

“Writing the story”: Analysis of discursive networks in a community writing process with victims of armed conflict

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the subjective construction of criminal identity among three adolescents linked to the Juvenile Criminal Responsibility System (SRPA, in Spanish) in Valle del Cauca (Colombia) with a history of gang membership. This study aimed to understand how these young people shaped their identity based on their life experiences, family relationships, cultural practices, and social environment. A qualitative approach with a biographical design was utilized, employing in-depth interviews and body mapping as the primary data collection techniques. Furthermore, the implementation of automated textual analysis, facilitated by the utilization of IRaMuTeQ software, enabled the generation of semantic graphs and discourse network maps. The results indicated that the criminal identity of these adolescents was characterized by sentiments of recognition, empowerment, and affiliation provided by gangs within a context of exclusion and marginalization. The narratives elucidated recurrent themes of familial abandonment, structural violence, and the quest for significance within high-risk social milieus. The analysis of the discourse networks facilitated the identification of thematic nodes associated with emotional experience, masculinity, transgression, and group loyalty. The study posited that juvenile criminal identity cannot be comprehended exclusively from a legal or behavioral vantage point; rather, it must be approached as a subjective construction anchored in social and symbolic dynamics. The study underscored the efficacy of semantic network analysis as a methodological instrument for elucidating the structures of discourse and the cognitive processes underlying the interpretation of criminal experiences among juveniles.

Keywords: discursive networks; community writing; subjectivity; criminal identity; adolescents; gangs.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Puesto que el hombre, tanto por necesidad como por aburrimiento, desea existir en sociedad y gregariamente, precisa de un tratado de paz, y conforme a éste, procura que, al menos, desaparezca de su mundo el más grande.

bellum ómnium contra omnes.

Since man, both out of necessity and boredom, desires to exist in society and in groups, he requires a peace treaty, and in accordance with it, he seeks to eliminate from his world at least the greatest.

bellum omnium contra omnes.
(war of all against all).

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE (1873)

THE ARMED conflict in Colombia has had a profound impact on affected communities, particularly in regions such as San José del Guaviare, where decades of violence, displacement, and social exclusion have taken place. In this context, the “other victims” —groups that have historically been invisible in official reparation processes— face significant challenges in rebuilding their lives and strengthening their psychosocial well-being. The intricacies of these circumstances necessitate novel methodologies that extend beyond conventional assistance, thereby fostering the proactive involvement of communities in their own healing and social reconstruction processes.

This study focuses on the analysis of the project “Writing the Story: Strengthening community well-being for victims of armed conflict in San José del Guaviare through community writing,” which uses writing as a tool for emotional expression, experience sharing, and mutual support among participants. The initiative is part of a participatory action research (PAR) methodology, which allows victims to actively participate in the construction of knowledge and the generation of symbolic and community reparation processes.

The employment of participatory methodologies, including participatory rapid assessment (PRA) and the “photo voice” technique, has facilitated an in-depth and contextualized evaluation of the community’s needs and capabilities. This approach has revealed that community writing can serve not only as a therapeutic

resource but also as a mechanism for reinterpreting collective memory and reconstructing the social fabric that has been fragmented by conflict. In accordance with the findings of studies that have demonstrated the efficacy of autobiographical writing in coping with grief and subjective transformation among victims of armed conflict, this project offers a comprehensive perspective that links the individual and collective dimensions, thereby promoting processes of comprehensive reparation and community strengthening.

This initiative is part of a broader set of programs in Colombia that underscore the significance of education, culture, and social engagement as foundational elements in establishing peace and fostering reconciliation in regions grappling with violence. Consequently, this study offers empirical evidence of the psychosocial benefits of community writing and proposes a replicable model that can be implemented in other regions, thereby contributing to the consolidation of lasting peace processes and the vindication of the rights and dignity of victims.

1.1. Conceptual approach

The concept of “other victims” is introduced to identify those affected by armed conflict who do not fit into traditional victim categories. Community writing is presented as a communication tool aimed at fostering understanding and consensus building, which is essential for the psychosocial support group, as it allows for the consideration of alternative perspectives on the events discussed during the sessions (Habermas, 1992).

The fundamental concepts underlying this study facilitate comprehension of its comprehensive approach, thereby elucidating the theoretical and methodological dimensions of the project. The concept of “psychosocial action” is initially emphasized, defined as a perspective on reality and a methodological approach that facilitates scenarios for action. This concept enables a comprehensive understanding of human phenomena, thereby proposing alternatives, solutions, and inclusive processes that evolve over time and yield new subjectivities within frameworks of greater justice, equity, human-scale development, healthy

coexistence, and peace (Villa Gómez, 2012). According to this conceptualization, psychosocial action is understood to range from diagnosis to evaluation in the specific case of the psychosocial support group sessions carried out in this project.

The incorporation of PRA as a working methodology for collecting and analyzing information produced by different population groups in a comparatively short time compared to other methods is closely related to this participatory approach (Visión Consultores, 2010). This instrument is predicated on the notion that individuals directly implicated in a given issue possess the most comprehensive understanding of its intricacies, thereby fostering community empowerment initiatives. The PRA is predicated on the notion of active participation and collaboration, with the objective of constructing shared diagnoses that will inform contextualized decisions and action plans, while concurrently fortifying local collaboration networks.

The data obtained through these participatory methodologies have enabled researchers to achieve a more profound understanding of the human experience from the perspective of "corporeality," a concept based on Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. According to Merleau-Ponty (1945), the body is not merely a physical object, but rather the means through which humans relate to the world and to others. From this perspective, the body can be conceptualized as a living archive, a repository of traumatic memories, emotions, and feelings of vulnerability. In this project, tools such as body mapping have enabled participants to explore and symbolically represent these bodily experiences, thereby revealing their position in relation to armed conflict.

This physical and experiential approach is particularly relevant when it comes to "other victims," a term that refers to people who, despite having suffered the consequences of armed conflict, do not meet the legal requirements to be officially recognized as victims under Law 1448 of 2011 (Colombian Congress, 2011). This category facilitates the identification of various forms of victimization that frequently elude institutional records yet are nevertheless associated with a robust subjective and collective component related to trauma, exclusion, and silenced memory.

Confronted with this reality, "community writing" is proposed as a communication tool aimed at fostering understanding (Habermas, 1992). In the context of psychosocial support groups, this practice is characterized as a collective process that facilitates the reinterpretation of experiences, fosters symbolic consensus, and introduces novel perspectives on past events. Consequently, it contributes to emotional processing and the establishment of a shared memory.

