YouTuber videos and the construction of adolescent identity

Los youtubers y la construcción de la identidad adolescente

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Abstract

The main objective of this research is to analyze the content of YouTuber's videos that have the greatest impact on adolescents and their relationship with the construction of identity. The YouTube platform is one of the most commonly used by Spanish teenagers and around 70% of young people between 14 and 17 years of age prefer this network. YouTubers are perceived by young people as their equals, approachable people who share similar traits to their own, which facilitates rapid identification. A qualitative analysis of the content of 22 videos on the YouTube platform was carried out using the Atlas.ti program. The analysis led to several emerging codes related to the construction of adolescent personal identity. Most of the messages relating to personal identity were aimed at transmitting the self-impression of the YouTuber and the relationship of that self-impression with his gender identity, sexual orientation, and vocational identity. Also, family and peers appeared in the videos, especially as providers of social support. Teen followers include messages to support YouTubers, express their identification with the messages and use comment spaces to describe their own experiences, expressing the same concerns in the configuration of their identity. It is necessary to take into account this new space of interrelation to understand the development of young people's identity.

Resumen

El objetivo general de esta investigación consiste en analizar el contenido de los vídeos de los youtubers de mayor impacto entre los adolescentes y su relación con la construcción de la identidad. La plataforma YouTube es una de las más utilizadas por los adolescentes españoles, ya que alrededor del 70% de los jóvenes entre 14 y 17 años prefieren esta red. Los youtubers son percibidos por los jóvenes como sus iguales, personas cercanas que comparten rasgos similares a los suyos, lo que facilita la rápida identificación con ellos. Se ha realizado un análisis cualitativo del contenido de 22 vídeos de la plataforma YouTube mediante el programa Atlas.ti. El análisis ha dado lugar a varios códigos emergentes relacionados con la construcción

de la identidad personal en la adolescencia. La mayoría de los mensajes sobre la identidad personal estaban orientados a transmitir la autodefinición que hace el youtuber sobre sí mismo y la relación de esa autoimagen con su identidad de género, orientación sexual e identidad vocacional. Además, la familia y los iguales aparecen en los vídeos, especialmente como proveedores de apoyo social. Los seguidores adolescentes incluyen mensajes de apoyo al youtuber, manifiestan su identificación con los mensajes y utilizan los espacios de comentarios para exponer sus experiencias personales, expresando las mismas inquietudes en la configuración de su identidad. Es necesario tener en cuenta este nuevo espacio de interrelación en la comprensión del desarrollo identitario de los jóvenes.

1. Introduction and current situation

Since the Erikson Theory (1971), experts in developmental psychology have considered that the construction of identity constitutes one of the most important challenges faced by adolescents (Zacarés, Iborra, Tomás, & Serra, 2009). According to theory, identity is a coherent conception of oneself that includes the targets, values, and beliefs to which we make a firm commitment. In building their identity, young people need to solve some issues: the choice of occupation, the values they commit to (religious, political, ethnical, etc.) and the formation of a satisfactory gender and sexual identity, which are the different scenarios proposed (Erikson, 1971). Identity is not formed in the same way in all these scenarios but is rather a complex process in which these issues are solved at a different pace, depending on the adolescent's features and his/her environment (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Identity also requires a reasonable integration of the past, present, and future aspirations. Nowadays, it is considered that the formation of identity does not start and finish in the adolescent stage, but rather constitutes a long and gradual process of extraordinary complexity (Kroger, 2003). The notion of identity has a psycho-social nature; built on the intersection of individual personality, self-concept, inter-personal relations and the broadest possible context of a person's surroundings (Trimble, Root, & Helms, 2003). One of the most relevant contexts in the construction of identity is undoubtedly the Internet and social networks, which have become an area of social inter-relation for adolescents, and in which they can associate with their peers on platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube (Ahn, 2011; Barker, 2009). In Spain, the use of social networks and the Internet by children and adolescents has increased substantially in recent years. The National Institute of Statistics (INE) reported that 98% of young people between 16 and 24 years of age frequently use the Internet (INE, 2016). García, Catalina, & López-de-Ayala (2013) found that the sites most visited are the social networks, followed by shared video platforms. As far as the use of such platforms by young people is concerned, studies show that apart from entertainment and the search for information, social networks are used as a means of interaction with others that are considered as peers (Barker, 2009).

