

THE INTERACTIVE DOCUMENTARY AS A CREATIVE AND ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE FOR YOUTH EMPOWERMENT: THE HEBE WEBDOC AS A CASE OF STUDY

EL GÉNERO DEL DOCUMENTAL INTERACTIVO COMO EXPERIENCIA ARTÍSTICA-CREATIVA DE EMPODERAMIENTO JUVENIL: EL CASO DEL WEBDOC HEBE

O GÉNERO DO DOCUMENTÁRIO INTERATIVO COMO EXPERIÊNCIA ARTÍSTICA-CRIATIVA DE CAPACITAÇÃO JUVENIL: O CASO DO WEBDOC HEBE

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ABSTRACT: The interaction potential offered by new technologies open up unprecedented possibilities both for the investigation of youth empowerment within academia, and for the design and implementation of participatory methodologies that foster young people's empowerment processes in society. The HEBE webdoc [www.hebewebdoc.com] described in this paper is presented as a pioneering case in the field of youth empowerment, as it combines within a single interactive platform: empowering stories in the form of audiovisual segments; reflections on the creative process as shown in various focus groups; and, finally, digital sharing in order to enable a dialogue between the materials and citizens.

The first section provides details of and analyzes the three main factors on which the HEBE webdoc is based: the evolution of empowerment participatory methodologies based on audiovisual creation; the use of new transmedia formats that allow collective participation; and the establishment of a film pedagogy as a way to learn from an emotional life experience.

The second section describes the stages of the HEBE webdoc building process, by detailing the most important aspects and revealing its qualities as a tool for citizen science. It also explains the pedagogical methodology applied in the workshop where it was created, and the webdoc site's navigation layout, which involves the construction of narratives that enable the user to reflect on processes, spaces and youth empowerment moments.

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	<p>To conclude, the third section contains the initial results from the completed webdoc's platform design, based on an analysis of the pieces resulting from the audiovisual education workshop, carried out by the participants.</p>
<p>PALABRAS CLAVES: empoderamiento juventud webdoc pedagogía artística ciencia ciudadana</p>	<p>RESUMEN: Las posibilidades de interacción que ofrecen las nuevas tecnologías abren posibilidades inéditas tanto para la investigación del empoderamiento juvenil en el seno de la academia, como para el el diseño e implementación de metodologías participativas que favorezcan los procesos de empoderamiento de los jóvenes en la sociedad. El webdoc HEBE [www.hebewebdoc.com] que describimos en este artículo se presenta como un caso pionero en el terreno del empoderamiento juvenil por el hecho de aunar en una única plataforma interactiva relatos de empoderamiento concebidos como piezas audiovisuales, reflexiones sobre el proceso de creación a través de distintos focus group y, finalmente, la posibilidad de compartir digitalmente estos materiales audiovisuales para hacerlos dialogar con la ciudadanía. En la primera parte del artículo se detallan y analizan los tres factores principales que están en la base del webdoc HEBE: la evolución de las metodologías participativas de empoderamiento basadas en la creación audiovisual, la utilización de nuevos soportes transmediáticos que permiten la participación colectiva y, por último, la consolidación de una pedagogía del cine como vía de aprendizaje de una experiencia vital y emocional. En la segunda parte se detallan las fases del proceso de construcción del webdoc HEBE, profundizando en los aspectos más relevantes y exponiendo sus cualidades como herramienta de ciencia ciudadana. También se explica la metodología pedagógica aplicada en el taller de creación y el diseño de la página de navegación del webdoc que implica la construcción de narrativas que permitan al usuario reflexionar sobre los procesos, espacios y momentos de empoderamiento juvenil. Finalmente, en la tercera parte, se presentan los primeros resultados derivados de la finalización del diseño del webdoc como plataforma, a partir del análisis de las piezas resultantes, realizadas por los participantes del taller de pedagogía audiovisual.</p>
<p>PALAVRAS-CHAVE: capacitação juventude webdoc pedagogia artística ciência da cidadania</p>	<p>RESUMO: As possibilidades de interação que as novas tecnologias oferecem abrem possibilidades inéditas, tanto para a investigação da capacitação juvenil no seio da academia, como para a conceção e implementação de metodologias participativas que favoreçam os processos de capacitação dos jovens na sociedade. O webdoc HEBE [www.hebewebdoc.com] que descrevemos neste artigo apresenta-se como um caso pioneiro no terreno da capacitação juvenil pelo facto de reunir, numa única plataforma interativa, relatos de capacitação concebidos como peças audiovisuais, reflexões sobre o processo de criação através de diferentes focus group e, por fim, a possibilidade de partilhar digitalmente estes materiais audiovisuais para os fazer dialogar com a cidadania. Na primeira parte do artigo, detalham-se e analisam-se os três fatores principais que estão na base do webdoc HEBE: a evolução das metodologias participativas de capacitação baseadas na criação audiovisual, a utilização de novos suportes transmediáticos que permitem a participação coletiva e, por último, a consolidação de uma pedagogia do cinema como via de aprendizagem de uma experiência vital e emocional. Na segunda parte, detalham-se as fases do processo de criação do webdoc HEBE, aprofundando os aspetos mais relevantes e expondo as suas qualidades como ferramenta de ciência da cidadania. Também se explica a metodologia aplicada na oficina de criação e o design da página de navegação do webdoc, que implica a criação de narrativas que permitam ao utilizador refletir sobre os processos, espaços e momentos de capacitação juvenil. Por fim, na terceira parte, apresentam-se os primeiros resultados derivados da finalização do design do webdoc como plataforma, a partir da análise das peças resultantes, realizadas pelos participantes da oficina de pedagogia audiovisual.</p>

