

ENGAGING HOST SOCIETY YOUTH IN EXPLORING HOW THEY CONSTRUE THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE RESETTLEMENT OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

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It is often difficult for youth to recognize and share their construct systems let alone to discuss how these systems guide their thoughts and behaviours. The purpose of this methodological article is two-fold: Firstly, it aims to present and detail four interview techniques we adapted from Personal Construct Psychology, to use in a physically co-located or in an online approach, with 42 participants between 16 and 24 years-old from a variety of North American and European countries affected by the Syrian refugee influx; secondly it presents a five-step approach to data analysis, with the aim to develop an in-depth understanding of the participants' construct systems. Our objective was to explore how this youth construed online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis and how they anticipated the influence of social media content on the resettlement of Syrian refugees in host countries.

Keywords: Resettlement, Syrian refugee crisis, social media, qualitative grids, Repertory Grid Test, youth

INTRODUCTION

Since the eruption of the Syrian civil war in March 2011, thousands of Syrian refugees have been crossing the doorsteps of neighboring countries such as Lebanon and Jordan and other less neighboring countries, such as Greece, Germany and Canada. Citizens of the host countries, including youth, are expected by their respective governments to greet the refugees with open arms. In fact, youth are on the frontline during the whole process. They are the ones who are expected to welcome the Syrian refugee youth in their homes, their schools, their work environments and in their lives. Within our youth, some support the settlement of the Syrian refugees in our country, others strongly oppose it and many are still undecided or unsure about the position to take, but almost everyone has access to online posts and interactions. In fact, youth, known to be among the world's most engaged Internet users, are most probably concocting an initial general image of these newcomers and what to expect from them, relying solely on their

interpretation of the plethora of information they find online.

During the dreadful November 2015 Paris attacks [1], youth had access to online transnational environments where tragic stories were shared, feelings of despair were broadcast, and fears were intensified. This led to a wide variety of responses. Cologne's sexual assaults [2] and the Brussels terror attacks [3] engendered similar reactions. The Internet in general and social media in particular facilitated the dissemination of racism and of intolerance (Perry & Scrivens, 2016).

Research on youth and social media claims that youth are influenced by the plethora of messages shared online (Wohn, Ellison, Khan, Fewins-Bliss, & Gray, 2013; Spears & Postmes, 2015). They are viewed as victims whose thoughts and behaviours are easily triggered and manipulated by exterior online forces. From a Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) perspective, online youth are viewed as knowing subjects, with experiences and construct systems that they use to construe the messages diffused online. Youth do not respond to messages as

stimuli. Instead, they respond to their choice of interpretations of these messages and anticipate events and behave accordingly.

Consider this scenario. A host youth encounters an online post such as:

“Islam is a primitive violent religion practiced by the scum of the Earth. Europe is being invaded by force, and we bring them over, house and feed them willingly. The cowards should go back and fight for their own country”.

Let us assume that the construct he/she uses to interpret this post is *violent/victim*. If he/she chooses the *violent* pole of the construct and interprets the post as a confirmation of Syrian refugees’ status as *violent* invaders of the host country, he/she would dread their arrival and strive to keep them out or to exclude them once they enter his/her environment. However, if he/she chooses the opposite pole of the construct and considers the Syrian refugees as *victims* of such outrageous ignorant comments, he/she might predict that the newcomers would be devastated by the harsh words and he/she would do his/her best to make the Syrian refugees feel welcomed.

It is often difficult for youth to recognize and share their construct systems (Burr, King, & Butt, 2014), let alone to discuss how their construct systems guide their thoughts and behaviours. Therefore, in this methodological article we present a selection of interview techniques that were designed by Kelly and other proponents of PCP. We modified these techniques to use in interviews with 42 youths between 16 and 24 years old from a variety of host societies. We wanted to explore how these youths construed online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis and how they anticipated the role played by these interactions in the offline resettlement of Syrian refugees in the host countries.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

In this section, we will present our adaptations of four interview techniques that stem from PCP: Kelly’s self-characterization technique, Procter’s Perceiver Element Grid, Kelly’s Repertory Grid Test and Hinkle’s laddering tech-

nique. These adaptations helped us to explore how youth from host societies construed online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis and how they anticipated the role played by these interactions in the integration and inclusion of Syrian refugees in host countries.