The aforementioned elements ultimately coalesce around the concept of "subjectivity," as understood through the lens of Husserlian phenomenology. Subjectivity is defined as an intentional construction that emerges from lived experience and interaction with the world and with others (Husserl, 2013). In the case of "other victims," subjectivity is expressed through a diversity of narratives that facilitate understanding of the unique and collective effects of armed conflict on communities, as well as of the ways in which these subjectivities resist, heal, and rebuild through words.

The "Writing the Story" initiative, grounded in PAR methodologies, has incorporated a range of techniques, including photo voice, body mapping, and social mapping, into the community writing process. These techniques have been integrated to foster the integration of emotional, symbolic, and community dimensions. These tools are utilized to facilitate the community writing process.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative approach and utilized the PAR to comprehend and fortify the community well-being of the "other victims" of the armed conflict in San José del Guaviare, Colombia. The PAR facilitated community involvement in all phases of the research process, including problem identification and solution implementation. The sample consisted of 14 residents of San José del Guaviare, selected for having been exposed to the aftermath of the armed conflict and not being registered with the victims' unit. These participants formed a psychosocial support group called "Writing the Story," where the interventions and data collection were carried out.

In the context of this project, a variety of information-gathering techniques were employed, including photo voice, body mapping, and social mapping. The utilization of these methodologies yielded insights into the well-being status within the community. It is imperative to acknowledge that certain modifications were implemented in the methodologies employed for the psychosocial support group known as “Writing the Story.” In particular, for the photo voice sessions, the photographs were brought to the space and displayed at all times so that participants always had access to them.

- *Photo voice*: It is a tool that generates knowledge, enables reflection, and fosters community intervention, thereby transforming participants into project collaborators. This shift in focus entails moving from a research paradigm that focuses on “researching in, for, or about them” to a more collaborative approach that involves “working with them” (Sanz Vega *et al.*, 2018). This instrument enables individuals to articulate their experiences and perspectives through a combination of images and narratives.
- *Body mapping*: It is defined as the development of a material anchor that represents the corporeal, including flesh, bones, blood, and all its systems amalgamated with symbolic references (Silva *et al.*, 2013). According to this understanding, body mapping is defined as the graphical representation of the body, with the objective of identifying the relationships between individual experiences and community experiences.
- *Social mapping*: It is a concept that facilitates the management of information in a dynamic and visual manner through the use of maps. This approach enables the identification of perceptions regarding the relationships between community actors and their environment, as well as the interactions that are generated with the context and the territory (Betancurth *et al.*, 2020). Given this understanding, the tool facilitates the mapping and analysis of social relationships, spatial characteristics, and resource availability within the San José del Guaviare territory over a specified time period.

To implement the interventions, ethnographic techniques were employed, with these techniques being adapted to align with the specific requirements of the population in question. Two approaches that will be taken into account are dialogicity and performativity, as pointed out by Ángel and Barranquero (2016). These approaches enabled the establishment of an open and participatory dialogue, thereby fostering collaboration and the joint construction of solutions.

The collected data were then subjected to qualitative analysis, a process aimed at identifying patterns and recurring themes within the data. A comparative analysis of the results obtained in the different phases of the project was carried out to identify changes and transformations in the community well-being of the participants. Constant reflection and dialogue with participants were central elements in the analysis process, ensuring the validity and relevance of the results (Figure 1). The “Writing the Story” support group’s work plan was meticulously structured into multiple sessions, with each session focusing on a distinct topic related to conflict and community well-being. Group dynamics, creative writing exercises, and spaces for reflection were utilized to facilitate emotional expression, the exchange of experiences, and the construction of collective narratives.

2.1. Processing and analysis

El hombre es un ser social por naturaleza.

Man is a social being by nature

ARISTÓTELES. (Trans. 1998). *Política*
(C. García Gual & A. Pérez Jiménez, trans.). Alianza

The aforementioned sentence establishes a philosophical foundation for comprehending the collective essence of the experience examined in the “Writing the Story” initiative. To structure the analysis, four main categories were established based on the interpretation of the stories generated by the participants. These categories are as follows: environmental conflicts, social conflicts, supernatural conflicts, and emotional conflicts. These categories are not intended to be rigid compartments; rather, they are analytical frameworks that facilitate a better understanding of the content. It

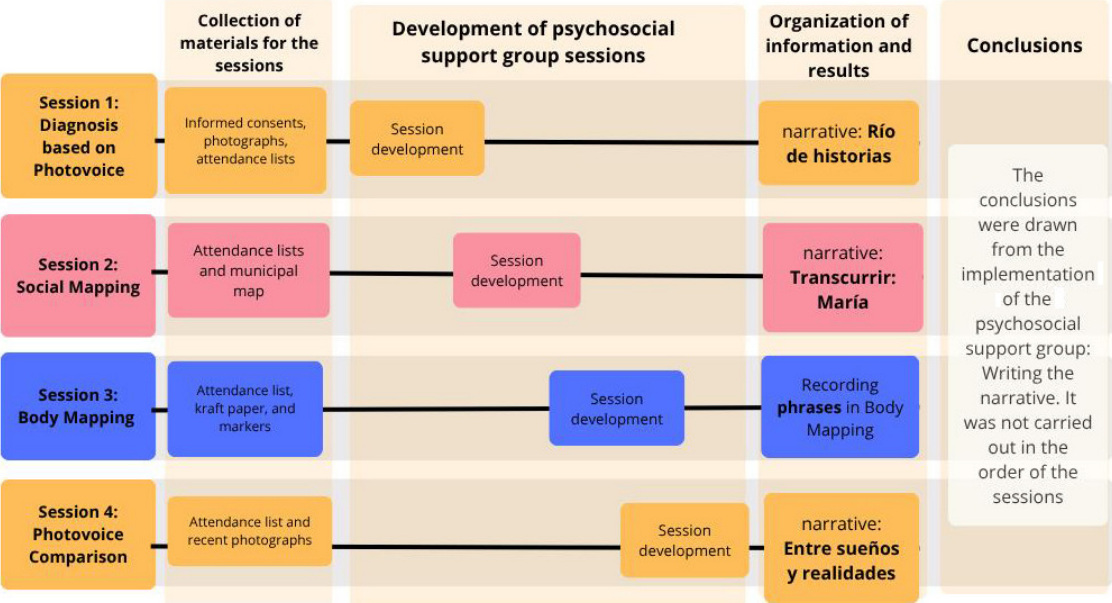


Figure 1. Implementation of the “Writing the Story” methodology.

is acknowledged that numerous experiences may be classified into multiple categories concurrently, as participants’ experiences are frequently characterized by the simultaneous presence of multiple dimensions. For instance, an environmental conflict may have profound emotional, social, or even symbolic, spiritual, or religious implications.

