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‘Production companies’ concentration and international capital in commercial Spanish television: Antena 3 and TeleCinco

Margarita Medina-Nieto [] Journalism Department II, Universidad de Sevilla (Spain) - marmednie@alum.us.es

Aurora Labio-Bernal [[CV](#)] [] Journalism Department II, Universidad de Sevilla (Spain) - auroralabio@us.es

Abstracts

Introduction. This paper presents a quantitative analysis of the production companies in Spanish commercial television for the channels Antena 3 (Atresmedia Televisión) and TeleCinco (Mediaset España), which are the two private television networks with the greatest audience share in Spain. **Methods.** A quantitative method was used to analyze the programming grid of an 8-day sample based on a content analysis. **Results and discussion.** The paper shows that the production companies that appeared in both channels are linked in most times with international conglomerates and that, on the contrary, small production companies have scarce presence. **Conclusion.** The tendency of outsourcing contents fosters a high penetration of transnational groups and international capital sources in the production of Spanish TV programs, which impedes formats created in Spain, and consequentially, the presence of national production companies.

Keywords

Television; production companies; media concentration; media groups; private television; Spain.

Contents

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the critique of capitalism and critical globalization studies has gained importance in the context of communication and media studies. A critical perspective on the political economy of communication is the theoretical foundation for this study. Political economy is centered on

"describing and examining the meaning of the institutions —especially the businesses and governments— who are responsible for the production, distribution and exchange of communication merchandise and the regulation of the communication market" (Mosco, 2006: 67). This perspective is centered on the study of power relationships in for-profit media (Herman & Chomsky 2008; Herman & McChesney, 1997; McChesney, 2008, 2002, 2000, 1998: 3; Mosco, 1996; Schiller, 1996, 1973). As Mosco argues (2011: 77), the critical analysis of this sector demonstrates the persistence and increase in media concentration, commodification and the dominance of the rich countries in the global economy. This assumption has been maintained since last century: Herman and McChesney (1997: 104) recognized that global media market is dominated by around ten conglomerates —vertically integrated— settled in the United States.

These power relationships are not only an economic drift but they constitute a fundamental issue for democracy because the economic power could become a political power threatening the functioning of democracy. In fact, concentration and media power are basic characteristics of the democratic system (Meier, 2005: 21–22, 42). We adapt this critical and structural focus to the case of Spain, where we demonstrate that television production companies are highly dependent on international capital and also highly concentrated/integrated within transnational companies. We also show that the television production market in Spain is based on a financial model that reaffirms the control of a small group of producers (production companies), establishing an oligopoly in the Spanish media sector. This concentration of telecommunications producers is enabled by the relationships among politics, business, economic interests, and communication corporations (Albert, 2014: 109–110; McChesney, 2002: 243).

This paper investigates the television production companies that are linked to the most important television channels in Spain. In the last decades, the playing field has been altered in this socially influential and economically important sector. As Gillian Doyle notes (2017: 2), "over recent years, transformations have taken place in the structure of ownership of the television production sector in the United Kingdom and elsewhere across Europe characterized by consolidation, takeovers, and the growing controlling presence of non-domestic parent groups." The emergence of DTT (Digital Terrestrial Television) has increased the number of television channels; however, in some cases it has also facilitated the concentration of different television channels into big networks or communication groups. Such is the case of the Spanish television duopoly, where only two communication groups operate thirteen different private channels. These are AtresMedia Televisión (*AtresMedia Television*), which operates six channels, and Mediaset España Comunicación (*Mediaset Communication Spain*), which owns seven (Table 1).

These two private groups, which control thirteen channels, get the majority of the audience share in commercial television in Spain. Table 1 shows that the amount of the audience index of both groups gathers around sixty percent of total commercial television share (specifically 57.9 percent, according to data of 2016). And this tendency has kept going over last years since the duopoly was set up in the Spanish TV.

Besides these two platforms, the other actor that counteracts the situation of a private oligopoly is the Public Service television in Spain, Televisión Española (*Spanish Television*), which constituted an amount of 16.8 percent (in 2016) of the audience share considering its five channels, a figure that is more than ten points from the second private group (AtresMedia). The sum of the two private groups plus the public broadcasting network is 74.7 percent of total share in Spanish TV. This means that three groups—two private and one public—control eighteen different channels and they practically monopolize almost the whole television free-to-air consumption with three quarters of the audience share.