Kelly’s Self-Characterization Technique

The *self-characterization technique* is an application of the ‘credulous approach’ as defined by Kelly (1955), which falls under the *Sociality Corollary*. This technique allows the researcher to relate to the participants through discovering the construct system they use in a particular context to evaluate a specific event. We asked the participants to write their character sketch following these very specific instructions:

I want you to write a character sketch of [name of participant], just as if [s]he were the principal character in a play where [name of participant] encounters online posts related to the Syrian refugee crisis. Write it as it might be written by a friend who knew [her]him very intimately and very sympathetically, perhaps better than anyone ever really could know [her]him. Be sure to write it in the third person. For example, start out by saying, ‘[name of participant] is... and write the comment or post that [name of participant] would share online if [name of participant] was to react to the Syrian refugee crisis or to express [her]his opinion (adapted from Kelly, 1991, p.241)

Kelly (1991) explains that “the phrasing of this request has gone through a great number of revisions” (p.241) and that every term was chosen carefully and purposefully. The term *character sketch* frees the participants from following specific structures and allows them to describe themselves through their own construct system. Using the third person distances the participants from having the impression that they are writing a confession, and encourages them to conceptualize themselves from an external perspective. Kelly uses the term *intimately* to communicate that an in-depth portrayal is expected, and the

term *sympathetically* to emphasize the importance that the participants accept themselves as they are, and disregard what they are not or what they think they ought to be. The term *friend* is employed to give the participants the feeling that they are in a safe environment. The phrase *perhaps better than anyone ever really could know [her]him* is far from being a good syntax yet it serves “to free certain literalistic clients from feeling that they must write the sketch as some actual, known person would write it” (Ibid., p.242). In other words, this sentence aims to discourage participants from recalling a specific individual from their circle and writing the sketch based on what they perceive would be his/her objective version. Kelly intentionally omits any suggestion of an outline to preserve the participants’ spontaneity and to respect their own outline (Ibid.). This aims to help the researcher see how the participants structure their world, identify their role in this world and place themselves on the spectrum of the constructs they use (Ibid.).

We added two requests to Kelly’s original instructions. First, we added the context of online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis because we were interested in discovering how the participants described their role within this specific context. Second we requested a comment from the participants, which we used as element of evaluation during the repertory grid test.

Procter’s Perceiver Element Grid (PEG)

Procter’s Perceiver Element Grid (PEG) stems from Kelly’s Sociality Corollary, and Procter’s relationality corollary. It maps the construing of an individual in situations, amongst groups or in one’s internal world and answers the question: “How do people themselves (...) in everyday situations, construe patterns of relationship?” (Procter, 2014, p.246).

We used the *PEG* to examine how youth perceived themselves and others, namely how they saw themselves, how they saw others, how they thought others saw them and how they thought others saw themselves in the context of online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis. That is, we addressed how participants construed the online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis and how they anticipated others’ construing of these interactions. We also investigated how participants construed the role that these online interactions play in defining the nature of the relationships between the host society youth and the Syrian refugees. This technique allowed us to address the specific question: How do host society youth construe patterns of relationships in situations involving online transnational interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis?

Our adaptation of the Perceiver Element Grid (PEG) consisted of three stages. In the first stage we showed the participants a number of screen captures of posts and comments on posts we retrieved from Facebook after the Paris and Brussels terrorist attacks and the sexual assaults in Cologne. When selecting the posts, we tried to reach equilibrium between posts expressing positions against the Syrian refugees and those supporting them. We asked the participants to go through the posts and think of the ones they would pay attention to online. Once participants made their selection, we asked them to explain their choices.

In the second stage, we asked the participants to answer the questions from the adapted version of the PEG. These questions are presented in *Table 1*.

