, including with participants with different sexual orientations and from different cultural backgrounds. Last, this study leaves an open door for exploring how researchers' DRM occurs during interviews with research participants.

The Dialogic Reconstruction of Memory, emerging from research oriented toward achieving social impact, opens up a dialogic space for participants to critically explore who they want to be and what relationships they want. Therefore, qualitative research methodologies oriented at obtaining social impact in this field are left with the essential role of enabling research participants to reconstruct their memories, understand their pasts and presents, and decide whether they want to be free or not. In essence, the DRM enables participants to decide whether they want to be the architects of their own brains (paraphrasing Santiago Ramón y Cajal (1989)) and, if they do, to pursue the freedom to construct the narratives, themselves, and the relationships they have always dreamed of.

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