YouTube is one of the most frequently used platforms for downloading videos and is preferred by around 55% of young Europeans (Mascheroni & Ólafsson, 2014). In the case of Spanish adolescents, YouTube holds the second place (around 70% of adolescents between 14 and 17 prefer this network) after Facebook (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2015). Whereas only a small percentage of adolescents and young people are active users (Gallardo & Jorge, 2010), the viewing of videos constitutes one of the most extended habits amongst European adolescents (Holloway, Green, & Livingstone, 2013). YouTube distinguishes between "standard YouTubers": those that create and share videos with friends and family and "special YouTubers": who interact with the community on line, receive comments and have subscribers in addition to offering suggestions and recommendations (Ramos-Serrano, & Herrero-Diz, 2016). You Tube channels represent a space for artistic and creative expression, thus providing a social connection with other YouTubers and

followers (Chau, 2010). The majority actively interact with their real and imaginary audiences (Ding & al., 2011). The audiences are active, as they can directly interact with the YouTuber who is admired and the proximity to the user is the key to success (Berzosa, 2017). The influence of YouTubers can be measured by the number of subscribers and video views on their channel (Burges & Green, 2009).

YouTubers are perceived by young people as peers, although also with qualities (creativity or talent) that they admire. They are also close to their followers in the sense that they share similar features (age, language, culture, social context, etc.) with the adolescents that follow them. This facilitates rapid identification (Westenberg, 2016). Another important feature is the possibility of interaction, given that the comments made by adolescents normally receive a reply from the YouTubers, which makes them appear as approachable and friendly (Berzosa, 2017; Chau, 2010). This makes them a major social reference in the construction of adolescent identity (Westenberg, 2016).

Despite the growing interest in the influence that the Internet and social networks have on the construction of adolescent identity, there are a very few research studies that provide relevant information. One of the main areas of research is on the use of the Internet and social networks to experiment with identity (Eftekhar, Fullwood, & Norris, 2014; Valkenburg, Schouten, & Peter, 2005). Other studies are focused on the psychological well-being of adolescents. For example, according to Valkenburg & Peter (2009), on line communications encourage positive relations in adolescence, promoting social connection and personal well-being. A recent research study showed that children and adolescents, as opposed to adults, use video platforms as a scenario to act, tell stories and express their opinions and features of their identity (Yarosh, Bonsignore, Mc Roberts, & Peyton, 2016).

By extrapolating this research, it can be expected that something similar will take place with the use of videos on YouTube, They can become topic of conversation amongst young people, encouraging firstly a sense of belonging and social identification, and secondly, an area in which they can explore and experiment with their identity. In fact, children and adolescents have become ardent followers of YouTubers (García & al., 2016). Also, YouTube enables adolescents to search for and join groups of people with the same interests, thus constituting a new way of making friends online (Lenhart, Smith, Anderson, Duggan, & Perrin, 2015). However, it is worth outlining the characteristic differences between YouTube and other platforms, firstly because of the lower degree of interaction they may offer, and secondly because of the differentiating role between active users –that constitute a minority- and passive users. These characteristics may largely favor the role of YouTubers as social references in the construction of identity. The overall aim of this study is therefore to analyze the content of the videos of certain YouTubers and their relationship with the construction of adolescent identity.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Design

This study has a qualitative design based on the analysis of content that enables the interpretation of messages, texts, and discourse to elaborate and process relevant data on the conditions in which it takes place and is used (Piñuel-Raigada, 2002). A specific analysis was carried out of the messages transmitted in some of the videos available on different YouTuber's channels. The methodology recommendations proposed by Andréu (2000) were used in the analysis of the manifest or explicit content (such as the title of the video and number of hits) as well as the latent content (adolescent identity construction scenarios proposed by Erikson, 1971).

