Active Audience in Transmedia Fiction: Platforms, Interactivity and Measurement

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Abstract

[EN] Introduction. The changes in the television landscape have given rise to new forms of production and consumption which present challenges to the monitoring of the audience. This article delves into the transformations regarding how to measure the audience through the case study of the series produced by RTVE, *Si fueras tú*, the first native, interactive and transmedia fiction series. **Methodology**. An analysis of the official media and platforms which make up the transmedia universe of the fiction series is carried out. Subsequently, the possibilities of interaction and the activities of the audience in each of them are studied. **Results**. The data show that Facebook and Instagram comprise the greater part of the activity in the transmedia universe. Moreover, the weekly routine in the combination of platforms and the integration of the active audience is identified. **Discussion and conclusions**. The impossibility of measuring in a standardized way the transmedia audience is proven while further challenges are mentioned.

Keywords

Transmedia Audience; RTVE; Public Television; Audience Measurement, Participation.

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1. Introduction

Over the past few years television has been forced to redefine its nature driven by the technological and business changes. Mobile devices, hyperconnectivity, web 3.0, social networks and the presence of new stakeholders in the sector have promoted new forms of watching, summarized in the core idea 'anywhere, anytime, any device', characteristic from the liquid television (Quintas-Froufe & González-Neira 2016).

The basic factors that traditionally defined television have been altered, such as time (the spectator is not limited to a grid in order to consume a space), the place (the Internet access facilitates the consumption in media beyond television, like the tablet, computer or smartphones) and the senders (together with the traditional networks, there coexist other operators of very diverse nature such as Movistar+, Vodafone Tv, Facebook, HBO, Netflix or Amazon).

In this mediatic context, one of the sector's greatest concerns are the consumption habits of youth, not only regarding the present, but also considering the fact they will be the protagonists of the future and actors of the economy in the next years. Different studies point to the progressive abandonment of conventional television by youth, even though they keep being very active consumers of audiovisual products.

This reality forced traditional actors, namely, renowned networks, to introduce changes in the creation, production and distribution of audiovisual contents (Lamelo, 2016). They committed for new products such as the application of virtual reality, content gamification, the transmedia, interactive series, interactive documentaries, the web series, where there is an investment on interactivity that, at the same time, promotes fidelity (Tur-Viñes, 2015). The goal of all this innovation is looking for the young audience in other realities, other formats and keep them loyal to the broadcasted products, compared to the competition of new players such as HBO or Netflix. Some of the characteristics of millennials define the strategies adopted recently. It is a sector of the population that is eminently digital, who prioritizes the user's experience. They are used to interactivity, to being producers of messages instead of passive spectators, to consume with the mobile phone in hand while new messages are issued. This young public with a wide digital experience demands something more than the simple viewing. They are interested about new transmedia experiences that unite the different prisms where their routine takes place such as social networks, the web or the gamification and that promote their message producer capacity. As Scolari (2014) indicates, "transmedia narratives, in this context, are presented as a possible solution –surely not the only one– to face the atomization of audiences."

Interactivity and participation are indispensable requisites for a public that is very used to combine their role recipient and sender of messages. As Jenkins said more than 15 years ago "Younger consumers have become information hunters and gatherers, taking pleasure in tracking down character backgrounds and plot points and making connections between different texts within the same franchise." (Jenkins, 2003)

Therefore, it is necessary to start up other tools to face these new transmedia television realities as well as to study what strategies are being used to promote the attraction of this audience (Herrero de la Fuente, 2017). As Davis (2013) says, in every innovative bet there is a concern for the economic return on investment (Cascajosa, 2016; Simons, 2014). Hence, the relevance of having data available that support the success or failure of a production. The audiovisual sector needs these data not only as exchange currency before advertising, but also as element of analysis of the new strategies triggered that are addressed mainly to the youngest public.

2. Transmedia products on television

The convergence process and the culture of participation have promoted the spreading of many transmedia productions (Costa, 2016). The aforesaid landscape has boosted the commitment for different transmedia experiences, understood as those that develop their narrative through different platforms, media or channels that complement between them at the same time that the interaction of the spectator in the narrative development of the product is favoured (Jenkins, 2003). Therefore, this concept of transmedia products for television gathers an aspect of narrative development in a variety of platforms as well as an indispensable component of user-spectator interactivity (García, 2011) that in turn can lead to the creation of fans communities (Lacalle & Castro, 2018). These are consumers, or, rather prosumers, that contribute to the narrative development of the product (Lastra, 2016).

Based on the studies of Jenkins (2003), partly inspired by Kinder's contributions (1991), the researches of the academic community have focused mainly on the transmedia narrative (Saavedra-Bautista, Cuervo-Gómez & Mejía-Ortega, 2016; Torrico, 2017; Ivars & Zaragoza, 2018) leaving other perspectives aside such as the study of audiences.

In Spain the transmedia experiences of different television series have been object of analysis (Costa, 2013; Rodríguez, Ortiz & Sáez, 2014). *El Ministerio del Tiempo* (2015-2017) is the one gathering the greatest number of analyses (Cascajosa, 2015; Paíno & Rodríguez, 2015; Rodríguez-Mateos & Hernández-Pérez, 2015; Establés, 2016; Sánchez-Castillo & Galán, 2016; Scolari & Establés, 2017; Cascajosa & Molina, 2017). However, it was definitely not the first experience in Spain in opting for the transmedia development. In 2011, due to the series produced by Antena 3 *El Barco*, the 'twittersodes' were created (Grandío & Bonaut, 2012; Deltell, Claes & Osteso, 2013; Fernández, 2013). Other examples of studies of this sort are the ones about *Águila roja* produced by RTVE (Costa & Piñeiro, 2012; Scolari, Jiménez & Guerrero, 2012; Guerrero, 2014; Franquet & Villa-Montoya, 2014), *Pulseras rojas* (Tur-Viñes & Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, 2014), *Isabel* (Franquet & Villa-Montoya, 2014; Establés, 2016), *Víctor Ros* (Barrientos-Bueno, 2015; De la Fuente, Cortés & Martínez, 2016) or *Carlos Rey Emperador* (Carreño, 2016). In some cases, there were done comparisons with Spanish series and foreign ones such as 'King fury' (Lastra, 2016), 'Games of Thrones' (Guerrero, 2014), 'Skins' (Grandío & Bonaut, 2012). The contributions at international level are completed with studies about other series like 'Lost' (Pearson, 2009; Scolari, 2014), 'Doctor Who' (Perryman, 2008), 'House of Cars' (Vasques-Ferreira & Magalhães-Costa, 2018), 'Fringe' (Guerrero, 2015) and *Sanningen om Marika* (Denward, 2012). Together with the development of the transmedia strategy, several studies outstand the contributions of spectators/fans especially in researches about *El Misterio del tiempo* (Miranda & Figuero, 2016; Lastra, 2016; Scolari & Establés, 2017; Torregrosa-Carmona & Rodríguez-Gómez, 2017), and highlight their prosumer nature or the copyright issue of the publics of transmedia narratives (Díaz-Noci & Tous-Rovirosa, 2012). Even though the fiction genre has concentrated a great part of the scholars' attention, the transmedia phenomenon has also been analysed in another kind of contents such as talent shows (Oliva-Rota & Pérez Latorre, 2011).