In the third stage, we asked the participants to answer the questions presented in *Table 2* in an attempt to explore the relationship they believed existed between online interactions and the off-line integration and inclusion of Syrian refugees.

Construing the influence of social media on the resettlement of Syrian refugees

Table 1: *The Adapted Version of the Perceiver Element Grid (PEG)*

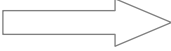

	Participant	Members of the Online Host Society Youth	Syrian Refugees
Participant	How do you construe/interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think members of the online host society youth construe/ interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think Syrian refugees construe/interpret the content of these posts?
Members of the Online Host Society Youth	How do you think members of the online host society youth think that you construe/interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think members of the online host society youth think their own group construe/interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think members of the online host society youth think Syrian refugees construe/ interpret the content of these posts?
Syrian Refugees	How do you think Syrian refugees think that you construe/ interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think Syrian refugees think members of the online host society youth construe/ interpret the content of these posts?	How do you think Syrian refugees think their own group construe/interpret the content of these posts?

Table 2: *The Perceiver Element Grid (PEG)*

	Participant	Members of the Online Host Society Youth	Syrian Refugees
Participant	How would you behave if you happen to meet a Syrian refugee for the first time ever in your classroom after you have read these posts and comments?	How do you think members of the online host society youth who never encountered a Syrian refugee before but have read all these posts and comments would behave when they first meet a Syrian refugee in their classrooms?	How do you think Syrian refugees who never encountered a host society youth before but have read all these posts and comments would behave when they first meet a [host country] youth in their classrooms?

Kelly’s Repertory Grid Test

The *Repertory Grid Test (RGT)* is a diagnostic and research tool that captures “a snapshot of the representation of a person’s construct system”

(Caputi, 2016, p.89), and makes the “tacit explicit” (Jankowicz, 2004, p.62). The qualitative and quantitative data that it generates (Björklund, 2008) emerges completely from the participants’ mental map, uncontaminated by the

researcher's construct system (Jankowicz, 2004), and makes of this technique one of the first mixed methods approaches in psychology (Winter, 2015). Bell (2003) explains: "Kelly's Fundamental Postulate says that a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events. That underpins the repertory grid. The *ways* are the constructs of a repertory grid, and the *events* are the elements." (p.95)

The Repertory Grid Test (RGT) requires three overarching steps. The first step is to specify the elements, which could, for example, be concrete situations, problems, events, or people. The second step is to elicit the constructs, normally through the triadic elicitation technique. The third step is to rate the elements on the constructs to identify the element/construct interaction. In the completed matrix of numbers, the researcher identifies how the participant think through their constructs and what the participants think through the ratings of the elements on the constructs (Jankowicz, 2004).

Selection of elements

For the purpose of revealing the construct systems that host society youth use to construe the messages disseminated online about the Syrian refugee crisis, we retrieved 280 comments from online petitions arguing for or against Syrian refugees' settlement in Canada. The selection of these comments was based on social inclusion and social exclusion factors discussed in the literature. Examples of these factors were: *unmet expectations*, *perception of real or symbolic threat*, and *us/them or ours/theirs* constructs. We then pilot tested these comments with three youth between 16 and 20 years old. We asked the youth to categorize these comments and explain the rationale behind their categorization. We also asked them to choose a few comments that would be representative of the categories. From the youth's selections, we retained 34

comments that we used as elements when conducting the RGT with participants in our study.

We shared the 34 comments with the 42 participants of this study and asked them to choose 8 comments that would stand out to them if they were online, regardless of whether they agreed with the content of the comments. The aim was to work with comments that would be relevant to the participant, not imposed by the researcher. Examples of these comments are listed in Table 3.