This analytical framework is twofold: first, it seeks to maintain consistency with the objectives proposed in the research, and second, it facilitates a comparative reading between the tools applied in each session. Consequently, it provides a comprehensive perspective on how participants comprehend and articulate their experiences within a context of protracted violence, uprooting, and territorial reconstruction. To guarantee the rigor of the analytical process, it was decided to work with the texts produced in each session in their original version, without making any stylistic corrections or subsequent edits. This methodological decision was made with the objective of preserving the authenticity of the participants’ voices and providing a phenomenological interpretation that is more faithful to their experience.

The textual analysis was complemented by the use of IRaMuTeQ software (Interface for R for Multidimensional Analysis of Texts and Questionnaires), a free tool developed to perform quantitative and qualitative analysis of

textual data. This program facilitates the generation of visualizations, including word clouds and semantic halos, which are instrumental in elucidating the relationships between concepts and dimensions articulated within the narratives. The program was utilized to generate specific halo of words for sessions 1, 2, and 4. This was due to the fact that in session 3—corresponding to body mapping—complete textual narratives were not produced by each participant. Instead, visual maps with annotations were produced.

A general word cloud was also created, integrating all the writings from all the sessions (with the exception of those that were edited or corrected) with the aim of observing the most frequent relationships between the terms used by the participants. This instrument furnished a synopsis of the prevailing themes that were present in the stories, thereby functioning as an initial point of departure for the analysis of the meaning at each level.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Level of analysis 1: Diagnosis based on photo voice

This corresponds to the initial session of the support group “Writing the Story,” which was held on Monday, September 23, 2025. In this

session, the photo voice technique was utilized to conduct a participatory community assessment. The methodology entailed the presentation of a series of historical photographs of San José del Guaviare, meticulously curated by the facilitator, to elicit memories, emotions, and narratives associated with the locale. The exercise commenced with the reading of the informed consent form and the presentation of the objective of the meetings. From the outset, the objective was to establish a space conducive to trust, wherein participants could perceive themselves as active subjects in the construction of memory. However, the initial reactions exhibited emotional resistance and a certain distance from the past. Expressions such as “talking about the past in Guaviare is difficult” have been employed to underscore the profound impact of trauma, memory loss, and denial as psychological defenses against the harrowing experiences that have befallen the region.

During the session, participants closely examined the images, yet several reported that they did not recognize the depicted locations. This visual distance prompted profound introspection regarding the dearth of knowledge concerning local history, particularly among individuals who arrived in San José del Guaviare during forced migration or internal displacement and whose relationship to the territory has been influenced by armed conflict.

The participants were invited to compose concise written pieces that elucidated the visual content presented to them by relating it to their personal experiences. At this juncture, a plethora of challenges emerged. A subset of participants reported feelings of inadequacy in their writing abilities. Others articulated apprehensions regarding the potential for articulating their thoughts with precision or were uncertain about where to initiate the writing process. However, a dynamic of mutual support emerged: those who possessed greater proficiency offered words of encouragement, corrected spelling errors, or shared ideas, thereby creating an atmosphere of collaboration and equality that facilitated the writing process. Finally, the majority of participants successfully completed the writing task and were prompted to present their written work to the group.

These texts were then subjected to analysis using IRaMuTeQ software, a tool designed for qualitative and quantitative textual analysis. The analysis revealed that the most frequently used word was “arrive” (“llegar,” in Spanish), suggesting that a significant number of stories centered on the participants’ arrival in Guaviare (Figure 2). This verb, at first glance uncomplicated, was imbued with profound symbolic significance. Its act of arrival was understood to signify migration, leaving something behind, starting over, building, adapting, and persevering. The word “arrive” thus became the central theme of the participants’ collective memory, reflecting their personal and family histories of displacement and reconstruction.

Other salient words that emerged included “water,” “people,” “family,” “uncle,” “surprise,” “Villavicencio,” “house,” and “age” (“agua,” “pueblo,” “familia,” “tío,” “sorpresa,” “Villavicencio,” “casa,” and “edad,” in Spanish). These elements were intertwined with both personal experiences and communal knowledge, including the passage through Villavicencio as a transit city, the symbolic role of uncles or grandparents as role models, the construction of the house as a representation of familial roots, and the vital role of water in the Amazonian environment. The repetition of these terms enabled the identification of three key dimensions in the stories: space (the territory), time (the past reconstructed from the present), and emotionality (the feelings linked to memory).

Phenomenological analysis of these evocations has been interpreted as both nostalgic and a means of reframing the experience. For instance, the term “home,” in addition to its physical connotation, alludes to the Greek concept of *oikos*, which encompasses the notion of a domestic environment, as well as the act of nurturing and cultivating identity, thereby weaving the fabric of social bonds. This concept of “home” as an emotional and symbolic space demonstrated that, despite the pain and uprooting, there was a collective will to rebuild a sense of belonging and community.

Another pivotal element of the study was the implementation of a reading-aloud protocol, in which the texts produced were read aloud to participants. This act, far from being

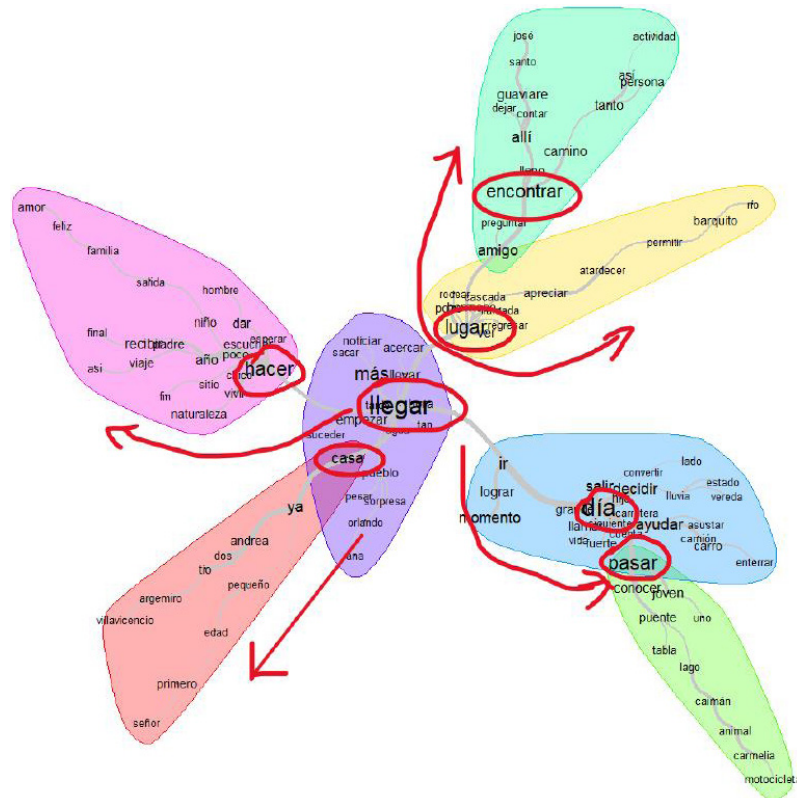


Figure 2. Halo of words. Session 1: Diagnosis based on photo voice.

