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Assessment of Identity Change Through Self-Characterization: Application in an Identity-Based Intervention for Young People With Depression and Anxiety

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ABSTRACT

Self-characterization is a constructivist technique of a narrative nature, proposed by George A. Kelly, that allows for the exploration of personal identity from a position of self-distancing. This study examines its potential to assess identity change throughout a psychotherapeutic process and its relationship with clinical change. Initial and final self-characterizations were compared in two young people with depression and anxiety who participated in an identity-based therapeutic intervention. The analysis was conducted from an idiographic Kellyan approach, focused on the narrative of the self, and was further complemented by a reading inspired by the HEXACO nomothetic trait model. Through the Kellyan analysis, changes were identified in the way the self was narrated between the beginning and the end of the therapeutic process. The HEXACO analysis showed changes in the narrative content interpreted in terms of HEXACO dimensions. A reduction in emotional symptoms was also observed. It is important to note that the HEXACO scores derived from the self-characterization are an interpretive inference and do not correspond to a standardized inventory. The value of self-characterization is discussed as a tool that allows for the capture of identity at moments of clinical relevance and for the exploration of identity change in an integrated manner, articulating an idiographic approach and reading together with a reading inspired by a nomothetic model. This use constitutes only one of the multiple possibilities offered by this technique for the study of human change in psychology.

Evaluación del Cambio Identitario Mediante la Autocaracterización: Aplicación en una Intervención Basada en la Identidad Para Jóvenes con Depresión y Ansiedad

RESUMEN

La autocaracterización es una técnica constructivista de carácter narrativo, propuesta por George A. Kelly, que permite explorar la identidad personal desde una posición de autodistanciamiento. Este estudio examina su potencial para evaluar el cambio identitario a lo largo de un proceso psicoterapéutico y su relación con el cambio clínico. Se compararon las autocaracterizaciones iniciales y finales de dos jóvenes con depresión y ansiedad que participaron en una intervención terapéutica basada en la identidad. El análisis se realizó desde un enfoque idiográfico kellyano, centrado en la narrativa del sí mismo, y además se complementó con una lectura inspirada en el modelo nomotético de rasgos HEXACO. El análisis kellyano identificó cambios en la manera de narrar el sí mismo entre el inicio y el final del proceso terapéutico. El análisis HEXACO mostró cambios en el contenido narrativo interpretado en términos de dimensiones HEXACO. También se observó una reducción de los síntomas emocionales. Es importante mencionar que las puntuaciones HEXACO derivadas de la autocaracterización son una inferencia interpretativa y no equivalen a un inventario estandarizado. Se discute el valor de la autocaracterización como una herramienta que permite capturar la identidad en momentos de relevancia clínica y explorar el cambio identitario de manera integrada, articulando un enfoque y lectura idiográfica junto con una lectura inspirada en un modelo nomotético. Este uso constituye solo una de las múltiples posibilidades que ofrece esta técnica para el estudio del cambio humano en psicología.

Palabras clave:

Constructo personal
HEXACO
Personalidad
Idiográfico
Análisis textual
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Introduction

The self-characterization (SC) is a technique proposed by George A. Kelly (1955) within the framework of his Personal Construct Theory (PCT). Kelly designed it as a way of obtaining a portrait that reflects the personal construct system of the person seeking consultation, as expressed by the person themselves. The purpose is to capture the way in which the person organizes their perceptions of the self in relation to others. In the development of PCT, this technique has played a secondary role compared with the repertory grid technique—a more widely studied and used instrument (Saúl et al., 2012). As a result, research on the SC is scarce. This article seeks to claim and demonstrate its potential: the SC makes it possible not only to assess how the person constructs their identity at a given moment, but also to explore the changes that occur in that identity over the course of therapy. Moreover, its administration alone may already generate a therapeutic effect.

The technique consists of asking the person to write a characterization of themselves by following specific instructions proposed in Kelly's (1955) original formulation. The first is to write it in the third person. This offers a new framework from which to observe oneself, by breaking with the usual formula of self-description or spontaneous internal dialogue (e.g., "I am shy"; "What an idiot I am!") and replacing it with another, such as "George is...". This shift in narrative focus creates psychological distance and facilitates observation from a broader perspective, reducing "defensive distortions" (Kelly, 1955).

Another instruction in Kelly's (1955) original version is that the description should be written "as if you were the principal character in a play". This instruction introduces a narrative and symbolic nuance that links therapy with the metaphor of the "world as a play". Years later, Goffman (1959) developed this perspective, showing that social interaction can be understood as a succession of roles performed in different settings before different audiences, following specific scripts.

Kelly's (1955) emphasis on the expression "principal character" is reflected in the notion of "script" in transactional analysis (Berne, 1961), and connects with later developments in narrative approaches such as those of White and Epston (1990), who extend the theatrical metaphor and stress the importance of the person recognizing themselves as the protagonist and author of the script of their life. The use of the SC favors the expression and exploration of the personal narrative within the therapeutic process, strengthening the sense of narrative agency. Indeed, George Kelly may be considered a predecessor of narrative therapies, not only because he created the SC, a narrative technique for understanding personality and guiding the therapeutic process, but also explicitly:

"Life provides man [sic] with no scientific footholds on reality, suggests to him no narrative plots, offers no rhythmic metaphor to confirm the moving resonance of a human theme. If he chooses to write tragedy, then tragedy it will be; if comedy, then that is what will come of it; and if burlesque, he, the sole reader, must learn to laugh at its misanthropic caricatures of the only person he knows - himself." (Kelly, 1969, p. 24)

The instruction to write the SC as if it were written by a close friend adds a fundamental component: it fosters an empathic and understanding view of oneself. This perspective can be linked to the postulates of positive psychology (Seligman & Peterson, 2004),

which promote the identification and cultivation of personal strengths as a foundation for well-being. It also represents a precedent for the appreciation of compassion as a therapeutic ingredient (see, e.g., Gilbert, 2009, although this approach has been widely disseminated through many other more recent works).

By promoting this compassionate view of oneself, the SC not only explores how the person constructs themselves narratively, but from its very first application it already facilitates the activation of resources and the need to focus on virtues, establishing a solid foundation for therapy. In this sense, it can be fully regarded as a therapeutic assessment (Finn & Martin, 2013; Finn & Tonsager, 1992): a form of assessment that, by virtue of its collaborative and reflective nature, produces a therapeutic effect during the assessment process itself.

Within this framework, the SC becomes not only an initial instrument for guiding the intervention, but also a tool that, when repeated at the end of treatment, allows identity change to be assessed. This is understood as the transformation of the person as manifested in their narrative identity; that is, in the way they construct and reconcile their sense of self on the basis of their past, present, and future experience, integrating it into a coherent internal narrative (McAdams, 2001). The reconstruction of identity (Feixas, 2021) occurs in a substantial proportion of therapeutic processes across very diverse orientations, and often involves challenging identity homeostasis, or the tendency toward continuity of the self, and recording a new narrative "snapshot" at the end of the process. The use of the SC described here makes it possible to observe this transformation.

In the research carried out within the study "Identity-Based Transdiagnostic Therapy (IBTT) for young people with anxiety and depression: Degree of engagement, efficacy, and predictors of outcome" (www.ub.edu/ibtt), the SC is prescribed at the end of the first session as a homework task. In the second session, it is read and analyzed together with the person, identifying their personal constructs and incorporating the most relevant ones into the repertory grid technique, a central ingredient of the intervention. In addition, the impressions, ideas, and sensations experienced by the person before, during, and after writing the SC are collected, as well as those arising when reading it—or listening to it being read by the therapist, if the participant prefers. At the end of treatment, the prescription is repeated using the same initial instructions, thus obtaining two narratives that allow identity at the beginning and end of therapy to be explored and compared.