1. Introduction

The HEBE webdoc case study [www.hebewebdoc.com] presented in this article is part of a wider research project (“Proyecto-HEBE:”) (“Young people’s empowerment: analysis of the moments, spaces and processes contributing to youth empowerment” [2013-2017]) involving the University of Girona (UdG), Barcelona (UB), the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and Pompeu Fabra (UPF). The main aim of this study is to identify and analyze the moments, spaces and processes of youth empowerment contained in three lines of research: the life stories of a representative

youth sample, the participatory evaluation of a questionnaire and, finally, an interactive documentary used as a tool for analysis of and reflection on youth empowerment. The paper is intended to explore how the term empowerment is conceptualized, relying on a practical self-reflective training experience. This article will discuss the last one of the lines of research listed above led by Universitat Pompeu Fabra. This is a current of great interest in Social Pedagogy as it can provide a methodology that contributes to inclusion policies and youth empowerment in society. Firstly, those aspects and phases of the process of how the webdoc was conceived and developed will be

considered as a method. Secondly, its potential as a research tool on youth empowerment will be discussed in order to propose new dynamics for the participation and training of young people. This is the study's main hypothesis: It is based on the premise that the interactive documentary can be used for self-narration purposes, and thus contributes to the definition of the concept "empowerment". In addition, the production of this genre within the approach of the HEBE webdoc Project in itself can be considered to be an empowering experience. The interaction possibilities and the ease of dissemination of content through social networks, make the initiative an instrument that invites reflection about the forms of young people's empowerment through artistic and creative means.

"Webdoc" is the most commonly used term to refer to interactive documentaries. It encompasses several formats and contexts (Català, 2010), including journalistic documentaries, experimental audiovisual discourse, and the transmedia narratives that accompany a made-for-television product (Sora, 2015). Webdocs are experiencing an enormous boost nowadays, even though they still lack clear patterns for their design and use. Although the webdoc is not a novel concept or format, the interaction possibilities offered by this genre in the current transmedia context makes it an original and unique tool for researching and thinking about youth empowerment.

The hybridization of the traditional documentary genre, defined by Bill Nichols (1991) on the basis of its ability to represent reality, together with its potential for interactive storytelling, brings the term "webdoc" close to the contemporary concept of video installations or multi-screens. This means that the descriptive and linear features of the documentary disappear to be replaced with a reflective and non-linear editing typology where the user's questions and concerns determine the story's progression. As Arnau Gifreu noted, "the web documentary introduces paratactic—merely juxtaposed—formulations that, despite their apparent simplicity, are the prelude to non-linear relative constellation architectures that are better suited to complexity. In this way, the ontological foundation of photography is combined with other post-photographic elements to delimit a new reflexive post-vision in which the mechanisms of the documentary imagination are essential" (Gifreu, 2013). Therefore, it can be seen that the interaction process through the webdoc is a creative process where users must set a dialogue with the different sections of the documentary for themselves. To summarize, the characteristics of interactive documentaries that led us to work

in this genre/platform in the HEBE project were defined by Peter Wintonick: "Docmedia take the complexities of conventional documentary and fuse them to the best qualities of new media. The playing with time. The responsibility to audiences. The Documentary as Database. Interactivity. The One to One and Many to Many. Real Truth, to million page-hits to second. Webdocs are new informational art forms" (Wintonick, 2011, quoted by Gifreu, 2013:274).

Underpinning the HEBE webdoc is the convergence of three important factors: (1) recent studies on youth empowerment and, more specifically, the participatory initiatives undertaken among groups of young people as an empowerment mechanism to address certain social problems; (2) the proliferation transmedia non-linear narratives that have used the media industry (new platforms and audiovisual devices) to put user interaction and involvement at the center of the action; and finally, (3) the increasing incorporation of audiovisual resources as a pedagogical and emotional education strategy for young people, as in the case of successful experiences at national level such as *Cine en curso*¹: a film pedagogy program in schools, "born of the desire and the urgency to encourage an active and profound discovery of cinema as art and as a creative act by children and young people" (Aidelman & Colell 2014; p. 25).