Note. The map was kept in the original language, Spanish.

a rudimentary form of closure, evolved into a medium of validation. Through active listening and the examination of their own words and those of others, participants engaged in a process of narrative reconstruction, recognizing commonalities with other experiences and overcoming feelings of emotional isolation. Consequently, the group initiated the establishment of a space conducive to intersubjective construction, wherein writing and oral expression functioned as instruments for healing, comprehension, and connection.

In sum, the initial session and the analysis of the narratives demonstrated that the community writing process facilitates the activation of profound memories, the construction of shared meanings, and the development of a collective narrative from the experiences of the "other victims" of the armed conflict. Writing, therefore, cannot be regarded as a rudimentary literary exercise. Rather, it has emerged as a therapeutic, political, and community instrument capable of transforming pain into words and words into collective action.

3.2. Level of analysis 2: Social mapping

The subsequent session centered on social mapping as a collective method for re-establishing the memory of the territory. The activity was once again conducted in a *suite* at the Centro Comunitario de Atención Virtual (CCAV) in San José del Guaviare. In this instance, participants engaged with an expansive map of the department of Guaviare, with a particular emphasis on the urban context of the municipality. Furthermore, each participant was provided with a letter-size map of San José del Guaviare, prepared by the Departamento Administrativo de Planeación (2018). The objective of providing this map was to facilitate the visualization and writing process, enabling participants to engage with the subject matter from a perspective that mirrors their immediate surroundings.

From the outset, participants indicated that many of the locations indicated on the map were unfamiliar to them. It was noted that the municipality had undergone rapid changes in its infrastructure, which had led to a certain

disconnect with the official maps. This observation initiated a discourse on the perceptions of urban space, territorial belonging, and the physical changes that occur over time. Despite the evident spatial separation from certain locations, participants commenced the identification of substantial areas, including educational institutions where they pursued their studies, residential neighborhoods where they were raised, the primary place of worship, and the central park. These spaces thus became sites of remembrance and emotional resonance, interweaving personal experiences with the broader tapestry of collective history.

Subsequent to the identification of these locales, participants were tasked with the composition of a narrative chronicling a notable occurrence that had transpired within one of these locations. The guidelines permitted the narratives to be rooted in the subjects' personal experiences or in experiences relayed to them by others. The written texts were subsequently consolidated into a unified document bearing the title "Transcription of the texts from session 2 (Social Cartography)."

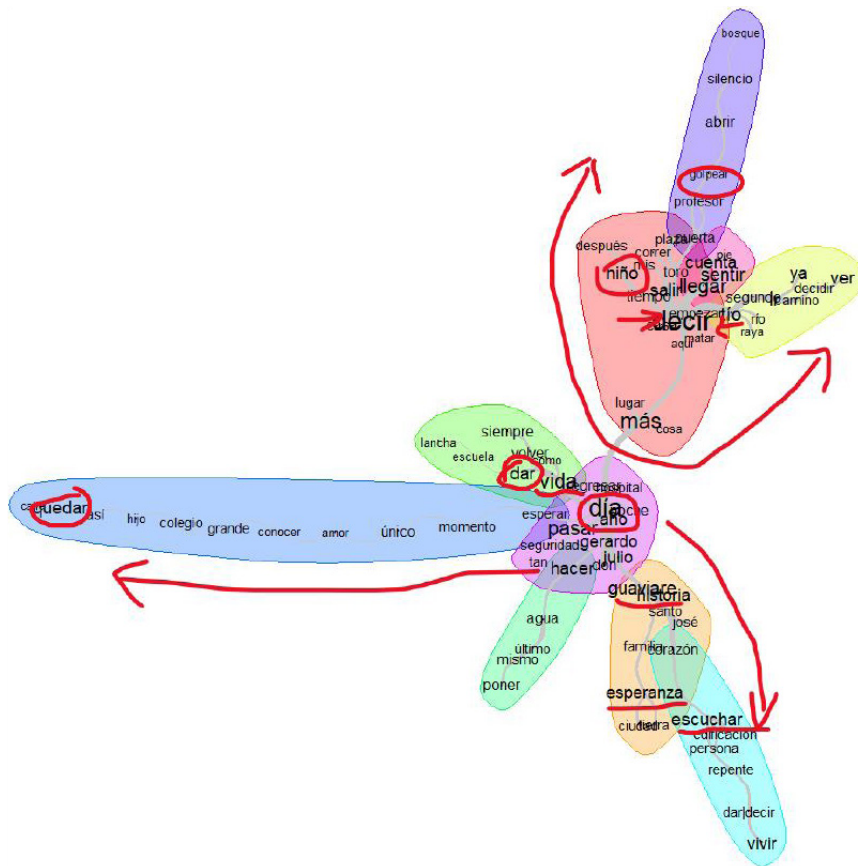
One of the most notable narratives recounts the poignant tale of Julio, a stray dog hailing from Chuapal, and the profound bond he shared with his proprietor, Don Gerardo, a farmer who succumbed to a myocardial infarction while engaged in the harvesting of sugar cane. Despite the apparent simplicity of the narrative, it is replete with symbols and emotions, including loyalty, loss, rural roots, and the animal's perpetual anticipation for its master. These types of narratives demonstrate how the relationship with the land is shaped by emotional and everyday bonds.

From a phenomenological perspective, the stories in this session allow us to observe how participants construct meaning about the territory based on their lived and felt experiences and not just on geographical logic. It is imperative to recognize that streets, parks, and houses are not merely physical coordinates; rather, they are sites where a myriad of events have transpired, including farewells, games, deaths, encounters, and memories. Consequently, social cartography transcends the confines of a mere technical exercise, metamorphosing into a methodology that imbues the geographical boundaries with subjectivity, thereby "emotionalizing the map."