IBTT is a transdiagnostic psychotherapeutic modality grounded in PCT and aimed at young people with anxiety and/or depression. It is based on the premise that emotional symptoms are related to the way individuals perceive themselves and others through their personal construct system. In order to work on these constructs, they must first be explored, a task carried out using the *Explore Your Meanings* tool (EYME; Feixas et al., 2021), developed from the repertory grid technique (Feixas & Cornejo, 1996; Fransella et al., 2004; Kelly, 1955). EYME makes it possible to represent and explore the patient's meaning system in an immersive way through virtual reality. The treatment combines this exploration with interventions focused on dilemmas, internal conflicts (Feixas & Compañ, 2016), and other relevant aspects of identity, with the aim of promoting self-exploration and facilitating desired cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes, made visible through identity change.

Analysis of the Self-Characterization

The analysis of the SC has been developed in various ways since Kelly's (1955) original proposal. Its basic premise consists of maintaining an empathic and credulous attitude toward the text, trusting that the person is expressing their experience and their own perspective on reality, which is accepted as such, without judgment. This approach reflects the phenomenological and constructivist emphasis on the interpretation that the person makes of themselves and of the events they have lived through. In this sense, the analysis seeks to read the text from the author's perspective, connecting with their narrative and with their identity in terms of experiences, achievements, and difficulties.

Although there is no single protocol for analysis, what the different approaches have in common is precisely this credulous stance and their focus on clinical usefulness (González-Encinas et al., 2019). Within Kelly's (1955) original proposal, two axes stand out: thematic analysis, which identifies the causal explanations that the person offers about their experience ("what has led me to be this way? why do I have this difficulty?"), and dimensional analysis, oriented toward the bipolar constructs through which the person organizes their world (for example: "Marcos is intelligent, sometimes selfish, finds it difficult to let himself go").

Kelly (1955) also suggested paying attention to the overall organization of the narrative: how paragraphs open and close, narrative sequences, the appearance of core themes at the beginning as "security zones", and the way in which the text develops gradually or abruptly. In addition, he proposed observing repetitions, emphases, variations in writing style, and even rewriting the SC from the therapist's constructs, as an application of the sociality corollary.

Later works have expanded these ideas. Botella and Feixas (2008) emphasize empathic reading as a first step toward entering the client's logic, complemented by the contextual analysis of the author's history and life background. Androutsopoulou (2001) takes up Kelly's original spirit by placing the text in dialogue with the person who wrote it, proposing an inquiry into the feelings experienced before, during, and after writing the SC, as well as the exploration of alternative versions (ideal, family, and future identity). This flexibility highlights the versatility of the technique.

Given this diversity of approaches, González-Encinas (2020) has pointed out the need for systematization and proposes a standardized protocol structured around five foci: dimensional analysis, organization, repetitions, thematic analysis, and themes/imagos. More recently, McGrane et al. (2023) have revisited and extended Kelly's classic protocol to explore work identities, integrating sequences, organization, repetitions, and narrative re-elaboration.

These procedures for analyzing the SC clearly reflect the idiographic emphasis of PCT in its study of personality, but we believe that a reading inspired by a nomothetic model can also be carried out. By adopting a specific trait model, changes before and after the therapeutic process can be analyzed in the SC, attending to the theoretical constructs that are relevant to that model. In our case, we chose the HEXACO model (Ashton & Lee, 2007) because it includes the so-called "Big Five" together with the H factor (Honesty-Humility), which reflects constructs with moral content that proved to be important in a study with patients with depression

(Montesano et al., 2009). Subsequently, Feixas et al. (2014) found a predominance of moral content among the congruent constructs of patients with depression. By comparing pre-intervention data with those obtained afterward, we aim to propose a bridge between an idiographic reading and a complementary reading guided by a nomothetic framework, in order to describe trends in narrative content that may establish an exploratory dialogue with research on personality stability and change. A recent meta-analysis argues that traits are relatively stable, but at the same time show significant variations in certain periods and dimensions (Bleidorn et al., 2022).

In this article, we adopt an integrative synthesis for the analysis of the SC, with the aim of exploring its potential to identify the identity changes that occur over the course of a psychotherapeutic process and their possible relationship with symptomatic changes. The analysis of two cases, with SCs of very different characteristics, may make it possible to appreciate the possibilities offered by the procedures used for the identity analysis of the SC.

Specific Objectives:

1. To identify the changes described narratively by two participants at the beginning and at the end of the therapeutic process, in their own terms. To this end, Kelly's analysis protocol is used, comparing the initial and final SC.
2. To explore the usefulness of the HEXACO model (Ashton & Lee, 2007), created and grounded nomothetically, as a frame of reference for interpreting the changes observed in narrative identity in the final SC compared with the SC from the beginning of the therapeutic process.
3. To examine the relationship between the identity changes found and the quantitative indicators of clinical change.

Method

This is a theoretical-methodological article in which, in line with our objectives, we explore the clinical potential of the SC for examining identity change occurring through therapy by means of two illustrative cases.

Participants

We selected two cases from the IBTT study, whom we will refer to as Manuela and Sara (pseudonyms). Both participants signed an informed consent form that included authorization for the use of their clinical data and the publication of their narratives for research purposes. The IBTT study was approved by the Bioethics Committee of the *Universitat de Barcelona*.

To protect the participants' identities, anonymization criteria were applied, including the use of pseudonyms and the omission or modification of potentially identifiable information in the narratives. The cases were selected because of the richness of their SCs and the contrast between them in terms of length, narrative style, and severity of symptomatology.

Manuela, aged 24, decided to begin therapy because of anxious symptoms that, according to her, "prevent her from living day to day" and intensify at night. Her initial self-characterization is brief and apparently little elaborated. However, in just a few sentences, her internal conflicts and a remarkable richness are revealed. Clinically, she stands out for having begun therapy with a very high level of distress.

Sara, aged 23, presented anxious symptoms, especially when going to sleep. She expressed as therapeutic goals working on the relationship with her ex-partner and reducing her self-criticism. Her initial self-characterization is extensive, with abundant explicit content and marked by tensions between different parts of the self. She began therapy with a relatively low level of distress compared with Manuela, although still clinically relevant.

Instruments

Self-Characterization (SC). This consists of the following instruction: “Write a characterization of yourself in the third person. It is as if you were the playwright of a play and had to describe what the main character who will appear in it is like. Write it as a close friend who appreciates you and knows you very well would do. Do not think of a specific real friend. For example, begin by saying: Manuela (e.g.) is...”.

Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation-Short Brief Form (CORE-SFB). Spanish abbreviated version of the CORE-OM (Feixas et al., 2012; Trujillo et al., 2016). It consists of 18 items, scored from 0 to 4, organized into the subscales of Well-being, Problems/Symptoms, Functioning, and Risk. It was administered in every session of the therapeutic process, at the beginning of each one. Its global score is interpreted in terms of psychological distress.

Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS-21). Short version of the DASS, validated in Spanish (Bados et al., 2005). It includes 21 items scored from 0 to 3, distributed across the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress subscales. It was administered at the beginning of the process and in the final session (session 16), before the follow-up session (session 17).

Procedure

The self-characterization instruction was presented at the end of the first therapy session, without additional instructions, except for brief clarifications: a maximum length of one page was indicated, leaving it to the participants to decide the final length of the text they considered appropriate within that limit. If this length was exceeded, any subsequent text would not be considered. In

Sara’s case, her initial self-characterization included a crossed-out section that was nevertheless incorporated into the analysis. Participants were also told that they could write it at the time and in the manner they preferred. The task was repeated at the end of the 16-session IBTT therapeutic protocol, thus generating two comparative texts.