2.2. Definition of the sample unit

The first step was to choose a series of videos according to certain criteria. Since YouTubers normally have more than one type of video on their channels and organize their videos in a subjective

and varied way, the classification of content on YouTube constitutes an arduous task (Codina, Carandell & Feixas, 2014). Bearing in mind the overall objective of the study and the indicators recommended in similar research (Burgess and Green, 2009; Yarosh et al., 2016), we chose the videos according to the following criteria: 1) those that include content related to adolescent identity construction, those based on the scenarios proposed by Erikson (1971): religious, vocational, ethnic and gender identity; according to the title; 2) those with at least 10,000 hits to account for the interest by followers; 3) the YouTubers with more than 100,000 subscribers on their YouTube channel in Spanish (see Table 1). The final choice was comprised of 22 videos belonging to 10 YouTubers (see Table 1). The YouTubers had an age ranging from 24 to 32 in 2017. The videos were published on the YouTube platform from 2011 to 2017, with an average number of 1,343,000 hits (Table 2).

Table 1. YouTubers and subscribers					
You Tuber	*** No. of subscribers**	**Youtuber**	*** No. of subscribers**	**You Tuber**	*** No. of subscribers**
LuzuVlogs (luzugames)	2.495.314	Kowai Nana	221.035	Uy Albert	281.431
Álex Puértolas	601.368	Adelita Power	419.493	Wismichu	5.565.688
Victoria Volkova	630.943	Dulceida	1.185.653	Yelow Melow	1.552.233
Toniemce	161.115				
*The number of subscribers is at the date on which the videos were selected (June 2017).					

Table 2. Videos analyzed	
Videos	**No. hits ***
1. AP y la regla (AP and the period)	322.156
2. No soy Feliz (I'm not happy)	223.828
3. ¡Querámonos Un Poquito Más! (Let's ask for a bit more)	690.511
4. Mi Operación De Pecho (My breast surgery)	1.501.811
5. Mi orientación sexual (My sexual orientation)	1.992.030
6. Mi experiencia en el Instituto: la rarita de clase (My school experience. The nerd)	115.737
7. Cosas típicas de mi adolescencia. Te echo de menos msn... (Typical things about my adolescence. I miss you msn...)	66.281
8. Infidelidades ¿Qué sienten ambas partes? (Infidelity. What do both sides feel?)	51.538
9. La bisexualidad: mitos y leyendas (Bisexuality: myths and legends)	139.161
10. Cambio mi forma física (I change my physical appearance)	333.360
11. El camino del éxito (The road to success)	7.015.936
12. Draw My Life 2.0	115.075
13. 50 cosas sobre mí (50 things about me)	105.533
14. Draw My Life	267.154
15. Mis tatuajes y su significado. (My tattoos and their meaning)	163.865
16. Como salí del closet (How I came out of the closet)	1.699.789
17. Él no sabía que yo era trans (He didn't know I was trans)	1.000.759
18. Hombres que salen con chicas trans (Men that go out with trans girls)	1.714.308
19. Draw my life	633.543
20. Respondiendo a vuestras preguntas (Answering your questions)	3.351.988
21. ¿Qué haces con tu vida? (What are you doing with your life?)	376.245
22. Mi orientación sexual (My sexual orientation)	426.597
** The number of subscribers is at the date on which the videos were selected (June 2017).	

2.3. Qualitative analysis of the data

The content analysis was carried out with the qualitative data analysis program Atlas.ti (version 7.0). To identify the quotes, generate the codes and determine the networks of relationships in the YouTubers' discourse, the videos were entered into the Hermeneutic Unit for analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The literal transcription of the content of the videos and the viewers' comments constituted the sample unit.