The analysis of the accounts also revealed the existence of different types of conflicts that affect community life. Initially, environmental conflicts were identified, including the challenges of residing in a jungle region characterized by heavy rainfall, fast-flowing rivers, and impassable roads. Secondly, social conflicts related to insecurity, poverty, and the normalization of violence emerged, as evidenced by life near the Joaquín París battalion, an area historically marked by armed conflict. The concept of supernatural conflicts was also discussed, as evidenced by narratives involving shadows, disquieting voices, and unexplained occurrences in locations such as the old mill or boarding schools. These narratives reflect not only local beliefs but also symbolic ways of processing the incomprehensible and making sense of fear.

The IRaMuTeQ tool was employed once more to process the accounts and generate the corresponding halo of words (Figure 3). A subsequent textual analysis revealed that terms such as "neighborhood," "church," "battalion," "mill," and "memory" ("barrio," "iglesia," "batallón," "molino," and "recuerdo," in Spanish) emerged as the most salient lexical nuclei. The words in question possess a high symbolic and emotional density, thereby corroborating the hypothesis that the territory becomes an extension of the experiences, fears, affections, and resistance of its inhabitants.

The exercise also enabled the identification of discrepancies between participants' versions of specific narratives. This plurality of memories was not regarded as a contradiction but rather as a source of interpretive richness. The existence of multiple versions of the same place enables a more comprehensive understanding of events and demonstrates that collective memory is inherently multifaceted and contested. Consequently, a series of methodological recommendations were proposed for subsequent applications of the exercise. It was proposed that larger maps be employed to facilitate visualization, that the cartographic work be accompanied by photographs of the places mentioned, and that the stories reflect both lived and inherited experiences. It was also proposed that an open space for dialogue be maintained during the writing process, which would enrich the texts and strengthen the sense of community among participants.



3.3. Level of analysis 3: Body mapping

From the outset, it was made clear that the concept of “scar” included not only visible physical marks but also emotional or symbolic traces caused by pain, trauma, or experiences that leave a mark. A number of subjects reported experiencing difficulties in visualizing their

Subsequent to the depiction of the body figures, the participants proceeded to annotate the most salient scars with drawings and phrases. These accounts encompass a wide spectrum, ranging from quotidian mishaps such as bicycle accidents or sports-related injuries to experiences directly associated with armed conflict, including the loss of a parent due to a stray bullet or involuntary displacement. In some cases, emotional or psychological conditions also emerged, such as anxious thoughts

or persistent sadness, as well as physical conditions associated with the environment, such as thyroid problems or skin diseases.

A subsequent analysis of these maps revealed an overlap of physical, emotional, and social scars. The following phrases were collected: “My father passed away when I was eight years old, due to a stray bullet,” “Persistent and anxious thoughts,” “Scar from a motorcycle accident,” “Scar from glass embedded in the skin after falling to the ground,” and “Emotional scar from an absent father.” These expressions not only described events but also constructed a map of pain experienced in silence, which in many cases had been invisible or not recognized as a legitimate form of suffering. The concept of body mapping facilitated the provision of tangible substance to memory, both in its literal and symbolic dimensions.

A salient aspect of the study was the demonstration that the experience of conflict transcends generations. Examples of such phrases include the phrases “Factions of my face, of my mother” and “Many moles, like my grandmother,” which illustrate how bodies serve as conduits for emotional and familial heritage. This finding led to the discussion of the concept of transgenerational harm, which is defined as the impact that violence has not only on those who suffer it directly but also on their children and grandchildren through behaviors, silences, fears, and altered family dynamics. The absence of the father figure, an overprotective maternal figure, or difficulties in discussing the past are tangible manifestations of these latent psychological injuries.

When categorizing visual and verbal accounts, various types of conflicts were identified:

- *Environmental conflicts*: reflected in scars caused by traffic accidents, falls, or diseases specific to the environment.
- *Emotional conflicts*: expressed in psychosomatic symptoms, distress, and unresolved trauma.
- *Social conflicts*: such as malnutrition, poverty, or lack of access to healthcare, which manifest themselves in phrases such as “short stature and low weight for age.”
- *Supernatural conflicts*: unlike previous sessions, none were identified in this session, which is attributed to the eminently personal and introspective nature of the exercise.

From a phenomenological perspective, the body becomes the primary means of relating to the world. As Merleau-Ponty (1945) contends, the body is not merely an object among others; rather, it constitutes the basis of our existence, the foundation from which we experience, feel, and understand. This concept has been reexamined to explore how individuals “inhabit” their scars and reinterpret them when representing them graphically. Additionally, the philosophical tenets espoused by Jean Paul Sartre (1943) were integrated, positing that the body serves as the primary condition and contingency of freedom—a conceptualization that can be likened to a combat zone wherein both anguish and the prospect of reformation are inscribed.

The session culminated with a collective introspection exercise, wherein multiple individuals disclosed sentiments of melancholy, mortification, and even a sense of accomplishment concerning the scars they had revealed. However, it should be noted that some stories were not committed to writing or illustration, but rather, they were conveyed through spontaneous conversations. This material, which was not formally recorded, was equally important because it highlighted a phenomenon known as emotional distancing: the tendency to omit or soften certain painful memories as a self-protective mechanism.

In conclusion, body mapping has been demonstrated to be a potent instrument for investigating the latent facets of armed conflict. Through the symbolic representation of the body, participants were able to recognize, reframe, and share their experiences of pain, collectively constructing an embodied memory. The body, conceptualized as a repository of experiences, functioned as the medium through which the resistance, identity, and dignity of the “other victims” were articulated.

3.4. Level of analysis 4: Photo voice comparison

The fourth and final session entailed a comparative analysis of the photo voice tool, which was previously introduced, with the initial exercise. In contrast to the initial session, in which historical photographs of the municipality of San José del Guaviare were utilized, this subsequent session employed contemporary

photographs taken from the same locations. The objective of this approach was to discern physical alterations in the environment and to formulate novel narratives informed by the present circumstances.

The day began with a brief explanation of the classic structure of a story: introduction, climax, and denouement. This guidance was necessary because, in previous sessions, participants had expressed difficulties in writing their stories. To facilitate the assimilation of this narrative structure, mini-stories were shared and analyzed, which helped participants identify the fundamental elements of a story through concrete and brief examples. Once contextualized, the participants began to write new stories inspired by the recent photographs. These writings were collected again under the title: "Transcription of the texts from session 4 (Photo Voice 2)." They show a shift in focus from the past to the present and, in some cases, to projections of the future, evidencing an emotional and symbolic transition in the writing process.