As a result of these three interweaving factors, the webdoc is designed as a platform to navigate through two types of recorded materials: 3 audiovisual pieces whose common thread are spaces, processes and moments of empowerment for young people, conducted by 6 people aged between 18 and 27, following an audiovisual workshop designed by the research group; and a reflection by young people about their particular empowerment processes, guided by global research indicators. These parts constitute the webdoc's backbone, since they summarize the young participants' learning processes, and reflect on each one's personal empowerment experience in its different contexts. The webdoc also presents a series of discussions filmed as a focus group, where both experts and professionals on youth policies and initiatives, as well as young workshops' participants reflect on empowerment. The first of them seeks to conceptualize the term from the macro research (HEBE Project) indicators and scope from the perspective of the young people's audiovisual pieces, and the others from their own learning experience. The site's interface or navigation page allows the webdoc user to relate and feedback on both perspectives: A learning process around the creation and development of communicative experiences as experienced by

6 young people from different backgrounds, and a more theoretical in-depth analysis of the concerns, desires and problems that the young people expressed in their audiovisual pieces.

Finally, considering that virtual platforms enable easy participation, the webdoc makes a space available to users so that they can add content and contribute to the conceptualization of the term empowerment. This can be in the form of comments, thoughts or images of their own experience as citizens via *Twitter*, as a contribution to the creating networks among young people and experts. This kind of interaction encourages citizens to actively participate in content creation and to take part in a form of artistic pedagogy where social and emotional education intersect. HEBE interactively combines a creative didactic empowerment process through an interactive format with the theoretical concepts and reflections on youth empowerment, thus forming a link between academia and citizenship. Undoubtedly, the convergence of the media helps rethink the way in which certain initiatives focused on youth empowerment can be articulated in a context marked by a deep economic crisis (where young people are the main disadvantaged group) and the progressive consolidation of transmedia environments (whose main users are young people).

Finally, it should be clarified that the concept of “empowerment” is understood in the study as “the process that increases the chance that someone might decide and act consistently on everything that affects their life; and participate in decision-making and act in a shared and responsible way on things that affect the community of which they form a part. There are two necessary conditions for this: the acquisition and development of a series of personal capacities (knowledge, attitudes, abilities, skills...) directly related to the foregoing; and an environment that allows for the effectively exercise of such capacities” (Soler, Trilla, Úcar & Jiménez, 2017). This is the meaning underlying this case study

1.1. Participatory methodologies on youth empowerment: a background

Scientific production around the use of certain media as youth empowerment mechanisms has increased in recent years. It has been mostly focused on the description of practical experiences of groups of young people (sometimes even teenagers) undergoing some social difficulties. In all of them, the expression of young people by means of various media such as radio (Wagg, 2004), photography (Delgado, 2015), video (Haynes & Tanner, 2013; the international project *YouthME²*, 2013)

and documentary film (Cohen, 2016) is the guiding thread to identify the specific problems to be aware of and, subsequently, to devise direct or indirect measures to tackle them.

In the Social Pedagogy field, the more successfully and frequently used participatory methodology (mainly in the Anglo-Saxon community) has been *Photovoice* (Wang, 2006). This technique is based on a double process: visually framing certain social issues (through pictures taken by participants on a daily basis) to give a voice to a reflection group on the images representing them. It can be summarized as the process of visualizing, verbalizing, and eventually reacting. Its inclusive nature and adaptability to different cultural groups have made it possible to carry out experiences that have given a voice to certain groups and promoted changes at the center of a community, such as the eradication of youth violence (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell & Pestrong, 2004), the social integration of racial minorities (Pritzker, LaChapelle & Tatum, 2012), and crime prevention (Ohmer & Owens 2013). These experiences have placed continuous learning through images at the center of their approach, turning photography into a tool for both empowering young people and for academic research into empowerment.

Another paradigmatic case for our webdoc was the *YES!* empowerment and research project, aimed at disadvantaged pre-teens (ages 9-12) and performed in primary and secondary schools (Wilson *et al.*, 2007). In its first stage, *Photovoice* was used to involve young people in changes related to social issues by reflecting on key questions from several pictures: 1) what do you see here?; 2) what is really happening?; 3) how does this relate to our lives?; 4) why does this problem or this quality exist?; and 5) what can we do? The *Photovoice* technique followed on from that used in *Reflect-Action* (2009) where participants' groups engaged in a critical dialogue rank the issues from the analyzed images according to their importance. All this was done in what might be called “free-expression, democratic spaces” that reproduced the willingness to acquire power in order to involve the group in the development of a social action project. The service-learning function carried out here promotes a change of action in the environment through an author-reflection. The uniqueness of the *YES!* Project lay in that youth empowerment's principles were developed both from an individual and a community perspective.

Both examples, as well as other approaches and similar structures that could be added to them (Finholdt, Michael, & Davis, 2010; Foster-Fishman, Law, Lichty, & Aoun, 2010; Strack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004; Streng *et al.*, 2004), illustrate the

main *Photovoice* methodology guidelines as described by Wang & Burris (1997): (1) selecting a participants' group, (2) proposing a specific theme to work with in workshops; (3) providing cameras to the participants in order for them to portray their reality; (4) reflecting on the images; and finally, (5) sharing the images and thoughts with various social agents' leaders.

Therefore, the HEBE webdoc origin includes the standard phases of the *Photovoice* methodology and introduces a variant in the last phase of the process: the sharing of images. The interactive format of the webdoc means that the act of sharing empowerment experiences transcends citizenship in that users become active agents capable of having a voice to visualize and verbalize their own empowerment experiences. The implicit participatory culture in transmedia environments has enabled an additional phase in the *Photovoice* empowerment process.