The complete self-characterizations of both participants (initial and final versions, as well as the original texts in Catalan and in Spanish) are included as supplementary material. Regarding the language of the analysis, Sara’s SC was made available to the evaluators both in its original Catalan version and in a version translated into Spanish, so that each evaluator could carry out the analysis in the language of their preference. The translation was performed using an automatic translation service and was subsequently reviewed by the authors, both of whom are bilingual, with the aim of ensuring the semantic adequacy of the content.

The CORE-SFB was administered in person during the first five minutes of each session, with a total of 17 records (see Figures 1 and 2). The DASS-21 was used on three occasions (see Figures 3 and 4). The first administration was online, one week before the intervention began, as part of the pre-therapy assessments. The second was conducted in person during the final minutes of session 16, the last session of the process before the booster session held two months later. The third and final administration was conducted online as part of the follow-up carried out three months after session 16.

Analysis

Two different procedures were applied for the analysis of the SC.

Kellyan approach: The analysis of the self-characterizations was carried out following a flexible approach, consistent with the original conception of the technique as an open and fundamentally idiographic procedure. We took as a reference the classical guidelines proposed by Kelly, as well as later developments that have systematized different foci of analysis, especially the work of González-Encinas (2020). Specifically, the analysis focused on each of the following aspects: (a) empathic and credulous reading (global and narrative view of the

Figure 1
Evolution of Sara’s CORE Scores Throughout the Therapeutic Process

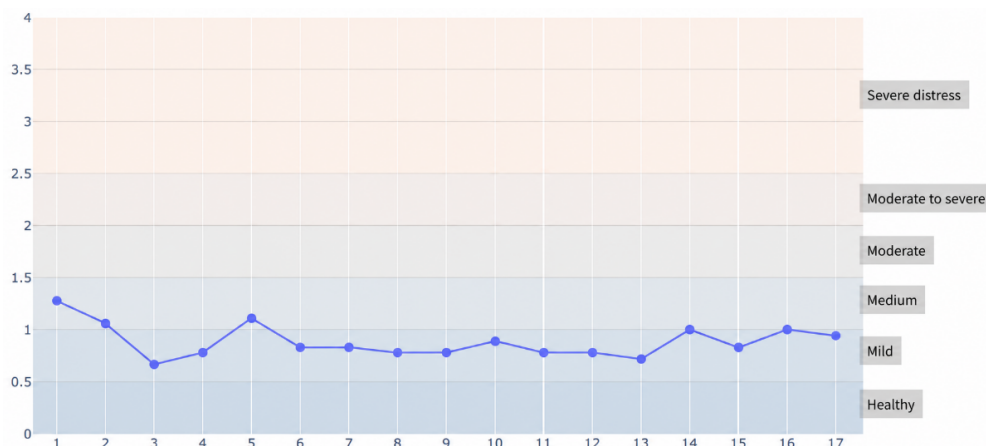


Figure 2
Evolution of Manuela's CORE Scores Throughout the Therapeutic Process

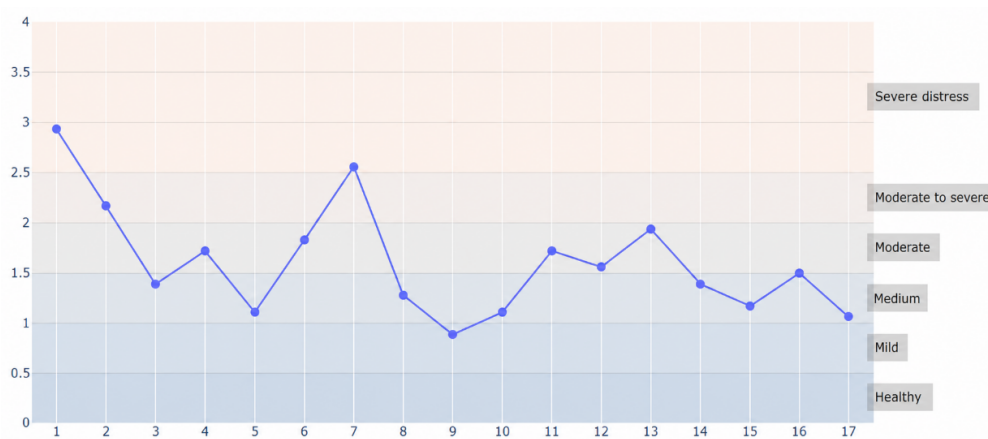


Figure 3
Evolution of Sara's DASS Scores Throughout the Therapeutic Process

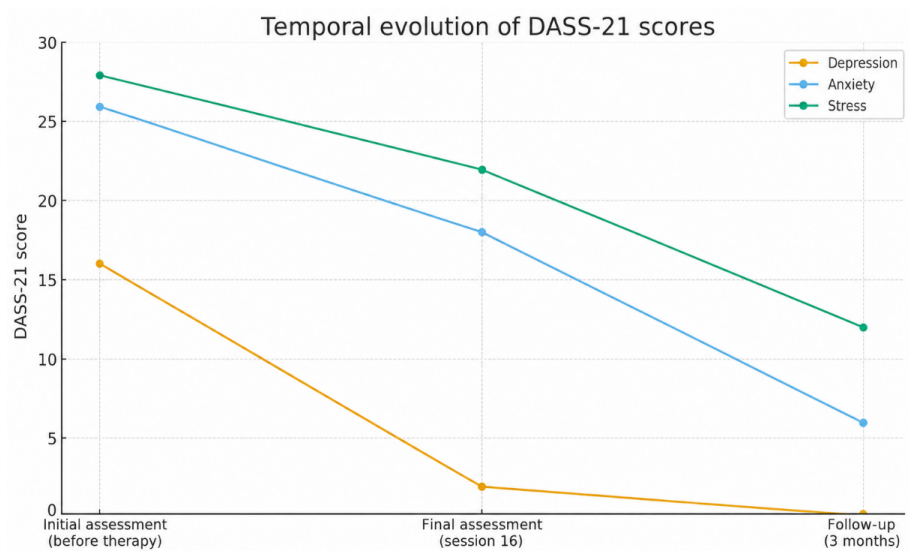
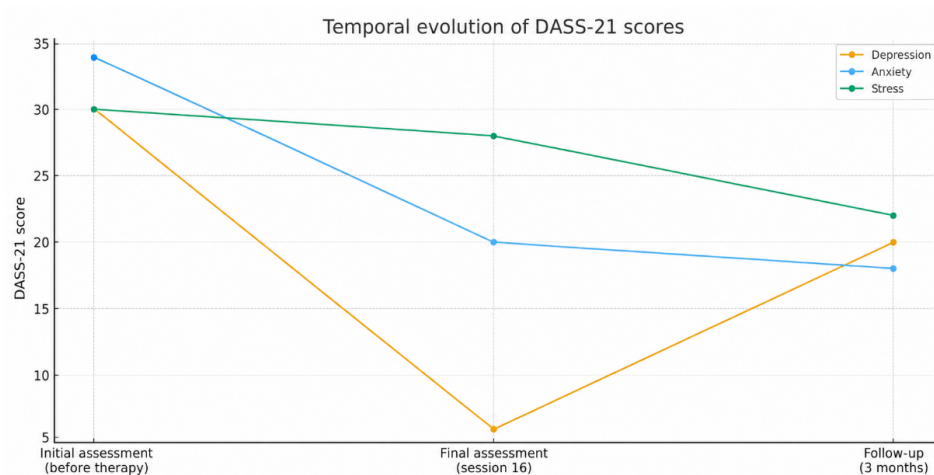


Figure 4
Evolution of Manuela's DASS Scores Throughout the Therapeutic Process



text), (b) organization and structure (openings, closings, sequences, transitions), (c) repetitions and central terms, (d) constructs (explicit or implicit bipolar dimensions), (e) cause-effect relationships and attribution of agency, and (f) dominant themes. It is important to note that, due to the narrative and integrated nature of this method, several aspects tend to overlap; however, in order to maintain greater methodological rigor, we chose to divide the analysis into these parts.