3. Results

3.1. Identity construction and scenarios

In the videos analyzed, YouTubers talk about their personal experiences about their physical changes during adolescence and describe their ideas and beliefs of who they are (self-concept), especially in those called "draw my life" and also provide information on how they value themselves (self-esteem). In general, telling your life story is a common topic for YouTubers as a strategy to emotionally connect with followers and for the latter to identify with the YouTuber.

The analysis of the videos showed different stages of self-concept development. There are references to the early abstractions of childhood and beginning of adolescence; for example "when I was little, I was fat, and none of the girls took any notice of me" (video 13), and "I was very nasty as a little girl" (video 6). There were also references to the present and the relationship between different traits: "I have always been a good kid, with good grades and lots of friends" (video 14), and multiple self-concepts: "I describe myself as a creative and stubborn person who hates vegetables, the beach, the gym, parties, flamenco... I like mum's cooking, going to the movies, staying at home… Yes, I'm like a grandfather…" (video 14). Descriptions include diverse self-concepts that are typical at the end of adolescence when formal thinking allows for the integration of different roles that are sometimes opposite, such as the like for parties in opposition to staying at home. These different "selves" do not produce feelings of incoherence or dissatisfaction.

About self-esteem, we observed a reference to the construction of a physical image during childhood and adolescence, and the judgment made of it (Figure 1). There are also references to the importance of believing in oneself: "when you believe in yourself and accept yourself… it is harder for them to hurt you", "look in the mirror and see the best version of yourself" (video 2).
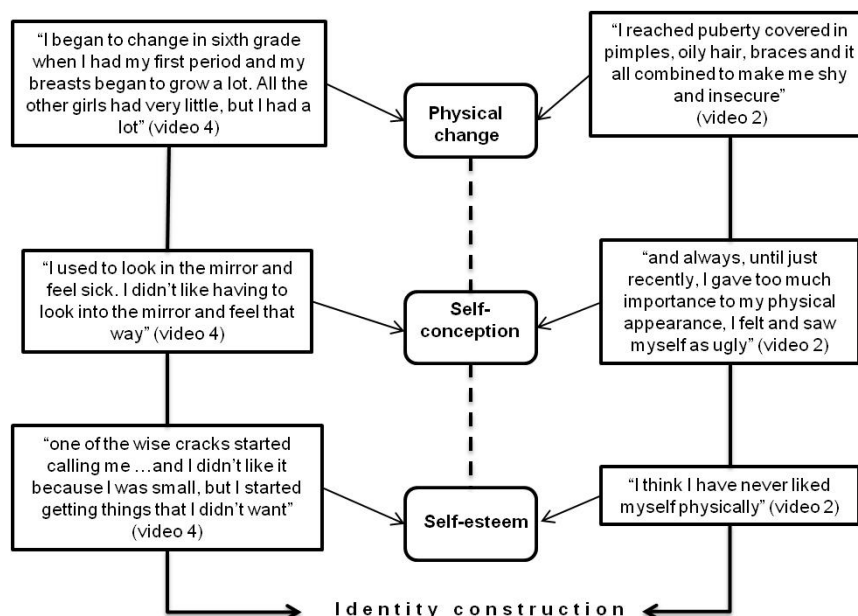

Figure 1. Example of quotes in the construction of identity.

The identity construction process is not a continuous or unitary one but rather takes place in different stages and scenarios throughout the life cycle that encounter their most significant expression in adolescence. The dimensions of gender identity building, sexual orientation and vocation are particularly mentioned in the content shared on YouTube.

3.2. Gender identity and sexual orientation

YouTubers talk about their gender identity and sexual orientation, with special reference to the social construction that exists in their immediate environment. They also describe the challenges and difficulties involved in choosing a gender identity such as homosexuality, bisexuality or transsexuality (Figure 2). This type of content is the most common on YouTuber's channels and is also normally the most viewed. For example, one of the videos called "my sexual orientation" has almost two million views.