Less attention has been dedicated to the measurement of transmedia audience, since studies performed from the public's perspective highlight their creative role without establishing analysis metrics. The European project Eurotransmedia [1] dealt with the development of methodologies in audience's measurement. Regarding this matter, the contributions of Evans (2011), Davis (2013), Simons (2014), Cascajosa (2016) and Costa (2016) are also worth mentioning.

3. Methodology

Before this scenario of transformation for television, and regarding an audience with renewed behaviours, the research questions that constitute the backbone of this study are the following:

> P.I.1. What are the platforms and media that compose the transmedia universe and the possibilities of interaction they offer as resources in the transmedia scenario?

> P.I.2. What actions are developed from the production of a series to encourage interactivity and the participation of the transmedia audience around an audiovisual product?

> P.I.3. What measurements and analyses of the transmedia audience and its consumption are made from an audiovisual product today?

> P.I.4. Is it possible to determine today the success or failure of a product depending on its transmedia audience?

The main goal of this article is to describe and analyse every official media and platforms offered from the production of a fiction series to, subsequently, study the activity of the audience in each one of them. In such a way as to delve into the roles of the active audience and the measurement of communicational impacts in a process of transmediatic nature.

The study object of this research is the web series *Si fueras tú*, produced by Atomis Media and RTVE, an adaptation of the New Zealander fiction series 'Reservoir Hills' (2009-2010) made by the same team of *El Ministerio del Tiempo*. The series is targeted to a young public and featured by a young cast with great presence and followers on social networks. The fiction series is composed of eight chapters plus a final TV-movie and broadcasted on streaming by the new platform of digital contents produced by RTVE, Playz, and *La 1* (Channel 1) (only the first chapter and a final TV-movie [2]).

Playz, the online video platform launched in October 2017, offers original and interactive audiovisual contents (mainly fiction and entertainment) targeted to a young public in order to promote the interaction of these new publics in this digital space. Playz aims to become the digital option of RTVE to compete with other similar portals such as Mtmad (Mediaset) or Flooxer (Atresmedia).

The justification of the study object resides, on the one hand, in the fact that it is the first native interactive transmedia fiction series of Spanish production. Every week the users decided the script's storyline depending on the number of votes on two social networks, Facebook and Instagram, within the twenty four hours after its broadcast. Based on the decision made by the public, the chapter to be broadcasted next week was written and recorded.

On the other hand, as public service of state television, and as set forth in the Master Agreement (2008), RTVE must participate in the technological progress and use the different technologies and dissemination means by developing new interactive services with quality contents, diverse and balanced for all kinds of publics, in addition to reaching an outstanding positioning in the audiovisual sector that guarantees the sufficient presence in the society. As stated by Franquet & Villa-Montoya

(2014) and Franquet, Villa-Montoya & Bergillos (2013), to broaden the tools that favour the participation of the audience, by integrating the contents derived from this participation, is one of the ways the public broadcasting entities have to create commercial strategies that allow them to continue being main stakeholders in these new technological scenarios.

The case study will be the methodology used (Yin, 1989; Coller, 2000), since it is the most suitable considering the particular characteristics of the research. Likewise, interviews were conducted to experts involved in the creation of this fiction series and the starting up of the digital strategy of the series like Ignacio Gómez Hernández (director of the Management of Analysis and New Projects of RTVE), Pablo Lara (transmedia producer of the series) and Agustín Alonso (from the Transmedia and Digital Contents Department of RTVE).

The analysis of any transmedia production entails the study of its core elements: the narrative universe, the expansion platforms of that universe and the prosumers that interact with the content (Lastra, 2016). This article is focused on the analysis of the transmedia audience; therefore it will have a special emphasis in the two last elements of the aforesaid triad.

In a first stage, the platforms and media that compose the fiction's transmedia universe were identified: television, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, Spotify and the website Playz. For the analysis of each platform, a specific code manual was created with common categories (native content or not; possibilities of interaction and user's response; temporality of contents; target public; interconnections; interactive resources; number of participant users) that allowed to stablish comparative relationships between platforms.

For data collection, an automatic monitoring was done using Facebook's and Twitter's API, as well as manual monitoring in the remaining media and platforms during the activity period of the series, from 4 August to 9 December, 2017 [3].

4. Results

4.1. Description of the platforms and media and their possibilities for interaction

After data collection, the actions carried out on the different media where the fiction series took place are detailed herein.

4.1.1. Facebook

Si fueras tú has used Facebook to generate community around the product and to promote its fidelization. It is a platform where they experimented with the users' interaction, besides keeping an updated channel of information with previews and video meetings with the leading actors before the premiere. With every episode, the broadcast was announced and released simultaneously with the Playz website, later they shared the link to the chapter, together with the extra material and the making of, as well as the notes published in other media and information about actors. The most singular actions in this platform have been votings – the users have chosen through Facebook's reactions how the series should continue in the next week- and the live chats with Alba, the protagonist.

Facebook allows, in a native manner, to perform comments, share a post and react to them. The production required the participation of users in two essential moments each week: choosing the storyline and keeping a live chat with Alba after the episode's online premiere. The content that generated greater activity were chats –up to 76.000 views the first one of them and 2.500 comments– . The comments reflect opinions, mention other users so that they can see contents or formulate