The analysis was carried out by three evaluators. On the one hand, the psychotherapist (JFN) of both cases, who had first-hand knowledge of the therapeutic process, which was conducted under clinical supervision (by GF). On the other hand, two final-year Psychology students, trained in PCT and familiar with the SC technique and the HEXACO model, who did not know the cases and had not participated in the therapeutic process. Both students received specific instructions to carry out the analysis following the same procedure and considering the previously defined areas.

Given the potential risk of confirmatory bias associated with the therapist's knowledge of the case, we chose to distinguish analytically between two levels of interpretation: (a) a textual interpretation, based exclusively on the content of the self-characterization; and (b) a contextual interpretation, which integrates the content of the text with knowledge derived from the therapeutic process. Nevertheless, the analysis showed that

the relevant interpretations could be supported by the textual content of the self-characterizations, without knowledge of the therapeutic process contributing additional elements to the results. Consequently, Tables 1–4 present the findings derived from the textual analysis.

This distinction is proposed for analytical purposes, while recognizing that all interpretation involves some degree of contextualization.

Reading inspired by the HEXACO nomothetic model: The HEXACO model (Ashton & Lee, 2007) was used as a frame of reference to conduct an interpretative reading of the narrative content of the self-characterizations. The analysis was organized around the six dimensions of the HEXACO model, using a 5-point Likert scale, with values distributed between the opposite poles of each dimension.

Scores were assigned based on the identification of narrative indicators associated with each trait within the SC, considering (a) the recurrence of these indicators throughout the text, (b) the intensity of their expression (for example, through the use of markers such as “very”, “always”, or other linguistic emphases), and (c) their centrality in the subject's self-definition; that is, the extent to which they organized the overall description of the self, rather than the presence of isolated elements.

Table 1
Kellyan Analysis of Sara's Initial SC

Kellyan analysis category	Textual interpretation
a) Empathic and credulous reading (global and narrative view of the text)	- The text conveys an internal/external duality or contrast in Sara: a sociable and luminous part versus another that is deeper, introspective, or sad. - The text has an affectionate and close tone that facilitates connection with the author.
b) Organization and structure (openings, closings, sequences, transitions)	- The text is progressively organized from the external to the internal: it begins with a public description and moves toward the intimate. - The ending has a tone of hope and future projection. - The text presents a smooth and orderly transitional style, with a main focus on the present, accompanied by minor references to the past and future.
c) Repetitions and central terms	- Joy and sadness are central; the former is public and the latter is hidden. - Self-demand and the feeling of insufficiency are constant in the way she sees herself. - Ambition and the desire for self-improvement are a recurring trait. - Happiness appears as a mandate: having to show happiness and make others happy. - Extraversion stands out in contrast to the solitary experience of sadness.
d) Constructs (explicit or implicit bipolar dimensions)	- Cheerful–Sad; the central axis of the text. - Extroverted–Introverted or Sociable–Reserved. - Self-demanding/Ambitious–Not self-demanding/Not ambitious. - Satisfied–Dissatisfied. - Emotional control–Emotional lack of control. - Internal polarities between what is felt and what is shown, particularly in the crossed-out fragment, where ambivalence regarding her relationship with her ex-partner is expressed.
e) Cause-effect relationships and attribution of agency	- Distress is mainly associated with internal causes: self-demand and difficulty showing herself authentically. - The text conveys an internal locus of control and a high attribution of agency; she acts by trying to maintain control and appear well. - She locates the origin of her self-demand in high school, when she began to feel that she had to give everything in order to feel at peace. - Her tendency to care for others and make them happy leads her to hide her sadness and avoid sharing her problems. - Through the crossed-out paragraph, she introduces the relationship with her ex-partner as a tension that creates distress for her.
f) Dominant themes	- The tension between joy and sadness dominates the narrative, reflecting the duality between what she shows and what she hides. - Self-demand and perfectionism drive her and, at the same time, generate distress. - Apparent strength and internal fragility. - Tension between being for others and being for herself. - Hope for improvement.

Table 2
Kellyan Analysis of Sara's Final SC

Kellyan analysis category	Textual interpretation
a) Empathic and credulous reading (global and narrative view of the text)	- The text reflects greater integration and internal balance: identity tensions have decreased, suggesting a reduced experience of internal conflict. - The narrative conveys personal growth, empowerment, and overcoming. - The focus on herself has been strengthened, and the prominence of other characters has decreased. - Joy becomes a more personal and integrated trait; it is no longer an obligation toward others. - The tone remains affectionate and positive, but it is now more centered on self-knowledge than on distress. - Weaknesses appear, but they are no longer overwhelming; they are now accepted as part of normality.
b) Organization and structure (openings, closings, sequences, transitions)	- The structure of the narrative is linear, progresses gradually, and is oriented towards the future. - The ending is hopeful and positive, recognizing progress and accepting that the process continues. - She speaks of growth without the sense of demand and urgency that colored the previous narrative. - The discourse is more cohesive; it no longer contrasts poles but rather integrates them. - There are no references to the past, and the focus on the future is reinforced.
c) Repetitions and central terms	- Strength, courage, and struggle are now the central axes of the narrative. - Joy and happiness remain central, although now with greater authenticity and integration. - Self-demand remains present, but it is reformulated: it is no longer a source of tension, but part of the effort to improve herself and feel fulfilled. - Happiness is no longer an unattainable goal; it is now a present and real state. - Fear appears as a counterweight to growth that is integrated and managed.
d) Constructs (explicit or implicit bipolar dimensions)	- Cheerful–Sad; no longer as a source of conflict, but as a polarity integrated into her identity. - Brave/Strong–Cowardly/Weak; a new central axis of self-definition. - Fighter–Non-fighter. - Extroverted–Introverted; it remains present, although with less relevance than in the initial SC. - Knows how to be alone–Does not know how to be alone. - Open to change–Conformist. - Opposites begin to function in a more complementary than antagonistic way, suggesting greater integration of the poles.
e) Cause-effect relationships and attribution of agency	- She establishes a relationship between self-knowledge and well-being: she recognizes how her mind and emotions work, achieving greater balance and autonomy. - A high internal attribution of agency is maintained, but now with a more positive and functional tone. - She now focuses on what she can control, in contrast to the rigid self-demand of the previous narrative. - Internal attribution of agency is now integrated with the recognition of her fears, without denying them.
f) Dominant themes	- Personal growth and self-knowledge: these indicate an evolution toward acceptance and integration. - Struggle, effort, and courage, nuanced by a more balanced and hopeful perspective. - Future projection with a hopeful tone. - Present happiness and happiness under construction. - Acceptance of vulnerability without guilt.

As a guideline, high scores (4–5) were assigned when the indicators were consistent, recurrent, and organizing elements of the narrative, also showing markers of intensity in the most extreme cases (score of 5). Conversely, low scores (1–2) reflected the absence of these indicators or the predominant presence of opposite traits, whereas intermediate scores (3) were used in situations of ambivalence or moderate presence of the trait.

With the aim of improving transparency and fostering the replicability of the procedure, a dimension-based coding table used for assigning scores within the framework of the HEXACO model is included as supplementary material. Examples of grading (1–5) are also included for some dimensions, in order to make explicit the criteria used to translate narrative content into dimensional scores.

The analysis was carried out by the same evaluators as in the Kellyan method. Each evaluator first assigned HEXACO scores independently and, subsequently, a meeting was held with the aim of agreeing on a final score for each dimension.

The discussion focused especially on the dimensions that showed the greatest initial discrepancies among evaluators, defining relevant discrepancies as differences equal to or greater than one

point. In these cases, the evaluators contrasted their interpretations of the text on the basis of the established coding criteria, with the aim of reaching a shared score.