What also exist are specific requests from followers to take a position or express his/her opinion on gender identity and sexual orientation. This is the case of a YouTuber who highlights the demand for her to define her sexual orientation: "There are many people that still ask about my sexual orientation, are you a man or a woman?" (video 22). She gives her opinion, explains the process and how she feels about her sexual orientation: "Now, I am fine, very comfortable with my sexuality" (video 22). On the one hand, she accepts her sexual orientation with a high degree of self-confidence and explains it to her followers and, on the other, responds to the demand for media exposure to have a successful YouTube channel.

Another transsexual YouTuber describes the evolution of his gender identity over several years on his YouTube channel. In his initial videos (2011), he defines himself as homosexual, to later talk about his experiences during the transition (hormones, surgery, etc.) and finally as a transsexual. In a 2011 video (video 16), he talks about his homosexuality: "I was always very feminine, most people knew that I was gay." Later, the transition began, and his videos express a new gender identity as a transsexual. In videos from 2015 and 2016, he describes himself as a "trans girl" with new gender identity: "I am a woman, and I feel like a woman, regardless of my physical appearance" (video 17). Another YouTuber talks about bisexuality in her videos (video 9): "My mother encouraged me to try and see if I like it, without accusing me of being a lesbian or bisexual in a bad way."

The videos show the active dynamics of gender identity construction in which adolescents pass through different stages of reflection and re-construction where the cultural context has a major influence (Rocha, 2009). As pointed out by Moreno (2005), gender identity is part of psychological development. Due to family and cultural messages and one's corporal image, it becomes evident from a very early age and is therefore incorporated into individual subjectivity.
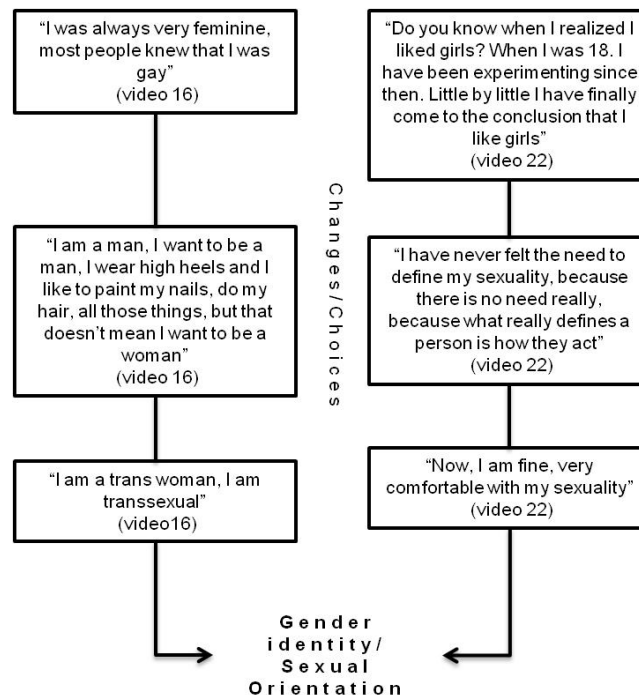
"I was always very feminine, most people knew that I was gay" (video 16)

"Do you know when I realized I liked girls? When I was 18. I have been experimenting since then. Little by little I have finally come to the conclusion that I like girls" (video 22)

"I am a man, I want to be a man, I wear high heels and I like to paint my nails, do my hair, all those things, but that doesn't mean I want to be a woman" (video 16)

"I have never felt the need to define my sexuality, because there is no need really, because what really defines a person is how they act" (video 22)

"I am a trans woman, I am transsexual" (video16)

"Now, I am fine, very comfortable with my sexuality" (video 22)

Changes/Choices

Gender identity/ Sexual Orientation

Figure 2. Example of quotes relating to gender identity and sexual orientation.