questions, in this sense, the team tends to answer the specific doubts presented. On the other hand, the video is one of the most used resources, since the most watched video reached 115.000 views, which corresponds with one of the votings to decide about the continuation of the series (9 October, 2017). In addition, these decisions are the publications accumulating a greater number of reactions.
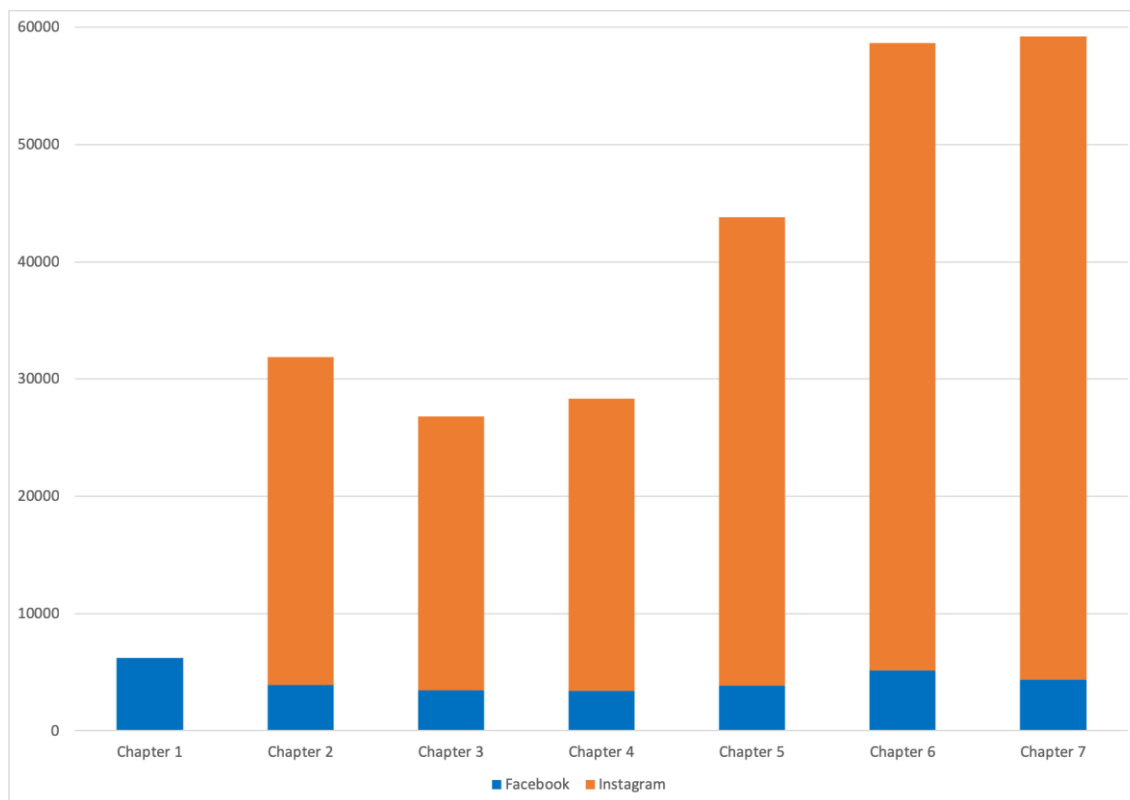
Graphic 1. Votes of the public by social network. Source: authors' own creation.

The main feature of the series was the possibility that the public decided how the next week would continue. On graphic 1, the increasing evolution of votes on Instagram is perceived (incorporated in the second week), while on Facebook it starts with a slight decrease to recover in the last three chapters.

Participation shows an increasing trend: after the first chapter, 6.225 votes were registered and chapter 7 reached the peak of 59.206 votes. Once the voting process was opened through Instagram, the participation from Facebook remained as a residual data, below 15%.

In an effort to trace connections with the rest of platforms, in the page of Facebook there was reference to Instagram in three occasions: by inviting to see messages published by Alba with extra content and to give opinions about the end of the series and its future through Instagram Stories. Considering that Playz, as part of the website of RTVE, is the main core where the content is located, it has also been linked so that users could consume the series episodes on demand. In a particular case, they even shared a YouTube video made by users about the theories that sustain the series plot (13 September, 2017).

Facebook plays a relevant role in the transmedia strategy, as a space for conversation and relationship with users, that have significantly responded to those most characteristic and differentiated contents – votings and live–. However, the strategy does not outstand for connecting to the rest of the transmedia universe except for specific cases exposed. This social network is associated to the creation of

community, a matter that presents a challenge for its management after the programmed broadcast of the series, because there is no follow-up for the audience that gets to the product after the premiere of the last episode.

4.1.2. Instagram

This social network has followed a very similar pattern to Facebook, highlighting the information about the series, the characters and actors before its premiere. With every episode, it's on demand availability was announced, the voting process was made available after the second chapter – depending on the production on official profiles by the public's demand, since its followers are on Instagram– and communicated their results. In this platform, the extra contents published outstand as pills disclosing complementary information to the storyline developed in the audiovisual product: WhatsApp conversations of the protagonist, police files, unpublished scenes, etc. On the other hand, they have published 'making of' material, messages of actors and the team as well as previews. Besides the official profile of the series, Alba also has her personal profile, although the activity has been low.

On Instagram, they took advantage of its visual nature in order to publish further extra content, also through the ephemeral stories, especially to show the filming. There outstand the videos filmed by the actors to invite to the Halloween party –Óscar Casas' video (another of the leading cast) exceeded the 110.000 reproductions–, an event where the series fans participated, as well as other contents related to them: Oscar's birthday celebration or the summary of the series elaborated by María Pedraza (Alba in fiction). In this sense, it is worth mentioning that the series has been benefited by the influence generated by the huge fame some of the protagonists have on social networks. The native options to interact are the comment and the reaction, exceeding the 47.000 likes in one of the options voted (23 October, 2017) –these votings were quite welcomed and reached the 59.206 votes through Instagram in the next-to-last episode–.
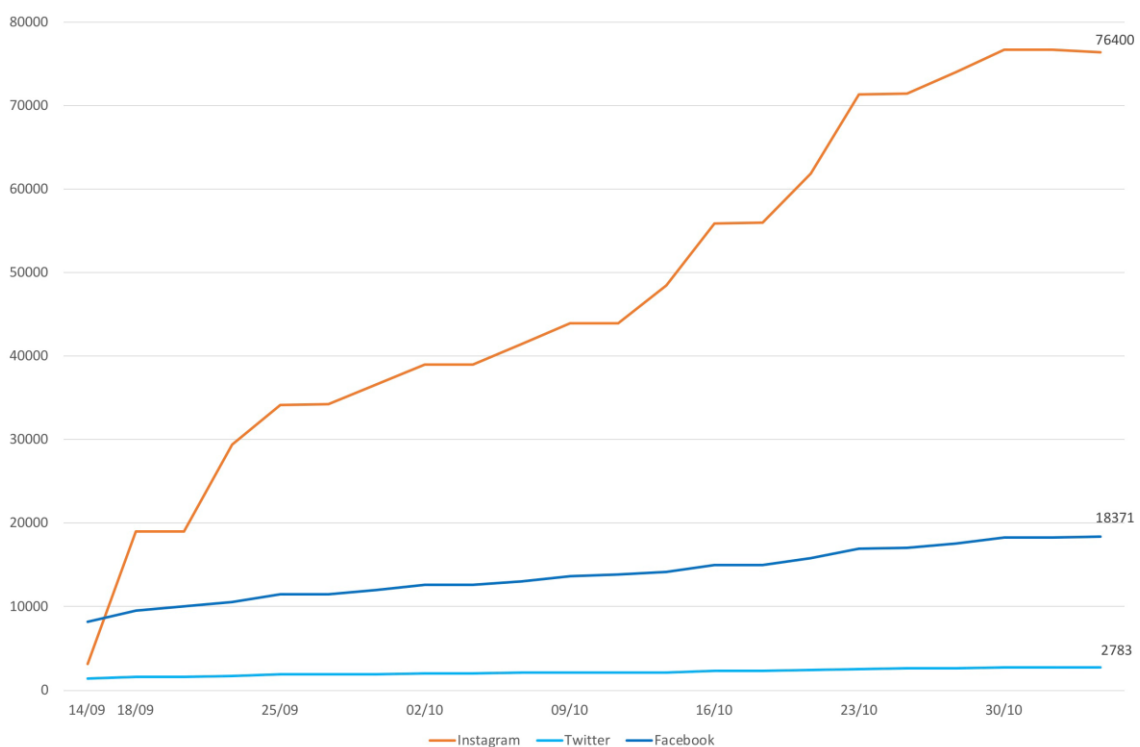
Graphic 2. Number of followers by social network. Source: authors' own creation.