It is important to distinguish between different levels of agreement in this process. In some cases, initial agreement among evaluators was observed (coincidence or proximity in the scores), whereas in others final agreement was reached after discussion and adjustment of the scores. In situations without unanimity, the final score was established by majority agreement after reasoned discussion.

Initial agreement among evaluators was examined descriptively based on the differences in the assigned scores (see Table 5), showing variability across dimensions, with relevant discrepancies in some cases. These discrepancies were more pronounced in those SCs with less narrative explicitness, as in Manuela's case. In some cases, the initial discrepancies reflected divergent interpretations of the same fragment, which could be revised during the discussion. For example, in one of the dimensions, one evaluator initially assigned a score that was practically opposite to that of the other judges, which was later reinterpreted as the result of confusion in the reading of

Table 3*Kellyan Analysis of Manuela's Initial SC*

Kellyan analysis category	Textual interpretation
a) Empathic and credulous reading (global and narrative view of the text)	- Strength stands out as Manuela's central trait. - The narrative conveys the idea of a persistent struggle throughout her life. - The desire to care for others stands out, accompanied by her trait of kindness. - Based on her care for others and her constant effort to improve herself, the risk of forgetting to take care of herself becomes evident. - Through its mention of strength and struggle, the text could be read as a narrative of resilience.
b) Organization and structure (openings, closings, sequences, transitions)	- The text is written as a single sentence, in a linear and continuous manner, without clear separations between ideas. - It begins by mentioning her strengths, and then immediately moves on to discuss her weaknesses. - The ending reaffirms the idea of constant struggle. - The structure of strong "but" kind may suggest that these are traits she experiences as partially opposed. - It does not explain the causes of "why she has been through a lot" or "why she has been fighting since the first day."
c) Repetitions and central terms	- The phrase "in whatever way she can" is repeated, indicating a recognition of personal limits regarding improvement and helping others. - Terms related to constant effort are repeated: trying, attempting, fighting, improving herself. - The text suggests an orientation toward improvement as something central.
d) Constructs (explicit or implicit bipolar dimensions)	- Strong-Kind; the strong pole appears centrally, and based on the use of "but", there is the possibility that kind functions as its opposite, although it could well be another characteristic, such as weak. - Nice-Unpleasant; the first pole is very clear, while the other would be implicit. - Headstrong/Stubborn-Flexible; synonyms that could represent the same pole, with the possibility that its opposite is greater flexibility or openness. - Fighter-Non-fighter. - Helping others-Not helping. - Improving herself/Getting better-Not improving or conforming. - Takes care of herself-Forgets to take care of herself.
e) Cause-effect relationships and attribution of agency	- The text could suggest a connection between difficult past experiences and her current attitude of struggle and strength. - It could relate her traits of considering herself headstrong and stubborn to the behavior of not taking care of herself and not staying centered. - It recognizes an internal agency focused on continuing to fight.
f) Dominant themes	- Strength and struggle dominate the text. - The desire to improve and better herself are quite central themes. - Kindness and care for others stand out as an important part of the identity narrative. - The difficulty of taking care of herself also stands out. - An implicit theme could be resilience, based on the reference to past difficulties and the persistence of struggle in the present. - A dominant theme could be the contrast in care: very present toward others and less present toward herself.

the text. Nevertheless, these initial scores were retained in [Table 5](#) in order to preserve the traceability of the evaluation process. The variability observed in the initial scores reinforces the need for the consensus process as a mechanism of interpretative integration.

[Table 5](#) presents both the initial scores assigned by each evaluator and the final consensual score, making it possible to observe the degree of initial agreement and the outcome of the integration process. Subsequently, these scores were represented graphically as a visual synthesis of the differences between the initial and final moments in the narrative content of the self-characterizations, interpreted in terms of HEXACO dimensions (see [Figures 5](#) and [6](#)).

This procedure constitutes an interpretative operationalization of the SC using the HEXACO dimensions as a framework applied to the reading of the narrative material. Therefore, the scores should be understood as dimensional estimates of the content and not as psychometric measures obtained through standardized instruments.

Results

[Tables 1](#) to [4](#) present the results of the Kellyan analysis of Sara's and Manuela's initial and final self-characterizations. These

tables include the elements identified from the textual content, in accordance with the analytical criterion described above.

[Table 5](#) shows the scores assigned by each evaluator and the corresponding consensus scores for an interpretative reading of the narrative content of the self-characterizations, inspired by the HEXACO nomothetic model.

[Figures 5](#) and [6](#) graphically represent the initial and final HEXACO scores of both participants, derived from an interpretative reading of the narrative content of their self-characterizations. These scores are not understood as direct indicators of change in personality traits, but rather as a way of representing changes in how the participants narrate themselves, framed within the dimensions of the HEXACO model. The evolution of the quantitative indicators of psychological distress (CORE and DASS) throughout the therapeutic process and at follow-up is shown in [Figures 1](#) to [4](#).

Discussion

We conducted the analysis on the basis of two cases that, like their SCs, are quite different: Sara's is very extensive and rich in detail, whereas Manuela's is much shorter; it contains less information, but what it does say is highly informative and precise,

Table 4
Kellyan Analysis of Manuela's Final SC

Kellyan analysis category	Textual interpretation
a) Empathic and credulous reading (global and narrative view of the text)	- The style and tone remain similar to those of the initial SC. - Kindness and strength remain central traits. - There is now a greater explicitness of pain and past suffering, which she expresses more clearly by recognizing that she finds it difficult to love herself and to let herself be loved. - She maintains her attitude of giving herself to others, but this is now nuanced toward prioritizing the people she loves.
b) Organization and structure (openings, closings, sequences, transitions)	- The text is now divided into two sentences, combining present, past, and future. - It maintains a sequence similar to that of the initial SC, beginning by affirming a stable trait and then developing it. - There is a contrast between seeing herself as someone who gives everything "but" is headstrong and stubborn; this appears alongside the mention of past suffering.
c) Repetitions and central terms	- Expressions of perseverance are repeated: fighting, moving forward, giving everything. - Her search for improvement remains relevant, with some new related words added, such as learning and moving forward. - She repeats the word "person", linking it both to herself and to the people she loves. - Love or affection stand out as central terms, appearing in association with her way of giving to others, despite the fact that she mentions that she has not learned to love herself or to let herself be loved. - Compared with the initial SC, the terms headstrong and stubborn are repeated.
d) Constructs (explicit or implicit bipolar dimensions)	- As in the initial SC, and formulated in almost the same way, the headstrong/stubborn-flexible construct appears. - Giving everything for others-Not giving everything/Not making an effort. - Improving herself/Learning-Conforming - Loving herself/Letting herself be loved-Not loving herself/Not letting herself be loved - The new central construct could now be formulated around "giving everything for those she loves". In the same statement, she contrasts this with being headstrong and stubborn, which suggests a possible tension between her willingness to give to others and these traits.
e) Cause-effect relationships and attribution of agency	- Manuela connects having suffered a lot with not having learned to love herself or to let herself be loved. - As in the initial SC, she maintains internal agency. - Her agency remains similar to that identified in the initial SC; however, it now appears accompanied by a greater explicit presence of learning.
f) Dominant themes	- Recognition of personal suffering. - Difficulty with self-love, in not loving herself or letting herself be loved. - Attempt to improve and grow. - Difficulty taking care of herself. - Giving/sacrifice toward others. "Loving" is a dominant theme: it appears linked to her way of giving to others, although she points out that she is unable to manifest it toward herself or receive it from others.