Triadic elicitation

Each participant selected their own set of eight comments. Then, we asked the participants: 'In what *important way* are two of them alike but different from the third?' (Kelly, 1991, p.152). The immediate perceived answer constituted the emergent pole of the construct and its opposite constituted the implicit pole (Fransella, 2003a). We encouraged the participants to elaborate on their choices. After a few random groupings, we asked the participants to purposefully choose triads from the eight elements to find new similarities between two elements as opposed to the third. We reminded the participants that they were expected to elicit new constructs and that similarities between two elements could be in any form or way they could imagine, even if they thought the similarities only made sense to them. Our goal was to have access to their individual distinctive construct system. This process was repeated until the participants started repeating the same constructs. This was an indicator that the participants reached a saturation of constructs.

Rating of elements on constructs

Once the triadic elicitation was completed, we asked the participants to rate each element on a 5-point scale on each construct, and to explain the reason for their rating

Table 3: *Examples of comments used as elements in the repertory grid tests*

The Canada I grew up in and love is an inclusive country. How we treat the least of these is a measure of who we are	I'm not against helping the unfortunate. These Muslims are like the plague. Treat them as such.	Islam is not compatible with the Western way of life
I'm Canadian and helping is what we do!!	No Syrian rapists and terrorists in Canada! Stop this madness now!	Canada is so naïve
We are full...close the borders to immigrants	After the recent events in Cologne I have completely switched from supporting the refugee causes	CANADIANS FIRST - MUSLIMS NEVER
Diversity is not a strength; it is a weakness. Diversity just got over a hundred people murdered in Paris, and you want to flood our country with the same group of people. If I'm standing in my door and 25000 rattle snakes are coming towards me, do I let them in because you say not all rattle snakes are dangerous. At least 1000 of those rattlesnakes are peaceful and will not bite me? If you let in the 25000 rattle snakes, you will get bitten. It is better to close the door to protect yourself and your family.	If ONE Canadian is attacked by a 'refugee' or if ONE Canadian loses a job to one of them then it is ONE too many. It's time we put our Nation first. I want my tax dollars to feed our homeless and support our veterans, not these foreign nationals who share nothing with us - linguistically or culturally. The people who built this country would be ashamed of our misguided attempts to create some multicultural utopia, which exists only in the minds of leftist elites.	I am a hard working Canadian woman and have always contributed and paid more than my fair share of taxes. Every year at tax time the government tells me I haven't paid enough and takes more. When I see this type of spending it frustrates me immensely. I do feel for these people, but I also believe that we can do other things to help. Our homeless, our senior citizens, our natives are living in horrible conditions and are crying for help and their own government has forgotten about them

Table 4: *Example of Rep Grid Matrix*

Emergent Pole	Comment A	Comment B	Comment C	My Comment	Com- Implicit Pole
Threat	5	4	5	2	Trust
Family First	4	3	4	1	Humanity
Us/Ours	4	4	3	2	Them/Theirs

1 ←————→ 5

Hinkle's Laddering Technique

The laddering technique, adapted from Hinkle's (1965) "hierarchical technique for eliciting the

superordinate constructs of the preferred self-hierarchy", allowed the participants to articulate their abstract values and beliefs. It also helped them and the researchers to understand the rea-

sons behind the construct system the participants used when they encountered online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis. Our application of this technique, was conducted as follows:

1. After completing the triadic elicitation, reaching a construct saturation and rating elements on constructs, we asked the participants to choose one of the constructs they elicited –i.e. the one that they considered the most important when examining online interactions about the Syrian refugee crisis.
2. We then asked the participants to indicate which side of the construct dimension was clearly descriptive of the kind of comment they preferred to share about the Syrian refugee crisis (Adapted from Hinkle, 1965, 2010, p.14).
3. Next, we asked the participants the reason why they preferred one side of a construct over the other. Through their explanation, the participants generated a new superordinate construct. We wrote this new construct with both its poles.
4. We then asked the participant the same question about this new construct. This process continued until reaching the top of the hierarchy, to the most abstract level of construing.

Figure 1 presents a step-by-step description of the laddering of a construct to explain the technique, and an example of an application of this technique using inclusion/exclusion as the initial construct.