The participation of the platform is enriched with initiatives promoted from the production, such as the votings or the call to send opinions through the 'stories'. Regarding comments, a considerable volume is identified –up to 2.470 in one of the votings– and the team answered to questions about specific issues regarding the series broadcast.

This platform facilitated an alternative route of communication with the protagonist, who had a personal profile of low activity. Her phone number was announced in order to talk to her through WhatsApp and promoted the participation of fans in the filming, besides publishing some contents that are only present on this network, among which there outstand conversations or received pictures and videos of Alba targeted to spectators. In general, the content adapts to Instagram, but shows a high coincidence with the contents published on Facebook, which hinders the audience to browse across platforms to complement the experience, in addition to the fact that it is not possible to incorporate links on this network's publications. The differentiation lies in the characteristics of each platform, rather than on the presented strategy.

The graphic 2 demonstrates the strong push of the series on Instagram compared to Facebook and Twitter. While the number of followers increases very slowly in these last two, Instagram leads one of the starring platforms, therefore, it becomes a scenario for votings.

4.1.3. Twitter

The routine in this social network follows the pattern of the previous ones, being the native options of Twitter the response or mention, the retweet and the reaction. The total volume of tweets was 1.584, of which 157 were original content, the rest were responses or retweets. They published previews, notes in media, introductions and promotions of the series before the premiere. With every broadcasted episode, they spread its premiere and the availability on demand at RTVE.es, announced the votings and their results, as well as the live chat produced on Facebook weekly with the protagonist. Between episodes, on Twitter there was commitment for sharing the messages of users, sometimes by adding some comment, acknowledgements, making of, also mentioning the actors. Most of the content is also available on other platforms, except for pre-launching extras and the mention to the campaign of *Fundación de Ayuda contra la Drogadicción* (Foundation against Drug Addiction) regarding the series.

4.1.4. WhatsApp

In order to create community and favour fidelization, they launched the possibility to maintain WhatsApp chats with the protagonist of the series, Alba, using her phone number. In this initiative, there participated 8.900 followers. However, the experience was not as satisfactory as expected because communication among applicants couldn't be always stablished, and given the case there was, it was really an unidirectional communication, where messages were sent but there wasn't any dialogue or conversation with users. Therefore, the so highly desired community the producers advocated was not created. During this time, Alba sent 9 messages in which she encouraged to vote, the premiere of a new episode was reminded and extra material like pictures were sent, however, in any case it was exclusive material of this platform for the transmedia universe of the series. The application was also used to channel participation when Alba requested users on Instagram to send videos to help her friend Rocío. For the producer, Pablo Lara, it was not a positive experience, because due to technical issues conversations could not take place, but there were monologues instead, thus the original goal was not fulfilled.

In this research, we did not include the WhatsApp groups created by the initiative of spectators.

4.1.5. YouTube

There was a channel of its own in the launching of the series, *Si fueras tú serie*, which had more extra content available and disappeared during the broadcast of this fiction, when transferring part of the videos to the Playz channel and RTVE. In the Playz channel on YouTube all episodes were distributed, as well as the movie, and other materials such as the trailer and the making of. At the same time, the RTVE channel on YouTube spread extra material of the series like the video meeting with the protagonists, statements of actors about the end, interviews and explanatory videos about how to participate. It is not about any exclusive material because it nourishes from contents published on Playz. Therefore, the channel has been used as an extension of the viewing experience and warehouse of chapters, providing the chance for a longer life on the more global audiovisual platform. Until 1 November, there were 1.281.251 reproductions of complete chapters (very close to the views data of 1.456.037 on RTVE). It is also significant that users go more to this platform for deferred consumption than its own space on Playz.

4.1.6. Spotify

The incorporation of this platform is done almost a month after the series broadcast. In the two reproduction lists (the OST and the music, Alba the protagonist, listens to) there were 357 and 266 followers respectively. Undoubtedly, it is the platform that less impact had despite being announced both on Facebook and Twitter.

4.1.7. Conventional television

The first chapter was broadcasted on 11 September, in *La 1* of RTVE at midnight. It reached a share of 5.9% and was watched by 576.000 spectators. Therefore, the bet of RTVE, by time slot and broadcasting frequency in its traditional grids demonstrates that the general-interest public was not their priority target. Said broadcast worked as a promotional tool of the new production instead.

4.1.8. The movie

Broadcasted on 8 December 2017, also in the late night time slot. It was filmed after grouping the different chapters of the series. It practically reached the same audience data than the first chapter of the fiction with a 5% of share and 567.000 spectators. It is worth mentioning that since it was not broadcasted for Catalonia, this generated complaints on social networks among followers.

4.1.9. Playz website

Through the space of Playz, the user has access to all chapters, the movie and extra audiovisual material such as the making of, video meetings, interviews, news, albums and explanation about how to vote. This website would be the mother ship of the transmedia production where the complete audiovisual material of the series is stored, however there is content that is not collected there and promotes the dispersion across the different networks, hindering its subsequent consumption after the live broadcast. The possibilities of participation in the website are limited to sharing contents on social networks.

In order to better know the interactivity levels of the audience of *Si fueras tú* promoted by the series, a comparison of the options suggested on the different platforms was done. To elaborate table 1, the native possibilities of every platform were taken as reference as well as the mechanisms created by the production to channel participation, in addition to the previous classification of Scolari (2013) about the user generated content in the transmedia fiction.

Function	Interactivity	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube	Spotify	Web	WhatsApp
Follow/subscribe	Low	●	●	●	●		●
React	Low	●	●	●			
Share	Low	●	external app	●	●	social networks	●
Comment	Low	●	●	●			
Participate in a live video chat	Medium	●					
Keep conversations with a character	Medium		●				●
Decide the continuation of the series	High	●	●				
Participate in filming	High					●	
User generated content	High						●

Table 1. Levels of interactivity of the audience. Source: authors' own creation.