1.2. Participatory culture and citizen science: the foundations of the HEBE webdoc

The second factor that led to the use of to the interactive documentary format in this project was the desire to incorporate citizen science (Irwin, 1995) into the research process. The basis to do so was the work by authors such as Ulf-Dietrich Reips & Michael Bosnjak (2011) and Kevin Gurney's *Ventus Project* (2013), among others. Given the ease of participation in and dissemination of content through the new digital platforms (Gifreu, 2012) and social networks (Ito *et al.*, 2013), and their potential to create virtual communication networks among citizens, they were considered to be the most appropriate tools for both the dissemination of the study's results, as well as the best method for obtaining young people's stories about their own empowerment experiences. Further to Lloret and Canet's arguments, the potential for interaction of what has been called "movement 2.0" drives consumers to generate content and communities that are fed by subjectivity and individual development, allowing the communities to be constructed beyond geographical boundaries (2008). This is essential for research, since the assessment of subjective community experiences in different contexts is important to encompass a concept of youth empowerment. As pointed out by Lloret and Canet, the dynamics of the so-called Web 2.0 movement are able to mobilize communities. The new applications allow users to become both creators and consumers of content according to their own particular needs, while enabling them to integrate and become integrated into communities that share tastes, needs,

dreams, feelings and experiences, in a way that no longer depends on spatial or temporal boundaries. This generates a suitable environment for the production and consumption of socially distributed knowledge, but at the same time for personal usufruct, from private interests. These are not communities where the group subsumes subjectivity, but communities that foster, legitimize and need individual growth, through the management of each individuality (Lloret & Canet, 2008, p. 2)".

The individual's empowerment experience that is both shared and confronted with the community is therefore one of the central themes of the HEBE webdoc. For this reason, in order to maintain continuity between the individual and the community, the webdoc should be understood as an open and dynamic story where users (citizens) could add content to their individual empowerment experiences and elaborate them further. This is where one of the narrative transmedia key issues lies (Scolari, 2013): unfolded stories are no longer complete and only thought out from the individual perspective. In this sense, our goal using the webdoc genre is to turn HEBE into a usage tool that can be easily appropriated by citizens, both by institutions and associations working with young people and by those responsible for youth policies. David Casacuberta's words describe the spirit of our project: "Digital culture cultural works are no longer built on an individual, solipsistic basis, but in an organized and collective way." The artist is no longer strictly a creator and becomes a producer. The artist develops a tool to be used, developed and disseminated by the public according to their interests, not necessarily matching or being influenced by the artist's original will. The artist's production is literally that of an intermediary who provides a structure, a tool, a medium so that viewers can express themselves, and create." (2003; p. 60-61)

In the transmedia narrative context, the concept of "participatory culture" theorized by Henry Jenkins is essential for establishing the webdoc's aim. According to Jenkins, "a participatory culture is one which embraces the values of diversity and democracy through every aspect of our interactions with each other –one which assumes that we are capable of making decisions, collectively and individually, and that we should have the capacity to express ourselves through a broad range of different forms and practices." (2016; p. 2). Jenkins' reflection is applied to the fandom phenomenon where fan communities of certain audiovisual products (series, sagas or genre films) are producers as well as being content consumers. Based on the analysis of the fan communities (Jenkins; 1992), prone to the use of the new media

platforms, audiovisual practices and experiences creation, Jenkins' participatory culture can be applied to other types of communities or environments: "Fans were simply one among many different kinds of communities that had been struggling throughout the twentieth century to gain greater access to the means of cultural production and circulation." (2016; p. 3). Based on these approaches the HEBE webdoc (both in its conception and in its deployment) intended to focus on participatory culture applied to the reflection on empowerment. Finally, as Jenkins highlighted, participatory culture is a tool with an enormous educational potential. "A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created)." (2016; p. 4)

In short, the involvement of citizens in the dissemination of progress and science led to consider the webdoc interactive format as the most suitable for our youth empowerment's research. It has enabled to use traditional techniques such as daily life stories and focus groups in audiovisual format. The HEBE Project considered the adaptation of the traditional research methodologies to new interactive media as one of its the main research objectives.

1.3. An artistic empowerment process based on film pedagogy

The third factor involved in the HEBE webdoc is the artistic and creative approach to the learning process explored in this initiative. Unlike the aforementioned experiences of *Photovoice*, where photography becomes instrumental to identifying certain social issues, our goal was to actively incorporate the artistic and creative process into the audiovisual as a way to express experiences of youth empowerment in an intimate and personal form. The webdoc platform is therefore a place for sharing experiences and individual problems conceived on the basis of certain empowerment indicators. An audiovisual education workshop understood as a film language and emotional education seminar was devised in order to bring two key components together: (1) film image awareness; and (2) a reflection on individual empowerment processes in relation to participants' life paths. The first component dealt

with learning how to read and develop skills for focusing attention on film images and at the same time letting those images challenge the participants' awareness, observing and questioning the formal choices made by filmmakers and engaging this active gaze in assessing the environment in order to create. Identifying the emotions that give rise to certain images is a way to connect with self-awareness, to rationalize emotions and therefore, to have other places from which to interpret the experience. The second component aimed to enable participants to draw their own vital path to identify the empowerment processes, actions and contexts that led them to grow as individuals. Once here, each one was required to devise the content of their own film sections.