One of the most emblematic narratives was that of Yenny, a young woman who recollects her school graduation with profound sentiment. The text delineates a scenario characterized by tension and optimism. Her classmate nearly failed to participate in the final agricultural exhibition, which would have resulted in the forfeiture of a pivotal model for her graduation. The timely arrival of her classmate, her commendable academic performance, and the culmination of the academic year collectively engender a sense of personal triumph, thereby paving the way for a future replete with possibilities. This narrative, characterized by affection, responsibility, and a strong aspiration to achieve success, functions as a positive memory within an adverse context.

A variety of texts have also been published that explore themes such as youthful dreams, the desire to study and progress, the dangers of the urban environment, and family memories linked to iconic places in the municipality. The experiences of urban violence were recounted, including robberies, threats, and accidents

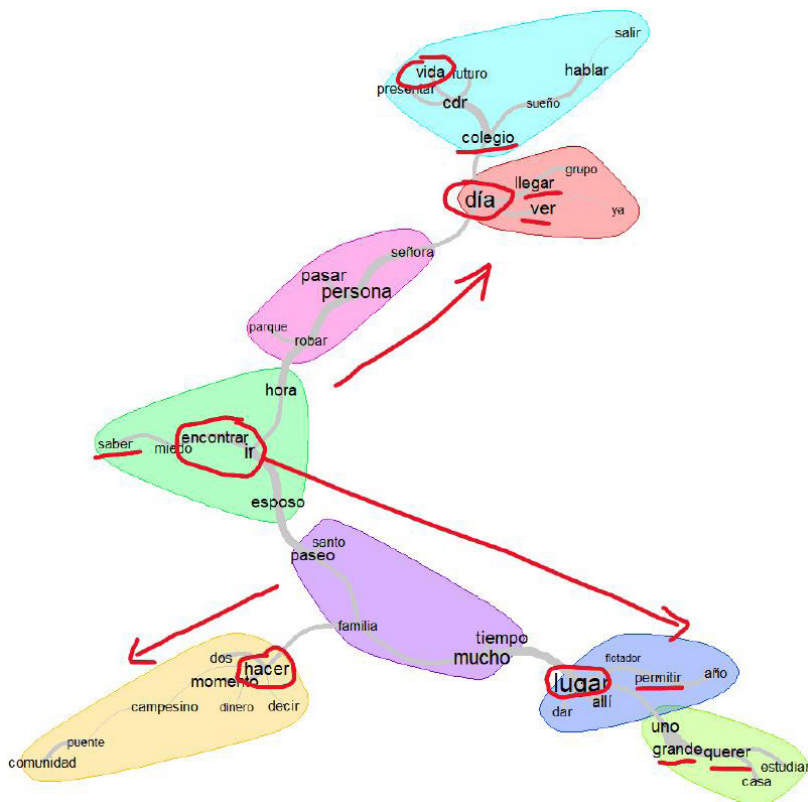


Figure 4. Halo of words. Session 4: Photo voice comparison.
Note. The map was kept in the original language, Spanish.

in areas known to be high risk. Additionally, scenes from everyday life were presented, allowing participants to express their feelings, frustrations, and aspirations.

The analysis of the halo of words for this session, generated using IRaMuTeQ software, revealed a significant change compared to the initial photo voice exercise (Figure 4). In the initial session, the prevailing term was “arrive,” which symbolized settlement and the formation of territorial identity. In contrast, the predominant word in this subsequent session was “go” (“ir,” in Spanish). This verb, in its simplicity, has profound connotations: it represents movement, search, and transformation, but also fear, decision, and the desire to find something different.

The term “go” was associated with words such as “fear,” “time,” “husband,” “find,” and “know” (“miedo,” “hora,” “esposo,” “encontrar,” and “saber,” in Spanish). These semantic links form a network of meanings that refer to life experiences related to transit: “fear” as a driving force or obstacle to moving forward, time (the “hour” [“hora,” in Spanish]) as a limit or impulse to act, emotional relationships (the “husband”) as support or anchor, searching (“find”) as an intentional process, and knowledge (“know”) as a way of making sense of experience. From a phenomenological perspective, this halo reflects the intentionality of consciousness, which, according to Husserl, is always directed toward something.

From a thematic perspective, the stories in this session revealed the four types of conflict identified in previous analyses:

- *Environmental conflicts*: present in stories about deteriorating infrastructure, unsafe bridges, or abandoned rural areas.
- *Social conflicts*: expressed in stories of insecurity, state neglect, or educational inequality.
- *Emotional conflicts*: manifested in experiences of anxiety, loss, frustrated hope, or personal resilience.
- *Supernatural conflicts*: although to a lesser extent, these remained latent as part of the collective imagination of the region.

The stories were subsequently compiled into a text entitled “Between Dreams and Reality,” which intertwines scenes of youth, hope, danger, loss, and affection. The objective of this

narrative consolidation was to coherently articulate the multiple voices and experiences collected, respecting the original style of the authors and reinforcing the community nature of the project. This final exercise not only brought the series of sessions to a close but also consolidated a process of subjective and collective transformation. A rereading of the territory through the lens of contemporary images enabled participants to recognize themselves as active subjects in the present, endowed with the capacity to dream, plan, and rebuild their history beyond the conflict.

3.5. General analysis of the text transcripts

A comprehensive analysis of the text transcripts was subsequently conducted. This objective was accomplished by employing the IRaMuTeQ software to generate a word cloud (Figure 5). The categories of analysis employed in this study were consistent with those utilized in the previous word maps, encompassing environmental, social, supernatural, and emotional conflicts.

3.5.1. Environment conflicts

The terms “water,” “river,” “road,” “rain,” “nature,” and “pass” (“agua,” “río,” “camino,” “lluvia,” “naturaleza,” and “pasar,” in Spanish) are particularly salient, denoting a persistent and demanding relationship with the natural environment of Guaviare. The prevalence of words such as “day,” “place,” and “arrive” (“día,” “lugar,” and “llegar,” in Spanish) in the text suggests that daily life is characterized by movement and adaptation to the landscape, where climate and terrain directly influence everyday experiences. The environment, therefore, is not merely a backdrop but rather a factor that conditions life and imposes obstacles such as rain, mud, and fast-flowing rivers, which can hinder transit and access to basic services.