This technique allows the researcher to investigate ordinal relations between constructs. With the “why” questions the construct is laddered up (Jankowicz, 2004). The participants elaborate on an existing construct to reach more general variants or superordinate constructs (Björklund, 2008; Jankowicz, 2004). Fransella (2003a) confirms that “it is in the process of laddering that one gets nearest to that experience of being almost a part of the other person” (p.112).

The selected construct was laddered up two more times, but with two different questions. The first question was: “Which side of the construct dimension is clearly descriptive of the kind of comment you guess host society youth

from the ‘against camp’ prefer to share about the Syrian refugee crisis?” The second question was: “Which side of the construct dimension is clearly descriptive of the kind of comment you guess host society youth from the ‘for camp’ prefer to share about the Syrian refugee crisis?” The purpose of the repetitions with these questions was to encourage the participants to make an attempt at guessing others’ construct systems and an attempt to subsume them.

DATA ANALYSIS

To analyze the data obtained through this interview process, we suggest using a five-step approach to data analysis: 1) open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 2001); 2) self-characterization analysis (Kelly, 1955); 3) interpersonal construing analysis (Procter, 2014); 4) interview process analysis (Jankowicz, 2004) and 5) the classification system for personal constructs (Feixas, Geldschläger, & Neimeyer, 2002). The paragraphs below outline how we suggest using each approach and their purpose.

Once the interview data is transcribed and validated by the participants, one get immersed in the data to obtain a broad picture. This can be done through an open coding exercise following the approach outlined by Strauss and Corbin (2001). Each interview should be read and codes should be attributed loosely, collapsed into categories and then themes that reveal the broad picture.

The next step is to analyze the self-characterizations texts by following the eight steps suggested by Kelly (1955). These steps included: 1) “Observation of sequence and transition” 2) “Observation of organization” (p.247), 3) “Reflection against context” (p.248), 4) “Collation of terms” (p.248), 5) “Analysis of contextual areas invoked by the protocol” (p.250), 6) “Thematic analysis” (p. 251), 7) “Dimensional analysis (p.252) and 8) Professional subsuming of personal constructs” (p.254). The purpose of this step is to obtain a thorough understanding about how the participant construes himself or herself with regards to the complex issue of online interactions about Syrian refugees.

Laddering Technique		Example of Laddering	
Steps	Laddering Technique	Steps	An Example of the Laddering of the Inclusion/Exclusion Construct
...	<i>And so on until reaching the top of the hierarchy</i>	...	<i>And so on until reaching the top of the hierarchy</i>
11	Because... <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Z1 Implicit Pole</div>	11	Because when people care about us we feel that we are safe with them. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Safe Implicit Pole</div>
10	<i>Why? Why is Y2 important? What are the advantages of Y2? Or being Y2?</i>	10	<i>Why? Why is the feeling of care important?</i>
9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Y2 Emergent Pole</div>	9	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Feeling of Care Emergent Pole</div>
8	<i>Which side of this construct do you prefer?</i>	8	<i>Which side of this construct do you prefer?</i>
7	<i>Construct Y is the first superordinate of Construct X</i> <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Y1 Implicit Pole</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Construct Y (Y1/Y2)</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Y2 Emergent Pole</div>	7	Whereas inclusion makes people feel that others care about them. <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Pain Implicit Pole</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Pain/Feeling of Care</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Feeling of Care Emergent Pole</div>
6	<i>Whereas? As oppose to...</i>	6	<i>Whereas? As oppose to...</i>
5	Because... <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Y1 Implicit Pole</div>	5	Because exclusion hurts. Excluded people are in pain. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Pain Implicit Pole</div>
4	<i>Why? Why is X1 important? What are the advantages of X1? Or being X1?</i>	4	<i>Why? Why is inclusion important?</i>
3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">X1 Implicit Pole</div>	3	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Inclusion Implicit Pole</div>
2	<i>Which side of this construct do you prefer?</i>	2	<i>Which side of this construct do you prefer?</i>
1	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">X1 Implicit Pole</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Construct X (X1/X2)</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">X2 Emergent Pole</div>	1	<div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Inclusion Implicit Pole</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Inclusion/Exclusion</div> ↔ <div style="display: inline-block; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Exclusion Emergent Pole</div>