Film image awareness methodology is based on the pedagogical project of French filmmaker, teacher and pedagogue Alain Bergala, creator of the French Cinematheque initiative *Le Cinéma, cent ans de jeneuse* (2009-2017), a benchmark for other initiatives on film pedagogy, including the aforementioned *Cinema en Cours*.

Between 2000 and 2003, Bergala was senior film advisor for the "5-year plan for the arts and culture development at school", promoted by the French Ministries of Culture and Education. The spirit of the pedagogical project was described in *The hypothesis of the cinema* (2007). Under these precepts, and summarizing Alain Bergala's ideas, one of the main objectives of film pedagogy should be leading to an encounter with otherness, far from the established rules, which will help the student/viewer to initiate a professional path in the elusive world of film art. It is not about teaching but transmitting an experience, promoting a form of introduction to cinematographic images; in other words, to educate the viewer's gaze in films and creation. That is the reason why Bergala believes that above teaching and prioritizing cinema language (types of scenes, ways to develop a script, technical aspects of light and sound), what truly matters is to promote an awareness to envisage cinema as the result of a creative process influenced by multiple circumstances. In other words, to understand that, since the goal cinematographic practice is to give shape to certain emotions, no dogmas exist. According to Alain Bergala: "in a film school, the words "standards" and "professional" are a threat. I often ask students why their films are so flat, or have certain mixing; they almost invariably respond "because we want to make it right". That is the danger: everybody wants to "make it right", everyone wants to "be good". The filmmaker can request a poor image, but the photography director will resist to this. The permanent danger is an excessively academic approach. Creation is

something else.” (2014; p. 16). Therefore, film experience and pedagogy are understood as a creation exercise detached from guidelines for excellence, and motivated by the expressive and emotional force of its creators. There are no good or bad results, it is just about conveying feelings.

Taking into account Bergala's premise, shared by many other authors (Langlois, 1986; Comolli, 2007), the HEBE workshop approach is not geared towards specific technical audiovisual training, but to arise an awareness of how to express emotions and thoughts that arise from personal empowerment experiences. So, in order to prevent technical issues from becoming an issue for the workshop participants' individual expression, a filmmaker-teacher accompanied them throughout the process, from its inception through to the filming, up to editing. The fact that the tutor or advisor is present does not involve that they would intervene. As pointed out by Núria Aidelman and Laia Colell in connection with the *Cinema on course* methodology “a film is poetry for us, it is a means and a way of knowledge, thought, emotion, astonishment, questioning of oneself, the others and the world.” “This principle articulates all the processes and methodologies and, especially, the backbone of the workshops: a close link between viewing and practicing, between watching films and filmmaking” (Aidelman & Colell; p. 25).

For this reason, the creative process to produce audiovisual empowerment pieces became an 8-session workshop, where meeting and discussions about the images are the leading aspects in the process, rather than teaching cinematographic language.

2. Methodology

The workshop methodology can be synthesized as follows: 1) viewing fragments and discussing emotions arising from the images 2) capturing images of everyday life from which final pieces can begin to form a structure 3) joint viewing of scenes and photographs taken by each participant over time and sharing feedback 4) individual tutoring sessions in relation to each piece's concerns 5) shootings 6) editing 6) joint viewing of the completed pieces.

Following the description of the HEBE webdoc foundations, we will detail its major phases of development. It should be emphasized that, at the time of the writing of this paper, the project was at its final stage: introducing all the audiovisual contents into the digital interface and devising the layout for interaction with the narratives that should guide the user through different materials. For this reason, and inspired by the methodological

references mentioned above, while the different phases of the process are explained here, we still need to verify them and explore the resulting interactions from the platform to conduct a specific analysis of how it is received by the public. In future publications, we will focus on the results participatory methodology of this application.

2.1. Stage 1: Designing the audiovisual creation workshop

The first part of the HEBE webdoc consisted of the design of an audiovisual pedagogy workshop (8 sessions over 2 months) based on the concept of youth empowerment. The ultimate goal of the workshop was to facilitate tools for carrying out three audiovisual segments by each of the six participants, which was the structural basis of the webdoc. The three audio-visual segments had youth empowerment as their guiding principle, as it relates to the starting point of the study: the analysis of the spaces, processes and moments of empowerment. In accordance with this approach, the audiovisual pieces were required to include: (1) the film portrayal of a space that was important for the participants' processes of empowerment; (2) the portrayal of a character who had influenced the participants' empowerment processes; and finally, (3) a self-portrait based on the moments of empowerment experienced by the participants. The competencies developed in this process started from the conception of youth empowerment as an active and continuous process (Tromp, 2007; Betancor, 2011). The training offered in this phase included sustained monitoring over time (2 months for the duration of the workshop, from the design and devising of the segments to their publication), which aimed to foster situations that provoked interactivity with the participants and their progressive development.