After examining the whole transmedia universe of this product, a standard week was detailed (graphic 3) in order to know the possibilities of interaction available for the audience on the different platforms, mainly on social networks, across which reiterated connections are generated. The platforms having a complementary role were not included (web, YouTube, Spotify).
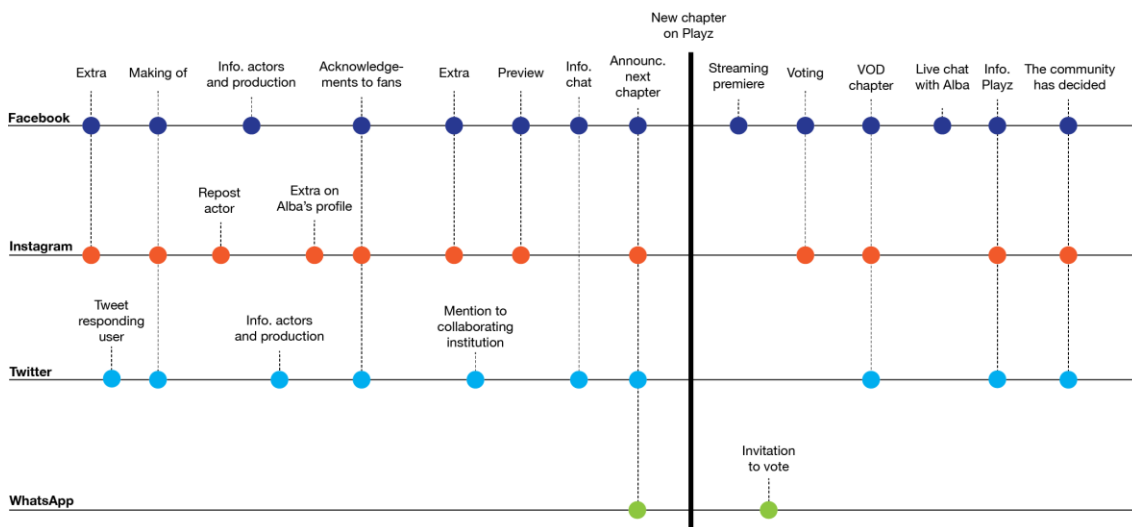
Graphic 3. Standard week of the transmedia development. Source: authors' own creation.

4.2. Series consumption

After getting acquainted with the composition of the transmedia universe of *Si fueras tú*, the consumption of the series by the audience was analysed. Based on the interviews conducted, it is concluded that the feeling of success in TVE is evident. The values obtained by *Si fueras tú* are the best among all products launched by Playz up until the moment this study concluded. During its

broadcast, there were 944.486 unique visitors that consumed contents of the series in RTVE.es. Undoubtedly, the success of the series also entails the success for Playz since 70.5% of these users entered for the first time on the web of RTVE. It is also worth mentioning that Instagram was the starring support of the fiction since it reached 76.700 followers. Besides, it also promoted a traffic of users towards the website of RTVE.es. From all the visits of new users that accessed contents of *Si fueras tú* from the social networks, almost 90% (89.7%) comes from Instagram. Up until today, the transmedia series had almost 7.7 million of views in the group of distribution platforms and 71% of its public are younger than 34 years old. From this number, almost 1.6 million come from watching the movie.

The data about the live consumption on RTVE.es and on Facebook –where they launched the weekly streaming– are very similar, with a slight drop between chapter 3 and chapter 5, recovering after chapter 6. The chapter 7 exceeded the rest by far and chapter 8, the last one, recovered the level of the previous ones, slightly above. Out of the eight chapters: three of them were viewed live more on Facebook while after chapter 5, the preference of spectators concentrated in the website of RTVE.

On the other hand, the on demand views (web and YouTube) regarding the deferred consumption on the same day and the next day show another evolution: the line is clearly ascendant. Only the chapter 4 breached the increasing trend. On the other hand, until chapter 4 most part of views occurred on the web, while from chapter 6 the data in both platforms are similar. The metrics show that YouTube increased the number of on demand users as the fiction developed up to the point that the last chapter practically equalled the views of RTVE (103.480 against 103.637 spectators, respectively). However, in both platforms, a progressive increase in most part of chapters is observed, since on RTVE.es there was a shift from 52.342 in the first episode to 103.637 in the last one, while on YouTube the increase was even more noticeable since it started with 1.250 and reached 103.480.
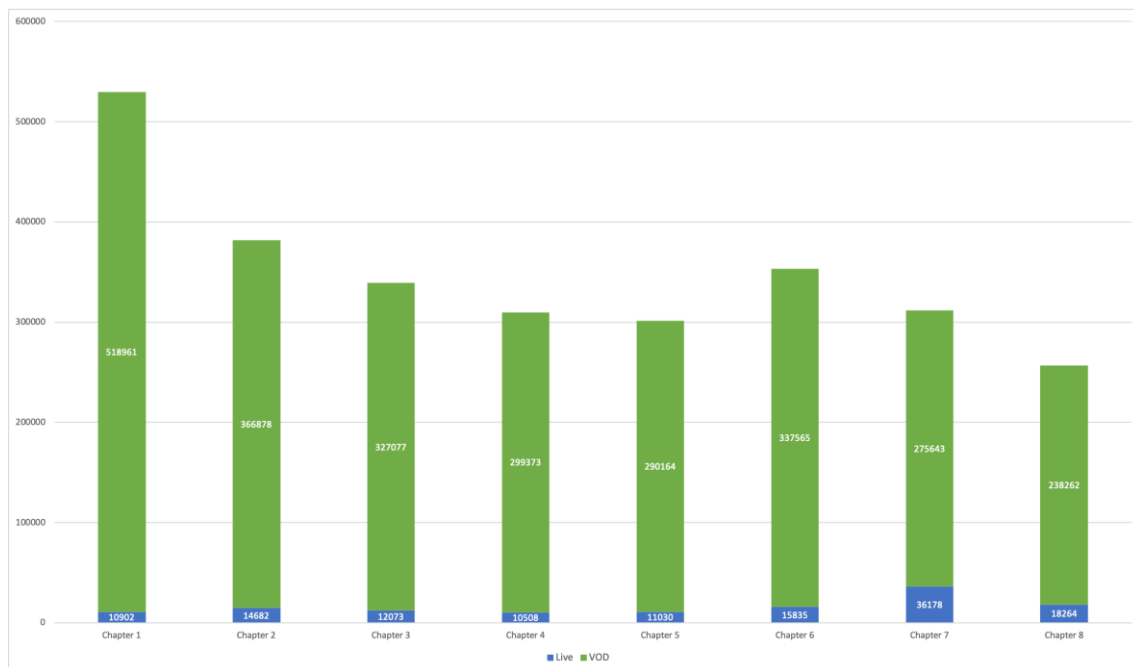

Graphic 4. Views of complete chapters (live and deferred –VOD–). Authors' own creation based on RTVE data.