Figure 1: A step by step laddering of a construct

The third step is guided by Procter’s (2014, 2016) discussion on the relationality corollary and the levels of interpersonal construing. The researcher analyzes how participants construe relationships within the context of online interactions about the Syrian refugees at the monadic level, at the dyadic level and at the triadic level. At the monadic level we examine how the participants construe social media interactions, how they construe Syrian refugees and how they construe other local youth. At the dyadic level we look at how the participants construe the relationships between what happens online and another group of youth. At the triadic level we examine how participants construe the relationships between what happens online and two other groups of youth.

Fourth, we suggest proceeding to the analysis of the qualitative data emerging from the RGTs. Jankowicz (2004) states: “The process by which the information is obtained is informative in itself” (p.77), stressing on the importance of exploring what is shared during the elicitation of constructs and then the ratings in the matrix. He lists a wide variety of questions that we reflected on when reviewing the construct analysis interviews. An adaptation of some of the questions is:

- How did the participants respond to the comments? Which ones did they choose? Why?
- Which constructs did he/she use to describe the authors of the comments?

- Which constructs required more thought than others?
- Which additional constructs did the participant add to the ones elicited during the triadic elicitation?
- How much did the rating procedure take? Which ratings required more thoughts than others?
- What was the participant's explanation for the reason why certain elements fell outside the range of convenience of some of the constructs?
- Where there any emotions (such as anger, sadness, disappointment etc.) involved in the process of eliciting the constructs or rating the elements?
- What comments did the participant make during the procedure?

Last, we suggest following Feixas, Geldschläger and Neimeyer's (2002) Classification System for Personal Constructs (CSPC) and explore the eight areas proposed by the classification system. The areas are: 1) moral; 2) emotional; 3)relational; 4)personal; 5) intellectual / operational; 6)values/interests; 7) existential, and 8) descriptors. We suggest using the CSPC after all the constructs, that emerge from the different interviews where participants discussed their positions, behaviours or thoughts and their anticipations of others' construct systems, have been aggregated.

REQUIRED INTERVIEWING SKILLS WHEN USING METHODS DERIVED FROM PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY

To successfully conduct an inquiry about youth's perceptions of inclusion and about the construct systems they use to construe online content about the Syrian refugee crisis using methods derived from PCP, we strived to subsume the participants' construing, to suspend our own personal values, to listen 'credulously', to be reflexive, and to be verbally skilled as described by Kelly (1955), Bannister (2003), Fransella (2003b), Scheer (2003) and Jankowicz

(2004). We also took account of "culture-dictated constructs" as suggested by Kelly (1991, p.307).

Personal construct researchers aim to see the world with the eyes of their participants without ignoring their own construct systems. Researchers should acknowledge that their constructs may be different from those of their participants. The role of the researcher is to come to understand the personal construct system of the participants, without feeling the need to adopt it. By the same token, researchers need to suspend their own values that could act as filters and intervene in their understanding of their participants' construal systems, and take at face value what they hear during the interviews. Our own experiences with the Syrian population and with war in the Middle East were very different. The participants also had varied experiences different from ours, which we acknowledged during the interviews.

Adopting a 'credulous' attitude is central to the PCP methodology. It means accepting the participants and their words, regardless of the researchers' opinion (Jankowicz, 2004). Researchers must listen with care and empathy to what their participants have to say, to their contradictions and to their silences, and ask causal probing questions when more details are needed to reach a better understanding of the participants' perspective (Yorke,1989). As researchers, we had to put aside our position in regards to the settlement of Syrian refugees and accept the participants' arguments and listen carefully to what they had to share.