Table 1. Channels, groups and total day audience share in AtresMedia and Mediaset in 2016

CHANNEL	Audience share by channel (%)	GROUP	Audience share by group (%)
Antena 3	12.8	AtresMedia Televisión	27.2
LaSexta	7.1		
Neox	2.5		
Nova	2.2		
Mega	1.8		
Atres Series	0.8		
TeleCinco	14.4	Mediaset España Comunicación	30.7
Cuatro	6.5		
FDF	3.2		
Divinity	2.3		
Boing	1.5		
Energy	1.9		
Be Mad	0.6*		
			57.9

**Be Mad* started its broadcasting service in May 2016. *Source:* KantarMedia

The tendency of these channels —which belong to only two platforms— is to broadcast content provided by subsidiaries or production companies that belong to a small number of communication groups and transnational media conglomerates. The result is a Spanish television full of foreign programs in the possession of only a few owners and broadcasted by a few networks. In fact, "Spanish broadcasters originally focused on the production of television content," but recently "there has been a gradual outsourcing of the production phase" (Fernández-Quijada, 2013: 101). The outsourcing of television content is the focus of our study because it provides foreign corporations unhindered access to Spanish television.

2. Duopoly in Spanish Commercial Television

Before analyzing the production of the two major Spanish private television channels and its tendency towards outsourcing content, it is important to provide a brief history of the Spanish television industry. This will allow us to understand the high level of media consolidation in the country and how this model has been set in Spain.

The high level of media consolidation in Spanish television resulted from communication policies implemented from the beginning of Spanish democracy after the transition from Franco's regime in 1975. Hallin and Mancini (2004: 89–90) situate Spain within a polarized pluralist model, meaning that Spanish media is highly dependent on political decisions and their connection to business interests (see also García Leiva, 2008: 204; Labio Bernal, 2006: 45–52). Since there is no governmental authority exclusively dedicated to regulating television in Spain (Bustamante, 2014: 31), whatever political party controls the government also oversees the regulatory decisions and policies related to media. This circumstance has resulted in the current private duopoly. For example, the Ley General Audiovisual (Spanish General Broadcasting Act, 2010) permits a single entity to own 100 percent of a media company and guaranteeing the principles for pluralism on the condition of the existence of at least three operators.

The DTT development strategy, established in 2005, marked the beginning of a "new structure for national television broadcasting license-holders, one where there were six private groups, with each operating a multiplex capable of containing up to four or five channels: Antena 3, TeleCinco, Cuatro, La Sexta, Veo TV, and Net TV." Analog signals were switched off in April 2010. Nevertheless, two out of six disappeared and the remaining started a strategy of fusions and concentration until the current landscape established in the Spanish TV. "From an external pluralism point of view, DTT has increased Spain's number of national television broadcasting players, even though the two new operators are part of already-established media groups" (Llorens, 2010: 853).

The crisis of the media sector and specifically, the crisis of big communication groups, such as Prisa and Mediapro-Imagina (González Pascual & Rodríguez Prieto, 2015: 73) were decisive to understand the takeovers that resulted in the current television duopoly (Bustamante, 2013: 274–475; García-Santamaría, 2013).

The platform Mediaset España Comunicación, which controls now seven different channels, was constituted when the takeover of Cuatro by TeleCinco took place in 2010. The main shareholder of the platform was Mediaset, the audiovisual subsidiary of the Italian holding company Fininvest, owned by Silvio Berlusconi, who is the majority shareholder of the company. Prisa had seventeen percent of the share, and two American financial and investment companies had forty percent of the stock: Fidelity Investments and the Tweedy Browne Company. These companies disappeared and Mediaset became the principal shareholder controlling the major part of the group.

Meanwhile, in September 2012, the same action happened in the platform Atresmedia: the channel La Sexta was taken up by the channel Antena 3, and the other agent of the duopoly was founded. The main shareholder in Atresmedia is still the Spanish-Italian group Planeta DeAgostini (made up by the Spanish company Planeta and the Italian De Agostini), with 41.7 percent of the stock. The second is the German RTL Group, which was linked to the conglomerate Bertelsmann through UFA Film, reaching 19.17 percent of the stock. Imagina, comprising several Spanish production companies, had 6.49 percent of the stock. The rest of the stock was distributed to minority shareholders, treasury shares and stock exchange options. Today the three groups remain on the stock market, with PlanetaDeAgostini holding the first position and ImaginaMedia, which is a Spanish production group, a little less.