Table 5
HEXACO Analysis Scores for All SCs

Sara initial	Honesty/Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
Evaluator 1	4	4	4,5	4,5	4	3,5
Evaluator 2	4,8	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,7	3,8
Evaluator 3	4	4	4,5	4	5	3,7
Consensus	4,2	4	4,5	4,5	4,4	3,6
Sara final	Honesty/Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
Evaluator 1	4	3,5	4	4,5	4,5	4
Evaluator 2	4,8	3,5	4	4,5	4,7	4,5
Evaluator 3	4	2	4	4	3,7	4,5
Consensus	4,2	3,5	4	4,5	4,5	4,2
Manuela initial	Honesty/Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
Evaluator 1	4	4,5	2,5	4,5	3,5	2,5
Evaluator 2	4,8	4,5	3,5	4,5	4,5	2
Evaluator 3	4,5	2	3,7	3,7	2	2
Consensus	4,2	4,5	2,7	4,3	3,5	2,2
Manuela final	Honesty/Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
Evaluator 1	4	4	2,5	4,5	4	3
Evaluator 2	4,8	4,5	3,5	4,5	4,5	2
Evaluator 3	5	1	3,7	3,7	3	2
Consensus	4,4	4,2	2,7	4,3	3,8	2,5

Figure 5
Sara's Initial and Final HEXACO Consensus Scores

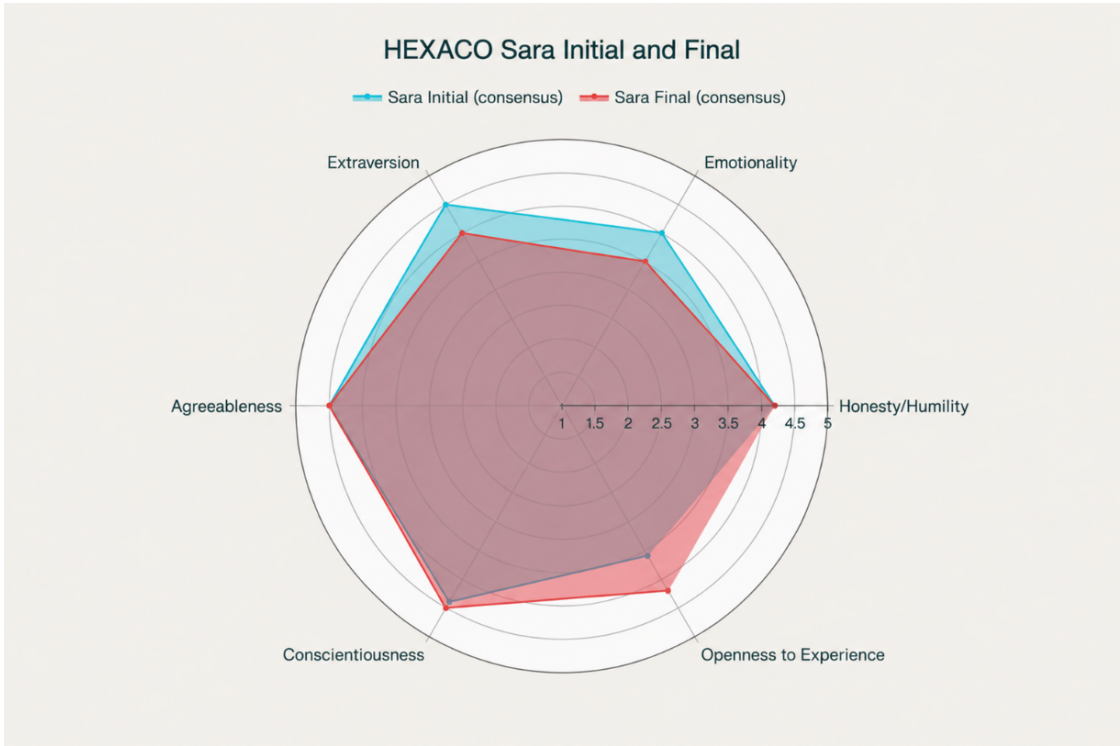
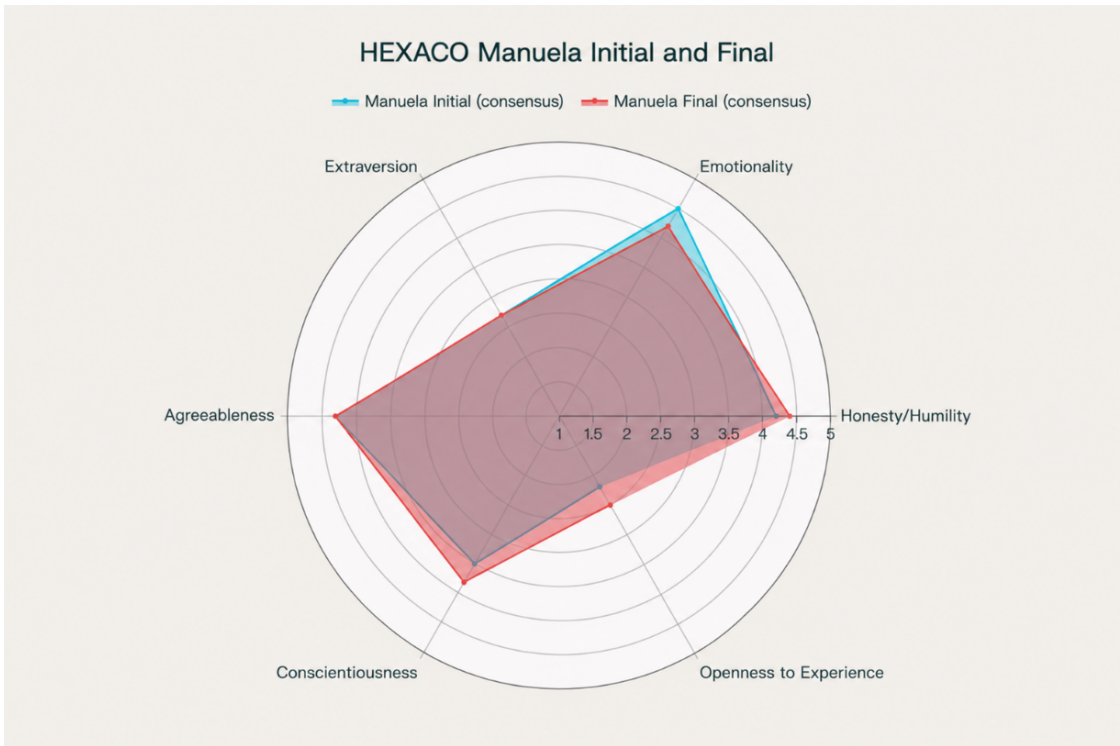


Figure 6
Manuela's Initial and Final HEXACO Consensus Scores



and clearly reflects her characterization, that is, the way she sees herself.

We will now continue developing the exploration of the potential of the SC to identify identity change, both through its Kellyan idiographic approach and through a reading inspired by the HEXACO nomothetic model. We will begin with Sara and then continue with Manuela, taking into account the quantitative data, which in both cases indicate symptomatic changes.

From a general perspective, by the end of the process, Sara appears to have greater self-knowledge and a clearer understanding of what she thinks and feels. She states this herself in her final SC: “she knows how her mind works and is able to understand her emotions”. Although she recognizes that she still has several fears to face, she defines herself as strong and brave. Her way of managing her emotionality seems more functional, after having resolved several dilemmas and identity tensions. Sara ends the process with mild distress (CORE = 0.94), a score that is related to the Kellyan analysis we have conducted: Sara continues to struggle, but she now faces this struggle in a different way, with strength, courage, hope, and an experience of greater happiness.

Based on the Kellyan analysis, we can observe that she has come to manifest a much more integrated narrative identity. The two differentiated Saras that appeared in the initial SC are no longer present: the external Sara, how she shows herself to others, differentiated from the internal Sara, the one who becomes sad and keeps her problems to herself. The idiographic approach allows us to see how Sara now constructs herself with greater integration, recognizing the different aspects that form part of her identity.