3.5.2. Social conflicts

The terms “family,” “person,” “child,” “young person,” “friend,” “parent,” and “community” (“familia,” “persona,” “niño,” “joven,” “amigo,” “padre,” and “comunidad,” in Spanish) underscore the significance of social and familial

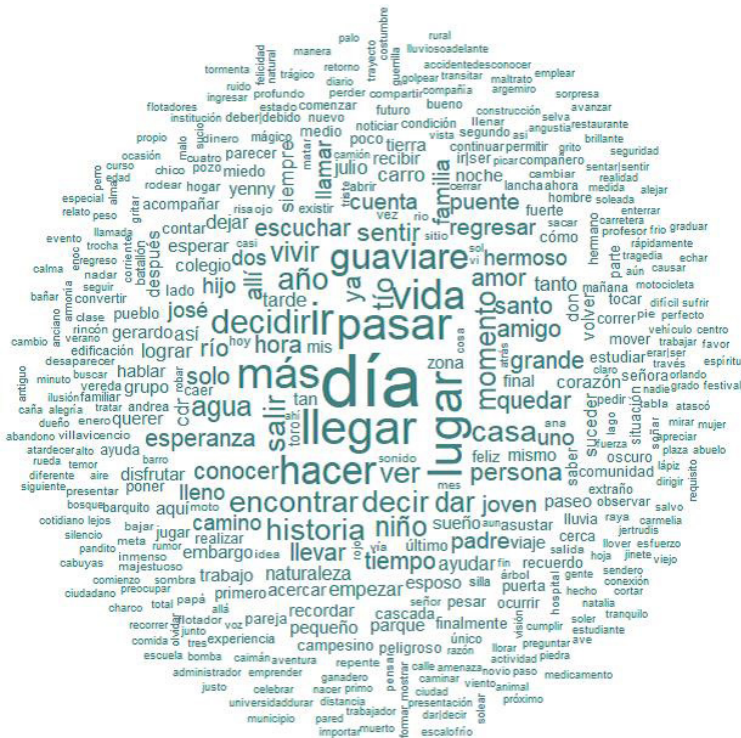


Figure 5. Word cloud derived from the transcripts of the texts.
Note. The map was kept in the original language, Spanish.

bonds. However, the presence of terms such as “decide,” “leave,” “return,” “hope,” “dream,” and “search” (“decidir,” “salir,” “regresar,” “esperanza,” “soñar,” and “buscar,” in Spanish) points to a dynamic of mobility and change, possibly related to phenomena of forced displacement and the search for better living conditions. This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that the majority of the victims in the municipality are due to forced displacement. The verbs “do,” “find,” and “give” (“hacer,” “encontrar,” and “dar,” in Spanish) become central actions, demonstrating a community undergoing processes of separation, adaptation, and the rebuilding of ties.

3.5.3. Supernatural conflicts

While the predominant themes in the word cloud are quotidian in nature, the presence of terms such as “dark,” “spirit,” “shadow,” “scare,” and “mystery” (“oscuro,” “espíritu,” “sombra,” “asustar,” and “misterio,” in Spanish) suggests the existence of supernatural beliefs and relationships in the context of everyday life. Despite their infrequency, these expressions indicate that the collective imagination is

profoundly influenced by enigmatic narratives and experiences that may facilitate comprehension and adaptation to the region's pervasive uncertainty and trepidation.

3.5.4. Emotional conflicts

The examination of words such as “life,” “love,” “hope,” “dream,” “feel,” “heart,” and “happy” (“vida,” “amor,” “esperanza,” “sueño,” “sentir,” “corazón,” and “feliz,” in Spanish) unveils a multifaceted emotional landscape. The inhabitants of Guaviare demonstrate a persistent quest for well-being and happiness, yet their lives are also characterized by nostalgia, longing, and a yearning for a more prosperous future. The repetition of terms such as “pass,” “decide,” “achieve,” “help,” and “overcome” (“pasar,” “decidir,” “lograr,” “ayudar,” and “superar,” in Spanish) indicates a constant struggle to move forward, to overcome difficulties, and to find meaning in the midst of adversity. Emotions represent a fundamental component of the collective experience, manifesting in the desire to “stay,” “return,” or “start” (“quedar,” “regresar,” or “empezar”) again.

From Husserlian phenomenology, word clouds allow us to observe how the experience of time (“day,” “year,” “moment,” “hour,” and “afternoon” [“día,” “año,” “momento,” “hora,” and “tarde,” in Spanish]) and space (“place,” “house,” “road,” “path” [“lugar,” “casa,” “camino,” and “vereda,” in Spanish]) is central to the construction of meaning for inhabitants. The “passing” (“pasar,” in Spanish) of days and “arriving” at new places are experienced as meaningful processes, in which consciousness is oriented both toward the physical environment and toward memories and personal projects. Words related to action (“do,” “take,” “live,” “tell” [“hacer,” “llevar,” “vivir,” and “contar,” in Spanish]) show an intentionality aimed at transforming reality, reinterpreting the past, and projecting hope toward the future.

In this sense, the term cloud generated from the stories written collectively by Guaviare residents offers a rich insight into the multiple dimensions that shape their experiences and memories. Through the medium of language, memories, and emotions are brought to the fore, as are the ways in which individuals inhabit and imbue the territory with meaning, confront past experiences, and project themselves into the future.

Utilizing an interpretive approach that integrates semantic analysis with elements of phenomenology, the study identifies various forms of conflicts —environmental, social, supernatural, and emotional— within the narratives. These phenomena do not occur in isolation but rather in relation to a consciousness that experiences time and space as profoundly meaningful conditions.

Dimension / type of conflict	Keywords highlighted	What collective narratives suggest	Axis of meaning that open up
Environmental conflicts	Water, river, road, rain, nature, pass, day, place, and arrive	The natural environment of Guaviare acts as both a driving force and a constant challenge. The climate, the mighty rivers, and the mud dictate travel and daily life.	<i>Adaptation and mobility:</i> People negotiate daily with the physical conditions of the territory to access services and maintain their routine.
Social conflicts	Family, person, child, young person, friend, parent, community, decide, leave, return, hope, dream, seek, do, find, and give	They reflect the centrality of family and community ties, but also the rupture and reconfiguration caused by forced displacement and the search for better opportunities.	<i>Separation, reunion, and rebuilding the social fabric:</i> These are actions to care for, help, and rebuild ties after forced mobility.
Supernatural conflicts	Dark, spirit, shadow, scare, and mystery	They reveal beliefs and stories that explain the unknown and channel fears. The mythical or supernatural coexists with everyday life as a way of understanding uncertainty.	<i>Symbolic interpretations of fear:</i> These stories give meaning to the inexplicable and reinforce local cultural identities.
Emotional conflicts	Life, love, hope, dream, feel, heart, happy, pass, decide, achieve, help, overcome, stay, return, and begin	They reveal a complex emotional plot: desire for well-being, nostalgia, and longing for the future. The action (“doing” and “overcoming”) indicates a constant struggle to move forward.	<i>The search for meaning and resilience:</i> Emotions drive projects, decisions, and solidarity in the face of adversity.
Phenomenology of time and space	Day, year, moment, time, afternoon, place, house, road, path, pass, arrive, do, take, live, and tell	From a Husserlian perspective, the time that “passes” and the spaces that are “reached” to inhabit are fundamental to constructing meaning. Consciousness is oriented toward the environment, memories, and projects.	<i>Situated and projective consciousness:</i> The present is interpreted in light of the past and the future, guiding actions that transform reality and redefine memory.