3.3. Vocational identity

The choice of vocation by adolescents is an important stage that is related to their autonomy and their future life project. The videos analyzed show some of the factors that influence this process, such as uncertainty, complexity, and significance (Rivas, 2003). Uncertainty implies having different options and a lack of knowledge of them, for example, "at the time, I didn't know if I wanted to be a paleontologist, marine biologist or an audiovisual communications expert; I even thought about studying journalism" (video 6). Complexity appears when the information is highly consistent and disperse and is not controlled by the individual: "I still have three years to decide, but if the guy I like so much and my good friend study science, even though I'm really bad at science, I will go with them" (video 6). The significance is related to the vocational choice being aimed at reaching a target that a person strives to achieve, for example, "I realized that I wanted to be a dancer" (video 12). This intention of achieving a target motivates action and directly influences vocational conduct: "I was always last in class and, in the end, went to learn dancing and reached my goal of being a professional dancer" (video 12); "my dream ever since I was very young was to earn a living making people laugh, telling stories, informing people". "I decided to go all out with YouTube" (video 13). This is related to the construct of vocational maturity, which refers to the degree of knowledge, skills, and abilities a person possesses, as compared to his/her peers, and is necessary to effectively confront future academic planning (Rivas, 2003).

We also observed the consequences that a vocational decision may have when it is not in line with a young person's objectives: anxiety, ill-feeling and lack of motivation. For example: "I was down and started to miss class…"; "this bad feeling… also produced anxiety" (video 6). The emotional process in vocational identity plays a very important role, as it is necessary to manage emotions before and after a decision is reached (Bisquerra, 2015). Together with the changes that occur in adolescents and the uncertainty about their future, this stage can be a time of stress for young people (Figure 3).
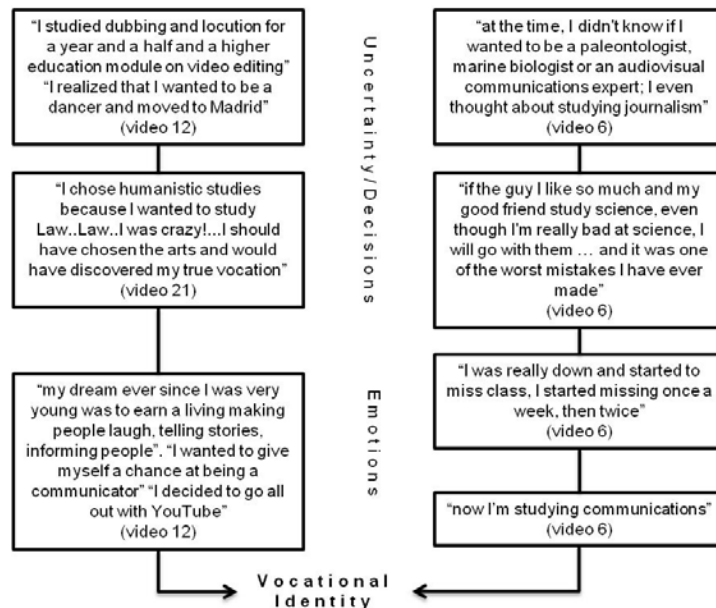
| "I studied dubbing and locution for a year and a half and a higher education module on video editing" "I realized that I wanted to be a dancer and moved to Madrid" (video 12) | Uncertainty/Decisions | "at the time, I didn't know if I wanted to be a paleontologist, marine biologist or an audiovisual communications expert; I even thought about studying journalism" (video 6) |

Figure 3. Example of quotes on vocational identity.

3.4. Social relations

The videos show a positive evaluation of parents in particular, and of the family at large, with messages of affection, respect and admiration and, above all, gratitude. For example: "I was born in Alcira and grew up in the best possible family environment that one could have" (video 14). Other videos contain expressions of affection and admiration for parents: "I wanted a tattoo that represented my parents because they are what I most love in this world" (video 15).

Concerning the family support, the videos particularly refer to gender identity. The family is an important factor in developing and maintaining adolescent self-esteem, and family support facilitates self-confidence in young people during the identity process (Demaray & al., 2009). For example: "I am very lucky to have my parents, they have brought me up with respect, but are very open; they have given me the freedom to choose my own life" (video 5).