The workshop sessions were structured as follows:

- **Session 1.** Presenting the Empowerment Workshop based on film practice. Discussion and group debate on youth empowerment's moments, spaces and processes at the core of the research framework. Explanation of the final Workshop aim, the creation of 3 pieces: portrayal of a space, a person's portrait and a self-portrait. The sole two “game rules” that had to be followed were the duration (3 minutes maximum) and the theme: each of the stories were required to be related to a personal experience of empowerment.

Discussion and group reflection to identify the first empowerment indicators in the lives of

each of the participants. Each of the participants received Mahmoud Reza's book, *Workers working: Film lessons of Abbas Kiarostami* (2013). It is the chronicle of a film workshop taught by the well-known Iranian filmmaker, whose work is closely linked to learning³. Kiarostami's theories about how to convey emotion with images and not with words, illustrated in the approach and dynamics courses, interacted with Bergala's cinema hypothesis.

- **Session 2.** The pedagogy of the images. An application of Alain Bergala's ideas, these sessions were an encounter with the images' poetics using multiple film fragments for reflection and debate. The selected fragments were directly or indirectly linked to the parts to be made by the workshop participants. The films chosen (David Perlov's filmed diaries [1973-1983], Walden (Diaries, notes and sketches) by Jonas Mekas [1969], *Le filmeur* by Alain Cavalier [2005], *Beepie* [1965] and *The Long Holiday* [2000] by Johan van der Keuken, *Agatha and unlimited readers* by Marguerite Duras [*Agatha et les lecteurs Illimités*, 1981], *Sans Soleil* by Chris Marker [1983], *10 on Ten* by Abbas Kiarostami [2004] and *Des dels nostres barris. Desde nuestros barrios*, from Bellvitge Institute [*Cine en curso* 2014-2015]) have as a guiding thread the film writing of the self (Martín Gutiérrez, 2008), where the director of the film uses a camera (stripped of any other resource) and through the collage and recycling of domestic films, portrays his surroundings with a personal and unique viewpoint.

Through the genre of the filmed diary, each of the films suggests different ways of making a film portrait of: a space, a person, and oneself. The objective of this first phase of the workshop was to introduce the participants to these film fragments, a way of writing that is very different from many of the classic canons of film narratives. The screenings should be used throughout these sessions as a way for participants to weave a link between their empowerment experiences and the different possible ways of expressing them. Understanding empowerment as a relational and asymmetric notion (Fortunati, 2014), it aimed to bring out individual and collective reflections derived from what had been seen, and to establish a dialogue about the different notions of empowerment according to the person, group or context (Lawrence Jakobson, 2006).

Working with film fragments, even if it does not replicate the irreplaceable experience of watching a movie, is a tool to bring participants in connection with the thrill of images (Aidelman

& Colell, 2014, p. 26). During these viewing sessions, participants had to learn to identify why some images produced certain emotions, and how those images reinterpreted reality. To do this, some simple questions to stimulate conversation were proposed: (1) how does the filmmaker present the character? (2) is there any indication of the relationship between the filmmaker and the filmed person? (3) what shot types suggest greater closeness and intimacy? (4) what is their perception of the editing pace? (5) how do voice and image interact? It was essential to begin by asking simple questions that could have specific answers. Day-to-day places needed to be created from which to interact with the images, since they can often seem strange to participants who have not had other experiences with Art House Cinema.

- a) **Session 3.** To observe and portray the 'other'. Photography is a very useful art for an initiation into the task of framing reality. Using a contact sheet with multiple images that were very similar, the photographer had to select the one that best expresses the idea that s/he wanted to show. The still image facilitated the process of "creating a frame". This session used the images of some photographers to learn the framing of the "other", both of strangers (Richard Kalvar [photographic series of Rome 1978-1984]), popular (Eve Arnold [photographic series with actress Joan Crawford]) or very familiar (Elliot Erwitt [mother and daughter, 1953] and Johan van der Keuken [Portrait of his spouse and her sister in the book: *The Lucid Eye: The Photographic Work 1953-2000*, 2001]). Once the debate about the images was completed, there was a practice period where workshop participants took pictures of each other, trying to highlight through the portrait some of the issues that had arisen during the working group sessions.
- a) **Session 4.** Listening to the world. A sound designer presented some examples of sound work, both in its significant role and in the use of voice-over, in a personal and imaginative way: *Barry Lyndon* (Stanley Kubrick, 1975) and *Looking for the lost sounds* (Ainhoa and Aitor Gametxo, 2013). This involved about reflecting on sound's potential for channeling emotions.
- a) **Session 5.** Group work based on each participant's individual project. This session was exclusively focused on the various participants' audiovisual work. From the first sketches (camera tests, photographs, notes, etc.), group discussions were held on the

approach adopted to narrate the different empowerment experiences. During this process of creation, the participants were helped by an audiovisual tutor who guided them in the technical issues, and also of a pedagogy expert. Both offered simple guidelines so that the participant could find those images and sounds that expressed their experience regarding empowerment in the most genuine way possible.