Reflexivity is another concept central to PCP. Bannister (2003) explains that reflexivity in Kelly's thinking implies that "there are not two languages, two psychologies, one for [the participants] and one for [the researcher]; there is one psychology for all of us" (p.37). The fundamentals of construct theory identically apply to both the researchers and their participants, which explains how challenging it was for us, as researchers, to suspend our constructs while listening to our participants. For instance, after conducting a number of interviews and listening to some youth answering our questions we realized that we started approaching our meetings with

certain anticipation of what the next participants would share with us. We had to make sure we equally paid attention to the reactions and answers that we expected and the ones that were particular to each participants.

Since commonality is not required between the researchers and their participants, the meaning that participants associate with the words they use may differ from the one usually adopted by the researchers. Adams-Webber (1989) asserts that a researcher should give his/her participants' words the meaning they give them, not the meaning he/she usually finds in the dictionary. Being verbally skilled in PCP means having the ability to *speak* the participants' language and to understand their culturally specific usage of the words (Scheer, 2003). Scheer (2003) asserts that actions such as paying attention to culture-dictated constructs and taking these constructs into consideration are not considered stereotyping acts. They are essential to understanding the genesis of the participants' way of viewing the world. In order to understand what our participants meant with some key words, constructs or concepts, we made sure to ask them to explain what they meant and to illustrate with examples.

In addition to the aforementioned requirements, the researchers should be aware of the social desirability effect and that their objectives as researchers may differ from the objectives of their participants or their readers, and their analysis and interpretation of the data is part of how they view the world. Thus, we acknowledge that our readers "will [always] construe [their] construing of [our] interviewee's construing!" (Jankowicz, 2004, p.76).

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK ON THE INSTRUMENTS

Many participants stated that the questions came as a surprise, which, according to them, made the interviews a valuable learning experience. They felt less in control of their answers and more prompted to share what they considered to be unexpected thoughts. One participant said: "I feel it is really interesting because it looks pretty

straightforward, you know, do this and that, but it has a secret meaning at the end. I was technically fooled, but finally I think it is really really good". Another participant said: "Some questions surprised me, I was Oh! Ok! I need a second to think about this". Along the same lines, one participant shared: "I was going in blind. I was not sure what to expect or what to do, or in which direction to go. Sometimes when you have a study you see where it is going and surpass it. This [PCP techniques] takes you out of that because you have no idea what to say next, which is cool. And you kind of discover something. You don't take it there. It goes by itself."

The participant also observed that they were challenged to engage in reflections they would not usually consider. This allowed them to discover aspects of themselves of which they were unaware. One participant questioned her own position: "The questions helped me understand myself better in those situations. I felt that sometimes I was contradicting myself because I say to myself yes of course we need to welcome the refugees, but at the same time our country is already suffering so I have to contradict this idea. You have to seek what is best for your country." A second participant remarked: "I liked the second one [the repertory grid] because it was a really good way of seeing things about myself which I didn't consciously really know but just kind of looking at the details and then look at the big picture you learn a lot which I haven't really thought about but I did think it was accurate at the end." A third participant shared: "They are challenging, but in a good way. You made us think further into situations sometimes. I am like yeah this is how I think, but I do not know why. It was hard sometimes to go further into it. Sometimes, when I was asked why, I realized that what I said was not actually what I thought."

Another example was: "I really liked the interviews. It challenges the conviction. I come with a mindset. Then when you have to perceive others, you disconnect from yourself and try to understand the other. It really helped me because I stopped only focusing on myself and I started seeing the other. I would have never done this by myself, to try to think how others thought about the online content."

Lastly, the tools we used not only intrigued the participants, but also motivated them to persevere and to dig deeper to find the answers. Some examples of what participants shared were: “It is obviously challenging, but in a good sense because I would have obviously given up much earlier when I had no ideas. So I was pushed to find ideas. But when I did it, it was good because after that when I was reviewing them they made sense. It was clearly my perception of things” and “It was cool to use the comments as elements. Sometimes it was hard when I had to choose the elements. It challenges the thinking so that was good. Challenging to think new ways and to do stuff that we don't usually do and when I thought that I couldn't find more I was telling myself yes you can do it.”