From the reading inspired by the nomothetic model, it is interesting to observe that, when recoding the narrative content in terms of the HEXACO model, Sara’s final SC can be read as compatible with a lower narrative centrality of emotionality and extraversion, and with a greater presence of content associated with conscientiousness and openness to experience. This can be observed throughout the text: she has decided to move to a new city, which points to openness to a new life accompanied by experiences she had not previously imagined having. She maintains narrative elements linked to extraversion, although with less centrality compared with the initial SC. Conscientiousness appears more organized around personal goals, and emotionality is presented with lower narrative intensity.

Regarding the change in her emotional regulation, this reading of the narrative content as compatible with lower emotionality is accompanied by a quantitative reduction in the DASS. Sara’s CORE score also decreased, although it should be noted that it maintains a relatively stable pattern that, compared with the beginning of the process, is reduced, but not very markedly. However, the reduction in the DASS is notable, especially on the depression axis. Sara not only narrates her identity differently, but these narrative changes are related to observed improvements in symptomatic indicators. At the follow-up conducted three months after therapy, this decrease becomes even more pronounced. Based on the SCs, we consider that it would be possible to speak of a change in the way identity is narrated, which may be related to clinically relevant implications.

When contrasting the initial and final narratives, a movement can be observed from an identity marked by self-demand, feared sadness, and dependence on the other toward a more integrated identity, with greater self-knowledge, the capacity to sustain

herself alone, and openness to hope. Joy remains present, but now accompanied by agency and by the possibility of recognizing herself as strong and brave.

Internal dissonance has been transformed into greater coherence. In the final SC, she shows herself as able to express and sustain her narrative, in contrast to what can even be seen as a graphic marker of narrative tension in the initial SC, in which she crossed out the paragraph in which she spoke about her ex-partner.

Sadness has been decentralized and, in the final SC, space is given to new, more integrative constructs related to strength, courage, and struggle. In addition, caring for others and joy no longer seem to be a mandate, but rather now appear as an integrated personal choice; there is a movement toward an internal attribution of agency and toward autonomy, an element that, according to several authors, would be the central aim of psychotherapy (Biegler, 2021; Vargas-Téllez & Dorony-Saturno, 2013; Villegas, 2015).

Manuela, on the other hand, presents two SCs that at first glance appear quite similar, but that involve relevant differences. Based on the Kellyan analysis, it is possible to observe how, in the final SC, she expresses more information about herself compared with her initial text. She states that she has not learned to love herself or to let herself be loved, and this formulation shows how she has deepened her understanding of herself by providing more information about past suffering, which she did not initially reveal.

Without going into greater detail, since this exceeds the purpose of this article, it is necessary to briefly explain Manuela’s situation in order to place it in relation to what is expressed through her SCs. Manuela had a complex family system, composed of her parents and younger sister, in which she had taken on a parental role. At a level that was quite explicit in some sessions, Manuela perceived that her parents did not fulfill certain functions and were unable to solve certain problems, even in everyday management; the family environment was not what she expected it to be, and therefore she came to assume an organizational and managerial role, even at the expense of her own individuation (Boszormenyi-Nagy & Spark, 1973/2012; Jurkovic, 1997).

The most representative moment of this dilemma between caring for her family and her own personal development occurred in the middle of therapy, when she considered several options for leaving home, at least for a while; in the end, she decided not to do so and to remain at home, reaffirming herself in her role as protector of the family.

This situation is reflected in her final SC, in the sense that, although in the initial SC she already showed a strong desire to help and care for others in a general way, in the final SC the first phrase she uses is: “She is willing to give everything for the people she loves”. Although she does not state it explicitly in these terms, we can interpret that she maintains her parental role within her family.

However, unlike in the initial SC, she no longer mentions “forgetting to take care of herself”. Instead, she explicitly states that she has not learned to love herself or to let herself be loved, expressing something that she had not previously put into words and that may point to an increase in self-knowledge. Likewise, the intention to learn on her present path oriented toward a future of improvement and self-betterment can also be interpreted as a desire to continue along this path of self-learning.

This case also illustrates the usefulness of the SC as an exploratory tool linked to the development of a therapeutic process.

It is important to qualify that, although the changes in Manuela's case are more subtle than in Sara's, they can be identified through the analysis of the SC texts, although they require a more detailed and careful reading.

In this sense, direct knowledge of the therapeutic process is not strictly necessary to identify these nuances, but it can facilitate their detection and understanding, allowing for a faster reading and a more direct integration of the narrative elements with the evolution of the case.

This finding suggests that the SC can function as an assessment tool both through textual analysis and in combination with contextual knowledge of the therapeutic process. While analysis based solely on the text makes it possible to identify changes in the way identity is narrated, integration with the clinical context can enrich the interpretation by connecting these elements with previously known relevant aspects of the case.

In Manuela's case, this integration is especially significant, as it makes it possible to link certain narrative elements—such as the willingness to “give everything for the people she loves”—with her position within the family system, characterized by a parentified role. Although this connection is not strictly necessary for the textual analysis, it does provide greater clinical depth to the interpretation.

In this sense, in the Kellyan analysis, the more subtle aspects related to Manuela were identified more easily by the evaluator with direct knowledge of the case, although, in principle, they could also be identified by other evaluators through a detailed textual analysis.

Regarding the reading inspired by HEXACO, the recoding of the narrative content showed final agreement among judges in the interpretation of a decrease in emotionality, as well as changes compatible with increases in conscientiousness, honesty-humility, and openness to experience.

It is interesting to observe the differences in contrast with Sara's case. In Manuela, the narrative differences are more subtle, but they are present and become more noticeable when the case is connected with its quantitative dimension. In Manuela's session-by-session CORE trajectory, compared with Sara's, there are many more ups and downs, and a much greater reduction in distress between the beginning of the therapeutic process and the moment at which it ends. It seems relevant to point out how the increase in distress occurred at a moment in the process when change was being pushed too strongly, and it was then that homeostasis returned with great force. This phenomenon becomes more understandable when connected with the final SC: in her final portrait of herself, being willing to give everything for the people she loves (her family) becomes the trait that appears most identity-defining. It makes sense that her distress increased when she approached the possibility of a change that was neither desirable nor coherent in relation to the way she constructs her identity.

All of this shows the richness fostered by the use of this technique, especially when accompanied by an analysis of what occurred during the therapeutic process and by the use of other tools such as those we have employed.

On the other hand, when observing the other quantitative tool used, the DASS, it is interesting to see how, in Manuela's case, the decrease is not as pronounced when compared with Sara's DASS. This is especially evident in the stress line, which between the first and last session becomes very similar, although it decreases

further at follow-up. Anxiety shows a greater decrease and is also somewhat further reduced at follow-up, but even so it does not amount to a very marked change.

Manuela's experience is aligned with the constructivist perspective described, for example, in the study by Sanders et al. (2019), which highlights the idea of the symptom integrated into identity. It appears that her symptoms of stress and anxiety, and to some extent her distress in general, are strongly aligned with her identity construction. Manuela, framed within her narrative of sacrifice, effort, and struggle, manifests symptoms of distress that form part of her way of seeing herself, even after therapy. Although there has been some degree of change, her way of narrating her identity, and therefore the symptoms she experiences, remain strongly connected to it, as can be observed in her final SC. Meanwhile, in Sara's case, a greater degree of change can be observed through her self-narration, something that in her case is aligned with the quantitative indices.

If we focus on the depression line in Manuela's DASS, we see a possible relapse at follow-up, based on an increase in her depressive symptoms. From her narration in the SCs, it is interesting to point out how what appears to be a core construction of “giving everything for others”, in a way that can even be interpreted as self-sacrifice for others, could be related to depressive symptoms. This is the case not only in relation to the study already mentioned above (Feixas et al., 2014), but also in light of several other works that have linked depression with the maintenance of a narrative of self-silencing in favor of the other, especially present in women (Jack, 1991; Jack & Dill, 1992), as well as with an identity defined by self-sacrifice for others, excessive dedication to them, and forgetting oneself (Helgeson & Fritz, 1999).