Another one of the indicators of interest is the accumulated volume of views of complete chapters, namely, live views on the two platforms (RTVE.es and Facebook) and deferred views (RTVE.es and YouTube). In total, there were 2.783.395 views until 1 November, of which 52.3% came from the RTVE website, 46% from YouTube and 1.7% from Facebook. Observing the data per chapters, the series shows a certain stability inside a progressive drop. Chapter 1 reached the 529.863 views and the second one reached 381.560, becoming the most viewed. After this point, there was a drop until the 256.526 views of the final chapter. The metrics about unique visitors per chapter reflect a similar evolution.

These data show it is a series of clear deferred consumption. The number of users who watch this fiction live was noticeably inferior in all the chapters versus those who consumed it at a later time. This deferred view occurs mainly during the first 24 hours, which is the time frame where the public can vote about the alternative ends.

Another noteworthy data (graphic 5) is that the consumption is mainly done using mobile phones (56.1%), compared to 9.3% of tablets. Namely, mobile devices are the main source of views traffic of this series.
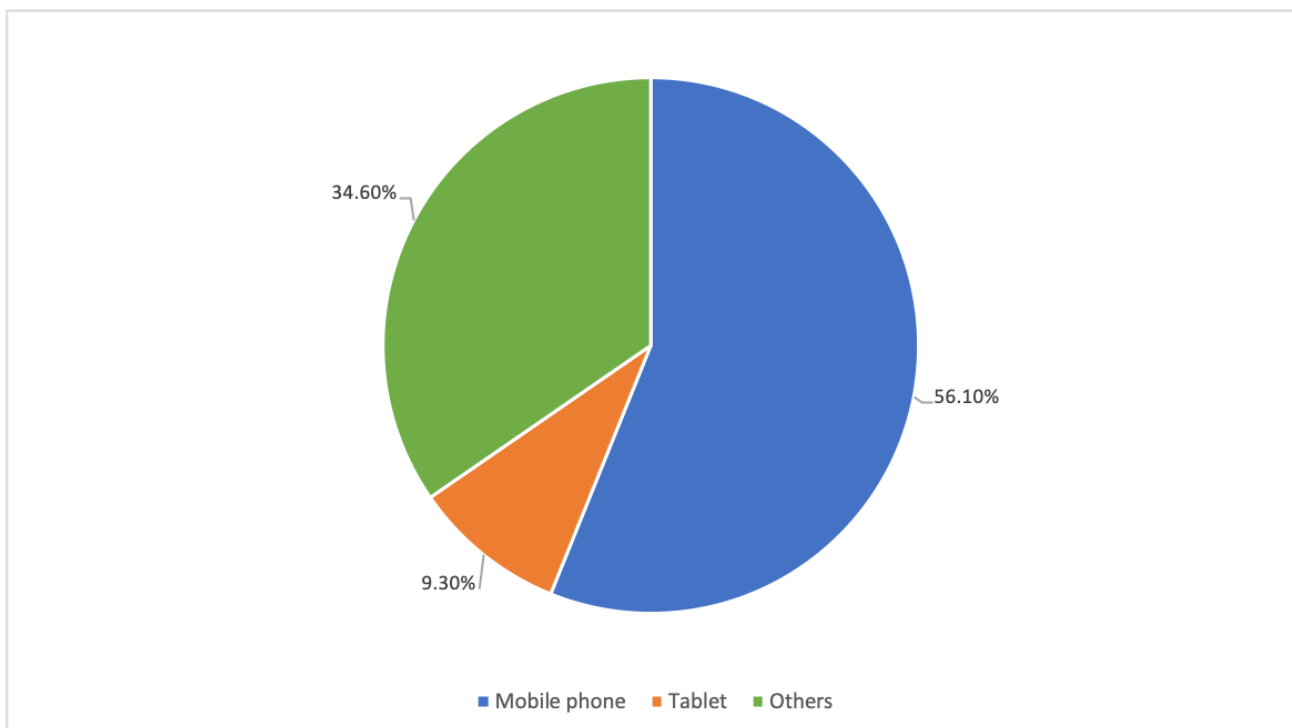

Graphic 5. Access device to the content of *Si fueras tú*. Authors' own creation from RTVE data.

Regarding live chats with Alba on Facebook after the premiere of every chapter between 1 and 7, there is a progressive drop except for chapter 6. The chapter 1 reached 42.941 live reproductions and the last chat, after chapter 7, accumulated 5.587. The average viewing time is low: between 41 seconds in chapter 7 and 16 seconds in chapter 4.

The transmedia proposal of the series used different platforms, gathering most of contents in the website of RTVE. Therefore, there is an interest in knowing the user profile and identifying the origin of the traffic towards that space. From a total of 944.486 unique users in RTVE.es, between 29 August and 6 November, 29.5% were recurrent and 70.5% were new users, one of the most significant data

about *Si fueras tú*. 49.9% of visitors came through browsers, a 39.8% from social networks, the rest through direct traffic or links. From the traffic originated on social networks, 89.7% comes from Instagram -social network where the target public of the series is identified with greater accuracy in this time–, 8.3% from Facebook and the rest from YouTube and Twitter.