CONCLUSION

In this article we presented our adaptation of four interview techniques derived from Personal Construct Psychology to study how youth from host societies construe online comments about the Syrian refugee crisis. These constructs are important because they can influence youth's behaviors towards refugees. While we cannot pinpoint which of the four interview technique was more effective, we designed the four instruments to allow the participants to build a chain of explanations, to express their thoughts, and to revise them. All participants claimed they have learned a lot from this process of externalization. When used together, these four techniques provide an in-depth interviewing design to extract implicit thoughts about a sensitive and political issue. As such, this is a methodological contribution to study youth construals of the Syrian refugee crisis comments on social media.

We also shared a synopsis of the reactions we collected from the youth we interviewed about the instruments we used to demonstrate the power of the process we designed to collect data. Most participants revealed that going through the interviews helped them understand their own thinking and made them realize that they needed to be more mindful of the reasons behind the reactions shared online before, construing an im-

age of the Syrian refugees. Going through the interview process and engaging in such deep reflections involved a learning experience about one's own implicit perceptions and thinking processes.

The interview process also allowed participants to make a decision about the role they would choose to play in the context of the refugees' settlement. In such a rapid-pace society, where youth tend to write online comments based on how they think others will perceive them (Jones, 2015), the interview process we outlined in our study provided them with tools to think and reflect based on their own conjectures, rather than on their peers' reactions.

In retrospect, our pilot test suggests that this type of interview protocol, based on PCP principles, is a powerful learning tool that can allow youth from host societies to engage in critical thinking and to learn to live with the one they perceive as being “the other”. More studies are necessary to identify the base of knowledge that we can extract from such methodologies and to verify the pedagogical soundness of such methodologies for learning about “the other”.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Paris terror attacks*. In a 33-minutes period of time, eight explosions occurred in Paris, killed 130 people and wounded 352. Paris attacks started at 09:20 PM on November 13th 2015 with an explosion outside of the Stade de France, a sports stadium in Saint-Denis, during a soccer match between France and Germany. The French president François Hollande was present at the game and was safely evacuated with hundreds of other spectators. The explosion was followed by two others at 09:30pm and at 09:53pm near the Stadium. At 09:25 pm, gunmen armed with assault rifles attacked people gathered at Le Petit Cambodge restaurant and Le Carillon Bar in the 10th district of Paris. At 09:32 pm, a shooting occurred in the 11th district of Paris at the Café Bonne Bière. At 09:36 pm another attack happened at the restaurant La Belle Équipe, followed by two more at 09:40 pm: one by a suicide bomber who blew himself up inside the Comptoir Voltaire restaurant in the 11th district and another by three gunmen who opened fire on the audience attending the Eagles of Death Metal performance at the Bataclan concert hall.

[2] *Cologne sexual assaults*. During the 2016 New Year's Eve celebrations, Germany witnessed an unprecedented mass sexual assaults in seven of its cities: Hamburg, Bielefeld, Dortmund, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Stuttgart and Cologne. Cologne had the highest number of reported assaults with 1529 victims. Women, surrounded in groups of 30 or 40 in front of Cologne's Central station, were groped, robbed, sexually assaulted or raped. While the 153 male suspects of the Cologne crimes were mostly from Morocco or Algeria, the anger shared on social media turned the focus towards the huge Syrian refugee influx in Germany and the hashtag #Rapefugees was launched.

[3] *Brussels terror attacks*. On March 22nd 2016 two bombs were detonated at 07:58 am at opposite ends of the check-in area of Zaventem airport in Brussels, Belgium. An hour later, a blast occurred at the Maelbeek metro station in Brussels' city centre. Thirty-five people were killed including the three bombers and 340 were injured. While ISIS claimed responsibility for the Paris and Brussels attacks, a Syrian passport was discovered near one of the suicide bombers in Paris and helped in triggering questions about whether the Syrian refugee's crisis was a "Trojan Horse" plot, as Donald Trump formulated it, to get terrorists in European and American countries.

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Received: 30 Oktober 2016 – Accepted: 13 April 2017 – Published: 1 August 2017