Possibly, Manuela remains trapped in her family drama, fitted into her position as a parentified daughter. The system has not really changed, and she has remained in her position. What occurred could be interpreted as a type 1 change (Watzlawick et al., 1974), since, in the absence of a deeper change, depressive symptoms begin to return. This is a type of change that maintains the structure of the system; the underlying assumptions or rules have not been questioned, as in this case the parentified role of the daughter.

Returning to the SC, it is likely that, as long as she continues “being willing to give everything for the people she loves”, while at the same time “not loving herself and not letting herself be loved”, she will remain trapped in the emptiness of depression (Villegas, 2025).

Based on this analysis and on the exploration of identity change, we consider that we have made visible one of the possibilities offered by the use of the SC.

Regarding other techniques that have been used to assess identity change, we consider the potential of Kelly's (1955) repertory grid, already mentioned, which constitutes an interesting union of both quantitative and qualitative factors. However, we believe that the potential of the SC is different, as it enters the qualitative aspect in another way, exposing the person's identity in narrative form. Within this framework, we find similarities with the Life Story Interview proposed by McAdams (1993), which involves an identity narrative that could likewise be carried out before and after a process in order to assess identity change, although in this case within the framework of a semi-structured interview that may become very extensive and that is conducted from a personal, first-person frame.

Within this same framework, there are several other ways of assessing therapeutic change from diverse approaches: constructivist-narrative approaches, such as the Innovative Moments Coding System by Gonçalves et al. (2011); humanistic approaches, such as Rogers' Q-sort (Butler & Haigh, 1954); or psychodynamic approaches, such as Blatt's Object Relations Inventory (Huprich et al., 2016). We find the identity snapshot made possible by the SC particularly interesting, since we consider that it has transdiagnostic and integrative potential. In addition, its use allows access to the autobiographical account in a way that may not be so extensive, but is nevertheless very rich in meaning, from a position that facilitates self-distancing and viewing problems from a more detached perspective, thinking about oneself as if one were an external observer. In this way, the way experience is processed changes, by becoming a self observed from the outside (Ayduk & Kross, 2010). This enables more adaptive self-reflection and reduces negative emotional responses, since self-distancing facilitates reconstructing the meaning of what happened, reflecting on difficult experiences more calmly, drawing lessons from them, and better regulating negative emotions, thereby contributing to self-awareness and insight (Kross & Ayduk, 2017).

There are some limitations to the procedure carried out in this article. Perhaps the most salient aspect is that we have presented only two cases. Future studies could implement this tool in a similar way, in order to corroborate the potential of the SC and demonstrate its usefulness with greater methodological robustness, with the possibility of observing identity change in general or even refining it toward the identification of more specific changes occurring in therapy.

Another limitation of the study, specifically in the reading inspired by the HEXACO nomothetic framework, is that formal indices of interrater reliability were not used (e.g., ICC or kappa). Although Table 5 makes it possible to observe the degree of initial agreement among judges, relevant discrepancies were identified in some dimensions before consensus. This reflects the interpretative nature of the procedure and the difficulty of inferring certain traits from brief narrative material.

On the other hand, we believe that our study makes it possible to establish an exploratory dialogue with the literature on personality change and psychotherapy. Based on the interpretative reading of the narrative content in terms of HEXACO dimensions, we found narrative patterns that can be placed in dialogue with what was reported in the meta-analysis by Roberts et al. (2017), in which the main trait shown to decrease after a psychological intervention is emotionality/neuroticism, although in our case this does not constitute a direct assessment of changes in personality traits.

In both Manuela's and Sara's cases, the final SCs present narrative content that, within the HEXACO-based interpretative reading, can be understood as less centered on emotional vulnerability and more oriented toward coping and regulation resources, especially in Sara's case. Nevertheless, these results should be interpreted as a pre-post narrative recoding in terms of HEXACO dimensions, and not as a direct assessment of changes in personality traits.

The aforementioned meta-analysis also found an increase—less marked than the reduction in emotionality—in extraversion. In our cases, this dimension shows different patterns: in Manuela, no clear change is observed, whereas in Sara the narrative can be interpreted as compatible with a lower centrality of extraversion, insofar as there

is greater emphasis on moments of desired solitude and a lower orientation toward others compared with the initial SC.

Ashton and Lee (2016) have noted that certain patterns of trait change can also be observed across the life span. In this sense, the narrative differences identified in our SCs can be read as compatible with trends described in the literature, although they should be understood as interpretative hypotheses derived from narrative material rather than as direct evidence of dispositional change.

Within this framework, a reading of the SC inspired by a nomothetic model makes it possible to organize and interpret narrative content in terms of personality dimensions, identifying differences in the way the person narrates themselves before and after the therapeutic process. These differences may reflect changes in aspects such as self-knowledge, emotional regulation, or subjective position, without necessarily implying modifications in personality traits in the strict sense.

With regard to Emotionality, Sara's text shows lower intensity in the conflicts and dilemmas present in the initial SC; the signs of anxiety no longer appear with the same clarity, especially in the crossed-out paragraph in which she spoke about her ex-partner. In addition, she states that she knows how her mind works and is able to understand her emotions.

In Manuela's case, the narrative can also be read as compatible with a change in this dimension, although in a milder way. A more nuanced attitude toward herself is observed, along with the appearance of elements of greater self-knowledge, such as the recognition that she has not learned to love herself or to let herself be loved, as well as the incorporation of the idea of learning.

In both participants, this emphasis on continuing to learn, oriented toward the future and with a hopeful tone, can be interpreted as indicative of a greater sense of purpose, in line with Frankl's (1963) proposal. Having a sense of purpose has been related to psychological improvement throughout therapy (Breiner, 2024). In addition, the more autonomous movement toward growth and personal development stands out, a movement that occurs after therapy and was originally proposed by Rogers (1961), and is also present in Villegas' (2015) approach. These aspects can also be related to our interpretation of the narrative content as compatible with higher levels of conscientiousness and openness to experience.

In our study, we included two evaluators who were unfamiliar with the cases. Carrying out an analysis process that does not depend solely on the therapist who knows the case reduces possible bias, and the inclusion of other evaluators makes it possible to explore the diversity of possible readings within a previously defined procedure. Within this framework, in addition to the idiographic analysis, the possibility of conducting an interpretative reading inspired by a nomothetic model is considered.

Outside the field of psychotherapy, there is the possibility of expanding the use of this tool in the organizational domain. As in the study by Androutsopoulou (2001), it could be used at the time of personnel recruitment and then, after a period of work within the company, to explore changes in work identity. Another possibility would be its use in longitudinal studies reflecting moments of growth and development at different life stages, making it possible to explore identity change across the life span.

Based on the results obtained, we suggest the possible usefulness of the SC in routine therapeutic practice, regardless of theoretical orientation, as a tool for exploring the narrated self

from a first-person perspective that at the same time introduces a certain reflective distance. Its application could be considered not only at the beginning of therapy, but also at relevant moments in the process, for example after the emergence of significant insights, and at the end of treatment. Extending this design to studies with larger sample sizes would allow its potential as a tool for assessing identity change to be evaluated with greater robustness.

As a final conclusion, we consider that the SC constitutes a highly valuable tool for exploring identity change. The approach presented in this article should be understood as an illustrative methodological approximation, showing one of its possible applications and opening the door to future research aimed at deepening our understanding of its usefulness and scope.

CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

Juan Francisco Narváez-Villarreal: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Formal analysis, Data curation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Guillem Feixas: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – review & editing.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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