- a) **Session 6.** Group discussion (recorded) among the workshop participants, before the filming of the segments. The session was conducted by a specialist in the field of empowerment, who helped them to think about the decisions made regarding the segments. This session helped to establish the link between the potential images that had been discussed and their own empowerment experiences.

Segment filming and editing. Together with the filmmaker who delivered the workshop, the participants of the webdoc filmed their segments with the cameras made available by the study or the devices they had. During the filming process, the tutor offered support for conceptual and technical problems. The participant chose the camera location, the angle and all the creative details concerning the segment.

- a) **Session 7.** After the participants had viewed the segments, a series of discussions were held (filmed) to analyze and interpret the images and, based on them, to reflect on more general issues related to youth empowerment such as: religion, family, sex, immigration, and the future.
- a) **Session 8.** Sharing empowerment experiences. Screening of completed segments to empowerment field experts, representatives from academia, youth policies and

associations working with young people. Group discussion (filmed) about the segments reflecting on the workshop participants' experiences of empowerment processes, on the content of the segments as empowerment indicators, and the possibility of transferring these experiences to society. Based on a series of issues raised by a specialist, participants questioned the creation processes that had supported empowerment awareness.

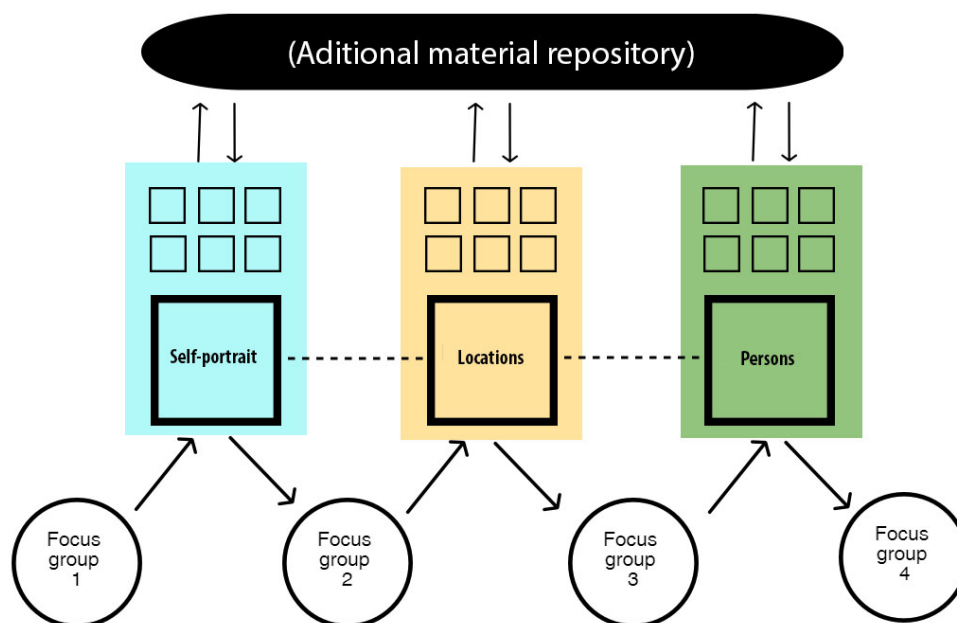
At the end of the last session, there was a final projection of the segments attended by relatives and friends of the HEBE webdoc participants and experts in pedagogy and youth politics. This brought the process to an end.

2.2. Stage 2: Design of the webdoc architecture

The structure and navigation design of the HEBE webdoc met four conditions included in the research project's framework: 1) the interactive tours made by the user of the webdoc should allow for a comparison between the different visions of the participants of the audiovisual creation workshop about the spaces, moments and processes of empowerment; 2) the user must be able to traverse the experiences of empowerment of a single participant of the workshop, to be able to construct their life story from the dialogue between the pieces; 3) the user must be able to follow the creative process carried out throughout the workshop by being able to interact / view the participants' comments about the learning process, and finally the group discussions about the segments; 4) the user must be able to incorporate their own experiences of empowerment through images filmed with their mobile devices. The basic architecture of the webdoc can be summarized as follows: (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

WEBDOC PROJECT'S HEBE NARRATIVE



This design meets both the *relational* empowerment dimensions (Russell *et al.* 2009) and the *interpersonal* (Wong, 2008), as it is designed for the different modes of youth empowerment to be viewed in a nodal manner, both by the participants in the documentary and by users.

2.3. Stage 3: Dissemination of the HEBE WEBDOC

The webdoc should not be understood as an end in itself, but rather as a starting point for the inclusion of citizen science research. For this reason, a series of intervention strategies will be established on social networks (twitter, facebook) to encourage the participation of citizens in the audiovisual creation of their own empowerment experiences, this will be combined with webdoc presentations to various associations and public centers that work with young people (who were also involved in the research process, such as councils) with the aim of showing the webdoc interactive experience and so engage young people in dialogue and debate about their views on empowerment.