The video is the main content across the different platforms, reproductions have changed through the weeks, showing their highest peak in the release of chapter 6, which reached a total of 1.014.055 reproductions, being YouTube the main source, followed by RTVE.es. Regarding the volume of reproductions per platform, during the broadcasting period, YouTube was the one that contributed the most, in second place there was Instagram and, then followed by the RTVE website and Facebook. Regarding the distribution of the video consumption across the week, the data show a similar pattern in all of them: the peak on the broadcasting day and then a progressive drop the rest of the week –the 3 or 4 last days of the week show much lower and similar data–.
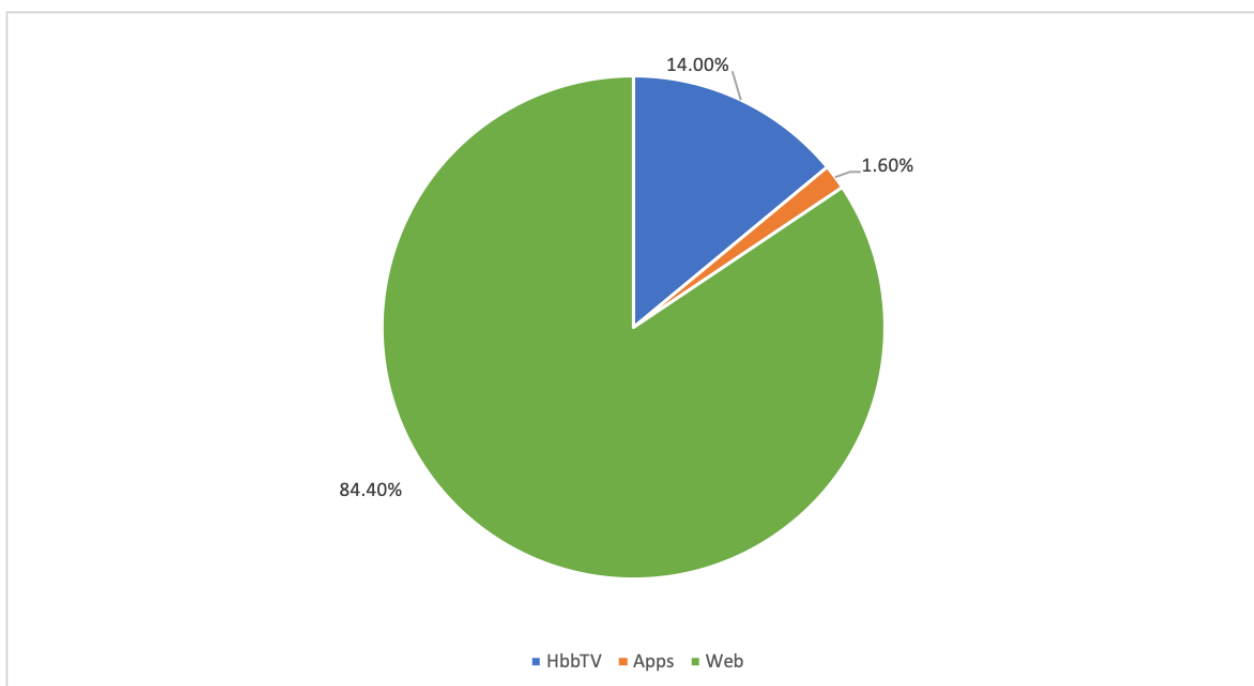

Graphic 6. Consumption platform of *Si fueras tú*. Authors' own creation from RTVE data.

The transmedia product entails a challenge by each one of the platform where the content is placed, because different publics with different habits are identified depending on the access route or the consumption device. The accumulated traffic to contents on RTVE.es was mainly through the website (84.4%), HbbTV (14.0%) and apps (1.6%); coming from browsers (46.6%) and social networks (42.8%); and with access from the mobile phone (56.1%), tablet (9.3%) and a considerable remaining range assigned to "others". Therefore, the standard user accessed through the website, through the mobile phone and using browsers or social networks.

The retention of users allows knowing the behaviour of those who have accessed previously. Thus, 13.1% of the users who consumed video from *Si fueras tú* on the first week of broadcast, also did so in the last week. The retention keeps decreasing as weeks progress. Regarding the consumption of users on RTVE.es, 10.3% watched the content of *Estoy vivo*, 6.2% of 'MasterChef Celebrity *2*' and 6.0% of *El Ministerio del Tiempo*.

Lastly, the lists created on Spotify –a soundtrack list and another one with Alba's preferred music of– accumulated 357 and 266 followers respectively; the WhatsApp service reached the 8.900 users; and 576 individuals participated in the contest to attend the filming of chapter 7.

0.50%
10.10%
42.80%
46.60%

■ Links ■ Live ■ Browsers ■ Social networks
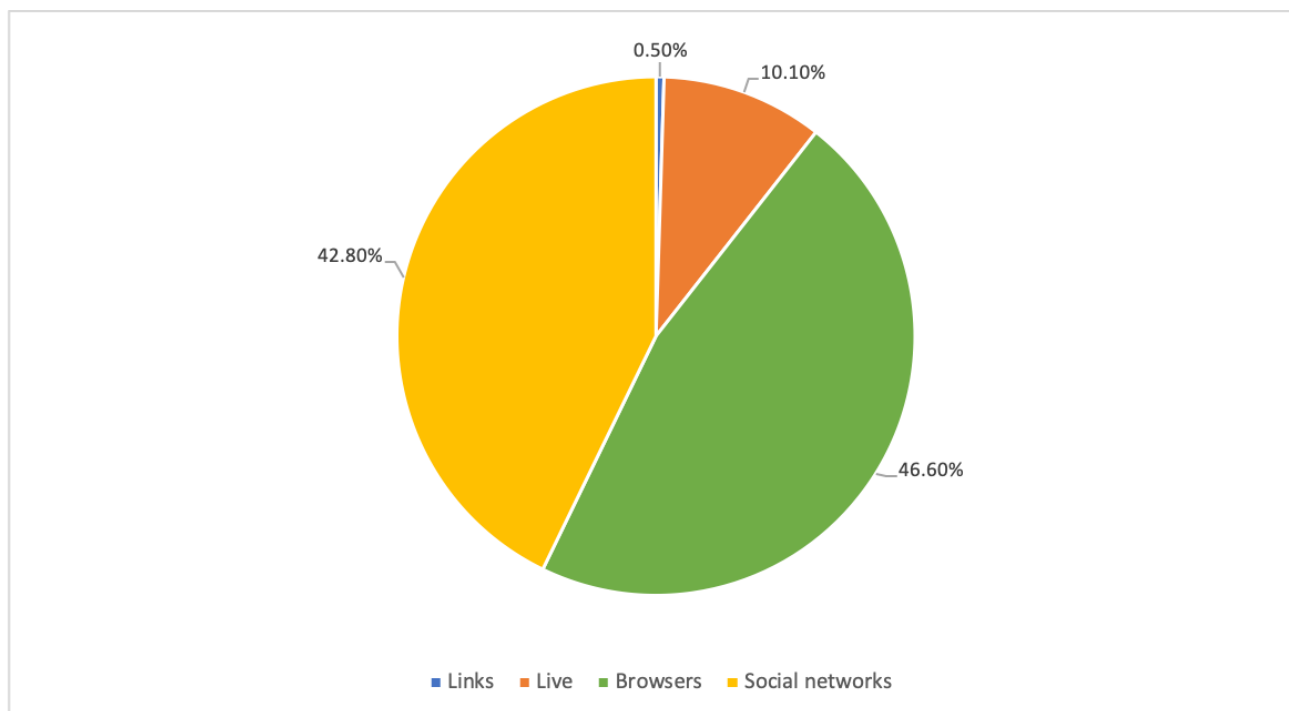
Graphic 7. Origin of the traffic of *Si fueras tú* on RTVE.es. Authors' own creation from RTVE data.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Once the transmedia universe of the webseries was examined through the description of the platforms and media selected and the possibilities of interactions offered (P.I.1), as well as the analysis of the actions developed from the production of the series to promote interactivity and participation of the transmedia audience (P.I.2), the following conclusions were elaborated. Firstly, it is considered that the intrinsic nature, features and dynamics typical of each media should be further exploited in order to avoid the high coincidence of contents detected, which may hinder browsing and experimentation of users across platforms. In such a way that the movement of users between these could be benefited and favour the creation of community around the product. A proof of it is that the contents that worked best are the most singular in each platform (for instance Facebook Live or votings).