Table 1. Summary of keywords associated with each dimension.

Source. Prepared by the author.

Table 1 offers a concise overview of these dimensions, systematically correlating keywords with their meanings within the context of collective narratives. This exercise enables us to categorize the voices collected and to recognize the complexity and depth of their ways of perceiving, narrating, and resisting life in a territory marked by conflict and transformation.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Finally, it is concluded that community writing can be a tool for strengthening the well-being of the "other victims" of the armed conflict in San José del Guaviare, Colombia. This strengthening was made possible by the implementation of specific objectives, namely:

- The "other victims" community, which includes individuals impacted by the armed conflict in San José del Guaviare, engages in the sharing of experiences within a secure and trusting environment. The community writing process unfolded within a secure environment. During the sessions, participants were able to share their stories and experiences related to the armed conflict without fear of judgment. This environment was instrumental in fostering a sense of ease among the participants, thereby enabling them to share personal narratives, which in turn facilitated the establishment of profound emotional connections among them. The interaction during the sessions that complemented the writing allowed for a deeper exploration of the shared experiences, enriching the narrative content and fostering a sense of community.
- The expression of emotions related to armed conflict is facilitated through the community writing process. Participants employed a combination of dialogue and written expression to articulate their sentiments and recount their experiences concerning armed conflict. The narratives thus revealed a wide range of feelings and experiences. Narratives pertaining to familial loss, quotidian apprehensions, and distressing encounters were articulated with candor, thereby enabling the processing of emotions within a communal milieu.
- The "other victims" community of the armed conflict in San José del Guaviare has been

instrumental in facilitating a supportive environment characterized by trust and respect through the community writing process. Through the sharing of experiences, community members identified shared values and established meaningful connections that promoted empathy, solidarity, and mutual support. This phenomenon was discernible in the interactions that transpired during the sessions, wherein participants offered reciprocal encouragement to articulate their sentiments through writing. The establishment of an emotional support network proved to be a pivotal factor in enhancing community well-being.

To achieve the overall objectives, three additional methodological objectives were proposed, which were necessary to coordinate implementation and enable the sessions to be designed. These are summarized below: diagnosis, implementation, and evaluation. The project consisted of four sessions: diagnosis based on photo voice, social mapping, body mapping, and comparison of photo voice. Each session allowed for the collection of stories that revealed how the armed conflict had influenced the daily lives of the participants. Four categories were established that were present in the stories and allowed for a comparative analysis of each session. These categories are environmental, social, supernatural, and emotional conflicts. Based on this, additional conclusions and final recommendations for the project were established.

The analysis of the stories reveals a relationship between environmental, social, supernatural, and emotional conflicts. These conflicts point to the existence of a community of "other victims" of the armed conflict in San José del Guaviare, Colombia. This finding indicates that individual experiences are profoundly influenced by the socioeconomic and cultural context of the region. Moreover, the municipality's identity has been profoundly influenced by historical violence and colonialism, fostering a gradual attachment to the territory despite initial unfamiliarity. Supernatural narratives function as instruments of cultural resistance, enabling communities to process distressing experiences and establish a sense of identity.

Moreover, it has been determined that halo of words analysis facilitates the visualization of how each term relates to the others, thereby enabling the construction of a narrative that reflects the intersubjectivity, temporality, and spatiality of the participants in the “Writing the Story” support group. This narrative exemplifies the intricate interweaving of personal experiences with the social and physical environment, thereby profoundly influencing the perception and understanding of quotidian events and interactions.

Halo of words analysis facilitates comprehension of the perceptions and interpretations of reality among group participants, underscoring the significance of social relationships and the influence of time and space in their lives. Intersubjectivity emerges as a pivotal element, as interactions between participants shape their experiences and perceptions. Temporality underscores the importance of time in the construction of community narrative, while spatiality reflects the impact of the physical and social environment on the community.

This approach offers a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between the participants in the “Writing the Story” support group and their environment and how these relationships influence their community well-being. A thorough analysis of the concept of “halo” can yield insights into the shared experiences and social interactions that fortify social bonds and foster a sense of collective belonging and mutual support. In this context, halo of words analysis becomes a valuable analytical instrument for understanding group dynamics and how personal narratives intertwine to create a more profound understanding of the psychosocial reality of the participants.

The community writing process has been identified as a valuable tool for strengthening the well-being of “other victims.” The provision of a secure environment conducive to the exchange of experiences has been demonstrated to engender empathy, mutual support, and emotional expression. This exercise facilitates the reinterpretation of experiences from a more expansive perspective. Each narrative functions as a constituent element of a more extensive network of shared experiences, wherein each

scar not only recounts a personal account but also serves as a component of the broader social fabric that has been influenced by violence.

Furthermore, the exercise demonstrated that the writing process was not the sole catalyst for the articulation of ideas; the dialogue that ensued during the sessions also played a pivotal role in elucidating experiences. Dialogue has emerged as an essential component in achieving consistency in the stories and enriching their content. Conversely, the narratives demonstrate that the experiences of armed conflict have ramifications not only for those who live through it directly but also for subsequent generations. This phenomenon, termed “transgenerational harm,” manifests in persistent fears, changes in family dynamics, and problems with individual and community identity. It is imperative to consider this aspect when addressing community well-being, as it necessitates a comprehensive approach that encompasses both direct victims and their descendants.

It is therefore recommended that additional time be allocated to the community writing process, with the objective of achieving a more profound configuration of the narratives presented. Furthermore, it is recommended that larger visual aids be utilized during the exercises to facilitate identification of the territory and enrich the narrative context. The continuity of these initiatives is of paramount importance to ensure the ongoing promotion of the emotional and social well-being of the “other victims” and thereby guarantee a lasting impact on the community.

It is imperative to acknowledge that the successful completion of the final text is contingent upon the presence of the individuals who authored the original stories. The intricacies inherent in the characters’ decision-making process underscore the significance of their involvement in the editing and proofreading process. This approach not only acknowledges the authors’ contributions but also ensures the preservation of the narratives’ original significance.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Contribution statement

Research, conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, methodology, and writing: Ángela Maritza Español Tapias.

Conceptualization, methodology, and writing: John Gregory Belalcázar Valencia.

Statement of data consent

The data generated during the research have been presented in the article. ●

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