3. Results

In this final phase of the webdoc creation process, the segments made by the participants (see www.hebewebdoc.com) are an important result, as

they provide themes in their videos about their relationship to the concept of empowerment. An initial assessment of the project can be made from a qualitative perspective, taking the audiovisual pieces resulting from the workshop as a basis for reflection. The portrait of characters and film self-portrait showed how the family plays an essential role for the majority of participants in the HEBE methodology. The fact that the eldest girl was the only one who did not place any familiar characters in their stories of empowerment was significant. It is evident, therefore, that in the segments, as well as in the discussions in the focus group, one of the main indicators of empowerment shown was the family. One could consider whether this fact resulted especially from the young life trajectory of the participants and socio-cultural elements of the Spanish context, which place the family at the center of interpersonal relations, of relationships, development and education. However, the benchmark for personal empowerment and the emotional education of the participants was more like a mentor than an example that the young participants wanted to personally or professionally model themselves on. Generally, the segments that referred to these people were presented as a tribute to thank them for an education that went beyond the definition that had been given of empowerment. It can be concluded, therefore, that there was a bond between the HEBE participants of and the people

who had been empowering for them, to whom they felt they were indebted in their life. The stories did not point to an explanation as to why or what had empowered them. However, it can be assumed that there was a global component, which could not be attributed to any characteristic or precise moment, but was included in the context of a continuous process of accompaniment and constant presence in personal growth.

Also in this processual line, self-portraits generally involved a biographical exploration that resulted in personal and identity-based analysis. Intimate portraits predominated, with a profound personal inquiry into the characteristics of the participants through their origins. For this reason, images of the protagonists' archives were often included, traversing their childhood experiences, which were contrasted with the present moment. In addition, a dialogue arose with the image of oneself and the physical, giving this corporeal exploration a very specific dimension of the conception of the self, combined with more abstract and global reflections. This suggested that the processual and temporal component of empowerment became a radically transformative element of self-interpretation under the prism of empowerment. In fact, among the indicators included in the project, enabling processes appeared as a defining sign of empowerment. The exploration exercise on the self, confirmed that any questioning about their personal training involved a longitudinal analysis of multiple moments and the collection of those experiences filtered through their personal perception.

The analysis of the participants' self-portrait segments forced a break with the uncritical empathy that the portrait could have had, and allowed them to reflect on their own stories from a great distance, from a position of otherness that allowed a revealing contrast of the protagonist's own contradictions when it came to reflecting on themselves and their empowerment. Finally, as regards the space, places to do with education, residence, coexistence and work and professional development appeared indistinctly. Although the participants did not represent a significant sample for objectifying data, the case study confirmed a tendency to emphasize institutionalized and formal spaces, to the detriment of places occupied more spontaneously by young people, spaces that were not controlled or had a fully leisurely component to them. In a revealing way, spaces returned to time: the chosen places were spaces that meant or had meant something to the protagonists for emotional reasons, but also because of their chronological location, length and duration. Its *prägnanz* lay not

only in the enabling character of space, but also in the interaction that the space allowed to have with the present moment.

The location indicator was directly related to aspects such as freedom, refuge, overcoming, professional career or friendship. The three explored elements defined a chronological itinerary that once again suggested that the time vector was important in the definition of empowerment, as it traces the line of the subject's progression, and forms a dialogue for improvement and comparison with the present. The evocative and retrospective nature of this introspective inquiry by the participants may have something to do with this, but even when the pedagogical workshop had raised questions about future pathways, the experience of the past appeared as an essential element when reflecting on personal empowerment.

4. Discussion and conclusions

As we pointed out previously, the results of this case study cannot be definitive, because it is currently in its final implementation phase on the web. It can, however, be noted that the recent audiovisual format of the webdoc, still under development and experimentation due to its novelty, allows a collective articulation of individual stories about empowerment that brings together the intimate and personal with the universal experiences of users.

This is a promising project is promising in three aspects. The first of these refers to the precision of the concept of youth empowerment based on the empirical reasoning of the participants in the web documentary. This will be accompanied by the clarifications of various experts, as a contrast with or supplement to what the protagonists of the documentary expressed.

In its second aspect, the project will reflect different processes of youth empowerment. These can be explored as a case study to specify everything concerning the field studied. The citizen participation encouraged by use of the webdoc, will be established as a mechanism to collectively and experientially analyze the term.

Finally, the process leading to the documentary, in the session for the preparation, monitoring and recording of the segments, will become a mechanism of empowerment in itself, so that the experience can be understood as a scalable and / or replicable methodology for working models of empowerment in other contexts.

Beyond these foreseeable results, the project seeks to investigate reproducible formulas for the implementation of youth empowerment policies. Through the proposed participatory workshop,

within the framework of the HEBE Project, methodologies will be proposed for raising awareness of personal development among young people and, at the same time, for acquiring greater intellectual and emotional training through individual and collective work, of language and the visual arts.

As an option for improvement, other exploratory exercises could be introduced by the participants, which can contribute to provide a more

specific definition of the concept of empowerment. The outcome of the audiovisual pieces produced by the young participants was generally taken from an essentially poetic, even metaphorical perspective. Perhaps the specificity resulting from focus groups exercises should be developed in the production of certain pieces or could supplement the abstract aspects of the videos produced by the participants with more specific data referring to the main concept in this paper.

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