Peers (friends and partners) are important references for adolescents and young people (Demaray & al., 2009). The comments by YouTubers relating to peers are incorporated into the topics included in their biographies. For example: "I met my best friend at school…, until I broke my arm, we were not real friends… that's what happens when you fight; you end up being friends" (video 12). Concerning partners, there are opinions on love and infidelity. "I cheated on my first girlfriend, many times and I regret it" (video 20). These videos show how the interpersonal relations between adolescents and their partners feature emotions and feelings that are new experiments and influence the composition of their peer groups (Connolly & McIsaac, 2008).

3.5. The role of YouTubers and their followers

The type of interaction between YouTubers and their followers is important. On the one hand, YouTubers act as role models, endeavoring to make followers identify with their discourse and also attempting to gain more subscribers. It is common for videos to end with an express request to "subscribe to my channel." Also, advice on each topic is normally added to the videos. Followers are able to express their like or dislike of the video and use the comments space to express their ideas and opinions on the topic.

In the case of YouTubers, the advice is normally related to the topics discussed in the videos, for example: "I'm not happy, but I'm trying. And you? Are you trying?" (video 2). This type of advice is more frequent in videos in which the YouTuber expresses personal opinions, for example when talking about sexuality: "my first advice is that you experiment because you don't know if you like men or women until you experiment" (video 9).

There are also videos designed to give or suggest recommendations to followers on how to act; for example, in video 10, with more than 7 million views, the YouTuber explains his ideas on how to overcome personal challenges: "the most important thing you need for any project is your mind"; "stop blaming other people around you for your failures". Followers repeatedly send messages of support and gratitude to YouTubers, for example "I am so grateful for this type of video," and of identification with the content; for example "I identify, because right at this moment, I am in that phase...". It is less frequent to see messages rejecting videos.

4. Discussion

The overall objective of this work was to analyze the content of certain videos and their relationship with adolescent identity construction. YouTubers are a social reference for present-day adolescents, and the study shows how they use their videos to deal with topics related to identity construction. In their videos, the YouTubers seek to connect with their followers and gain more subscribers to their channel. This is where the followers can decide whether they like the videos and express their ideas about the topic. In this interaction, YouTubers not only entertain but also act. In certain cases, they become role models on key issues in the formation of identity, such as in the physical changes experimented during adolescence, self-esteem, self-concept, gender and vocational identity, and social relations, thus encouraging a connection with their followers (García & al., 2016; Westenberg, 2016).

YouTuber's videos constitute topics of conversation amongst followers, who write messages of support, gratitude and, on occasion, talk about their own experiences and even satisfy their curiosity by asking the YouTubers' questions. Less frequent are messages of rejection. They, therefore, encourage the belonging and social identification, as well as exploring and experimenting with personal identity by describing their own experiences and opinions on the topics discussed and even their doubts (Barker, 2009; Lenhart & al., 2015; Valkenburg & Peter, 2009).

It is important to highlight that YouTubers talk about their experiences in a current context: the transition phase from adolescence to adulthood, given that the average age of YouTubers is 27. This revolutionary "emerging adult" phase that they represent is characterized by gradual autonomy, psychological maturity, and productivity, amongst other features, offering a perspective that enables them to provide their thoughts "remotely," which means having overcome adolescence (Zacarés & al., 2009). This contrasts with the views of their followers who normally, in a current context are in an adolescent stage - and consider YouTubers to be people they should follow and admire for what they do as confirmed by previous studies (García & al., 2016; Westenberg, 2016). This dynamic is reproduced in the identity building scenarios examined. It is also worth highlighting the absence of videos dealing with scenarios of ideological identities, such as religion and politics and even ethnic identity. We could suggest that this is due to either a lack of personal interest in these topics or that they do not sell well on the Internet and may even lead to losing followers. This issue should be contrasted in further studies, although YouTubers are normally advised to focus their videos on

humor, sex, inspirational issues or those that contain a story or produce intense emotions (Rodríguez, 2013).