While in other transmedia products, each platform or medium can try to attract a different potential audience, in this case it is not observed that it has been so, since contents were reiterated on the two main platforms (Facebook and Instagram). To avoid that, when switching from one platform another, there are introduced elements that interrupt the consumption of the audiovisual product, the fidelization strategies on each one must be very strong and solid. Therefore, it should be allowed that each platform could behave as an autonomous access route with exclusive material but that could also enable each user to establish connections with the rest of media.

Among the platforms, the role of YouTube regarding the deferred consumption of the web series is noteworthy: it becomes one of the first sources for viewing, even above the RTVE website. In addition, as the web series progresses, it consolidates as main platform for viewing in the accumulated data of video reproductions, equalling the number of RTVE spectators in relation to complete chapters

viewed. The case of *Si fueras tú* suggests the contraposition of an interactive transmedia strategy before the dynamics of conventional television, linked to a linear and regular broadcast. As a consequence, beyond the good result of the deferred consumption, the viewing of the webseries outside the active period is senseless, because the strategy performed on social networks and complementary platforms is paused once the launching of the series comes to an end.

Regarding the public of the web series across the different platforms, it is observed that it is mainly female in all of them, although the age ranges vary in relation to the platform of reference, with pre-eminence of the age range between 18 and 24 years old.

Secondly, the case analysed outstands because the two elements that build transmedia products, the narrative and interactivity, do not progress in a parallel manner, but instead the narrative of the series is built from the interactivity and participation of the user.

In third place, a deficient use of the personal profile of the protagonist, Alba, was identified due to showing a very low activity in WhatsApp, Instagram or Spotify, wasting the direct communication between the character and the audience.

The transmedia strategy is very interesting for creating clusters of consumers loyal to the audiovisual product. However, in this case it was detected that the community around the audiovisual product faded and a part of the users of the web series stopped following official profiles after the broadcast ended. The volatility of the audience hinders the consolidation of the publics' fidelization processes, therefore it is of great interest to know what the lifecycle of the audiovisual product is, beyond the broadcasting period, in order to perform a follow-up of the audience accessing to the web series once it concludes.

In order to summarize the criteria that support a transmedia relationship between the audience, the narrative universe and the production, based on the case study of *Si fueras tú*, the following key issues mentioned in the analysis are described:

1. Content: the platforms must be unique, complementary and constitute into access routes to the story; there must be a strategy for the conception of a transmedia consumption.
2. Audience: there is an adjustment to the target public of each platform and these are fidelization routes for the public.
3. Participation: it is a defining element of the transmedia proposal, either planned or spontaneous, showing levels of interactivity between the user and the product.
4. Temporal approach: the broadcasting strategy favours a regular consumption, either live or after the premiere.
5. Consumption data for the assessment of success compared to expectations: views, devices, profiles, recall and ROI.

Starting a transmedia project is always more adventurous, in terms of return on investment, than a conventional audiovisual product. Let's recall that these native digital publics live distanced from conventional television, and hence the mother ship is not the conventional television broadcast. *Si fueras tú* is clearly a commitment of RTVE for making products that are innovative and close to younger publics, with a multiarea mediatic behaviour, and with profiles on several social networks. However, RTVE as a public network, has the advantage of not being tyrannized by the economic profitability of its own production, which allows to present to the public riskier projects than those of other business groups such as *Mediaset España* or *Atresmedia*.

After the interviews were conducted and the fieldwork was completed, an answer to the research question can be given (P.I.3) and conclude that, today, there is not a standard metric able to measure the totality of the transmedia audience. Each media and platform has its own analysis metrics, which hinders the possibility of stablishing a single data comprising the transmedia audience as a whole. The complexity of this measurement is evident because the fact of constituting across different media and platforms requires the collaboration of several stakeholders, not always inclined to the public communication of data when imposing protection barriers that limit the access through its API. Moreover, it would need a standardizing of methodologies and metrics that would flow into the development of a multiplatform measurement system.

As a consequence, it would be necessary to install other ways of measurement where not only the audiovisual consumption of the audience was taken into account as evidenced in the case of *El Ministerio del Tiempo,* but consider also other actions that were impossible to do before (share, comment, retweet or save). The experience of the audience in the current transmedia environments allow them to interact, create and perform different actions that were impossible for the audiences in the past. Hence, it is no longer interesting to only know the audience quantitatively but also know the qualitative dimension as well since it is the most relevant in this new context. Therefore, the measurement of the transmedia audience shouldn't be done by samples like the conventional television audience but actual instead, by applying 'Big Data' analysis techniques that allow to trace the activity of each user in each one of the platforms and media composing the transmedia universe in order to observe how they interact with each one and what is the contribution of each one of them to the user experience. This way, the quantitative as well as the qualitative dimension of this new audience would be assessed across the platforms used.

Therefore, to respond to the research question (P.I.4) about the possibility to determine whether an audiovisual product like this web series has been a success or a failure depending on the audience, as it is usually done in the conventional television to decide its renewal, wouldn't be currently possible due to:

On the one hand, since they are contents dissociated from traditional programming schedules, the aim is not to gather the greatest number of spectators compared to the rival network since in this type of consumption there is no direct competition between television spaces like in conventional television measurements.

On the other hand, from the production of the web series, they would have to respond to other questions beforehand, for instance: What number of web series reproductions would be considered satisfactory? What number of followers could be considered enough?, Within what period would the transmedia audience be measured?, Whom it is targeted to?, etc… The answer to these questions would allow performing the most appropriate assessments about the final results of the audience of this web series.

In the following studies, it would be useful to analyse the re-elaboration and re-appropriation processes by the audience that were not treated in this paper, since they were not part of the web series and exceeded the objective proposed.

In short, the analysis and measurement of the transmedia audience is presented as a challenge for the future that the audiovisual sector must face swiftly considering the proliferation of transmediatic productions witnessed over the past few years.

6. Notes

[1] The European project Eurotransmedia about the measurement of audiences is available for review at: https://cordis.europa.eu/result/rcn/194555_en.html.

[2] Each chapter lasted about 10 minutes except for the first chapter (20 minutes) and the final tv-movie (80 minutes). The chapters were issued weekly from 11 September to 30 October, 2017.

[3] The follow-up of all platforms included the active period of the series: from the start of the activity on 4 August, 2017, with the profiles activation, up to 9 December, after the broadcasting of the tv-movie. The specific data, like the number of views, comments or total followers, correspond to the closure of the series on 9 December, 2017. On the other hand, the information regarding votings was published by the series after the closure of the public's participation period, 24 hours after the premiere of each chapter. Regarding the data provided by RTVE regarding the website's traffic, unique visitors and videos reproductions, these range from the start of the series up to a week after the broadcast of the last chapter.

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