There are normally two identity scenarios that are addressed by YouTubers: gender identity together with sexual identity and vocational identity. They show the process they followed to build their gender and sexual identity; the majority do it from a present context, describing how it occurred, why they decided on particular sexual orientation, what gender they identify with, who supported them, what doubts they had, what are their emotional experiences, etc. It should be mentioned that the videos with the most followers are those that deal with sexual orientation issues, especially in the discovery of homosexuality and bisexuality, as well as the definition or identity of a transsexual gender. From a follower's perspective, judging from their comments, they are still in the process of deciding what they want or what will be their gender identity or sexual orientation. Adolescents are therefore able to ask questions or talk about their own experiences, which generates an emotional link with the YouTuber. As shown in previous studies (Moreno, 2005; Rocha, 2009), gender identity is influenced by social and cultural contexts, and it is, therefore, important to consider the influence of YouTubers in this scenario. This is because YouTubers acquire a major role by talking about issues that adolescents may not dare to talk about with other people and their personal experiences may heavily influence the decisions of followers and even the process of communicating with their environment. In the case of vocational identity, YouTubers describe the difficulties they encountered in choosing a particular vocation at a time when they were experiencing so many physical and emotional changes. They highlight the influence of their peer groups in their vocational decision and the emotional consequences of making the wrong decision (Bisquerra, 2015), in addition to their experience in their present role as a YouTuber, which they consider to be their "true" vocation. They, therefore, deal with the processes of uncertainty, complexity, and significance in the identity scenario, in addition to the importance of achieving vocational maturity that can allow anyone to make the right choice of education and occupation (Rivas, 2003). In turn, their followers talk about their doubts relating to a particular future educational project or occupation for which there is very much information all at once, and which often does not depend on themselves. Nevertheless, the comments highlight the importance of having a personal goal to be a "writer" or "artist," for example, as the basis of the choice.

In social relations, there are very few YouTuber videos that deal with ideas on family, friends or partners, although they do highlight the importance of family support in building an identity, especially gender identity. There are also comments on past and present friends and opinions on love and infidelity. Bearing in mind that peers and family are an important source of social support (Demaray & al., 2009), we have to ask ourselves why they are missing. One hypothesis would be that in their role as advisers and role models, what prevails is their self-disclosure as a strategy to generate empathy and gain subscribers. The priority is, therefore, to talk about themselves as independent and mature people.

Besides, the results of the study highlight the experiences of YouTubers and their followers in relation to the significance of their physical changes in adolescence, especially the difficulties and conflict they generate: the evolution of the self-concept "adolescent" (from the initial abstractions of who they are up to the creation of a multiple self-concepts), and the importance of self-esteem to be happy.

This work illustrates the diverse roles that YouTuber messages can have in the construction of the identity of their followers, mainly adolescents, their relationships being an important social aspect to be taken into account in the process. The limitations of the study include the selection of videos based on the YouTubers with the highest number of followers with this type of identity content. The popularity of YouTubers can produce a certain consistency in their opinions and relations, as they may simply have a commercial vision of their relationship with their followers. However, the Internet and YouTube are broad and diverse worlds, meaning that there are more than likely other YouTubers with a less concentrated influence, but a greater diversity of opinion and interests, a less commercial view of the relationship and a much more ideological approach.

Finally, further research is required to study the different issues and aspects resulting from this work. Firstly, it is necessary to obtain more data and learn the opinion of YouTubers on their role as

advisers, which they appear to assume and to understand why they do not address certain issues such as those related to ideology. It would also be recommendable to increase the sample of YouTubers, using selection criteria that are not based on popularity and extending the analysis to blogs and Instagram. Secondly, it is also necessary to learn the views and interpretations of YouTuber followers on this type of video. To do so, it would be highly recommendable to carry out studies that include in-depth interviews that enable a more comprehensive worldview of both groups.

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