At present the group Mediaset España Comunicación has two generalist channels: TeleCinco, started in 1989, and Cuatro, started in 2005. AtresMedia also has two generalist channels: Antena 3 merged in 1989, only a few months before TeleCinco, and La Sexta, which became part of AtresMedia in 2006. TeleCinco (Mediaset) and Antena 3 (AtresMedia) are by far the ones that gather largest shares (Table 1). In 2016, TeleCinco got an average of 14.4 percent of the share and Antena 3 commanded

12.8 percent. AtresMedia and Mediaset have other thematic channels with much lower shares. AtresMedia's thematic channels are: Neox, Nova, Mega, and Atres Series, and Mediaset's are: FDF, Boing, Divinity, Energy, and Be Mad (Table 1). All of these thematic channels in both platforms follow similar strategies while at the same time they are competitors (Medina, 2017; Prado, 2002). Besides the concentration process, this factor increases the lack of pluralism.

The audiovisual market in Spain is highly concentrated because only two communication groups get the majority of the advertising revenues and the audience share. According to data from 2016, AtresMedia and Mediaset own 94.8 percent of the total advertising revenue of Spanish commercial television and nearly 57 percent of the audience share (Infoadex, 2017; see Table 1). Other private operators, Net TV and Veo TV, were around in 2002, but ultimately they could not compete with Atresmedia Corporación and Mediaset España Comunicación. Veo TV and Net TV are now respectively owned by two powerful press media groups: Vocento (the owner of the national newspaper *ABC*) and UNEDISA (the owner of the national newspaper *El Mundo*) (Llorens, 2010: 853). Eventually, they stopped broadcasting (in 2008 and 2012, respectively) and began renting their signals to other communication groups getting very low audience indexes: Veo TV rents its signal to Discovery Networks and Mediapro, and Net TV to Disney Channel and Paramount Channel, both transnational production and distribution companies.

This paper analyzes the two channels with the largest audience share. In the AtresMedia group this is Antena 3, and in the Mediaset group TeleCinco. The group Mediaset, which operates seven channels, got a total of 918 million euros from advertising revenues. The group AtresMedia, which operates six channels, entered about 893 million euros from advertising revenues. Televisión Española (Spanish Television) —the public broadcaster in Spain, which operates five channels— counteracts this private duopoly, but the audience share for public broadcasting is considerably lower than for private platforms, and the influence index of those channels is lesser.

We selected the two most watched channels, Antena 3 and TeleCinco, to analyze the production companies that produced their content, to measure levels of production companies' concentration and its relation to capital investment. According to this, D'Arma and Labio (2017: 1-2) argue in a work comparing the Italian and Spanish public television, that while the public broadcasting system is still generally "occupying a prominent place in national media landscapes, many of these organizations have experienced a decline in recent years both in income, as public funding has either stagnated or shrunk in the aftermath of the global financial crisis of 2008."

Fernández-Quijada (2009) made a diagnosis of the independent production companies at Cuatro and La Sexta, the two other chains that are part of Mediaset España Comunicación and Atresmedia Corporación (Table 1). The study confirmed a high level of consolidation. His study also showed that the media consolidation has an impact on the television broadcasters' hiring policies that could harm independent production companies thereby limiting their "possibilities for developing market share." (Fernández-Quijada, 2009: 85).

3. Objectives

This paper explores the role of foreign agents —TV production companies— that create and/or sell most of the content to Spanish commercial television. We provide quantitative data with the aim of highlighting these figures, which leads to negative social effects of media concentration in Spain. As Bagdikian argues (2004), having a few conglomerates controlling the media prevents the free broadcasting of content. By controlling flows of information, capitalism produces media organizations with a significant amount of centralized power, capable of setting agendas and becoming highly influential with audiences (Schiller, 2000; Smythe, 1989).

In this paper, we aim to demonstrate that these flows of content towards consolidation and the establishment of foreign capital take place in many cases of the TV content. The hypothesis of the study is that Spanish TV capital is highly linked to international capital, specifically to media conglomerates, which could have significant repercussions for the free flow of information. The questions we expect to answer are:

- 1) What are the dominant production companies in TeleCinco and Antena 3?
- 2) Is there media concentration based on conglomerates or production companies related to these two channels?
- 3) What is the national origin of those production companies or conglomerates? Is there a concentration of capital in some nationalities more than others?

The primary objectives of this study are:

- 1) To analyze the programming grid of the two channels to identify their production companies.
- 2) To show the degree of concentration in private television production companies in Spain.
- 3) To identify the nationalities of the companies that supply content to Antena 3 and TeleCinco.

4. Methods

A quantitative method was used in this study. Frequency analysis was chosen (Krippendorff, 2004). The two channels targeting a general audience were selected since they had the highest ratings. A systematically random sampling of the days from February 1 to March 1 was used to build the database. The sampling began on February 1, 2016; every three days thereafter, we applied a criterion of random selection. The dates selected were: February 1 (Wednesday), February 5 (Sunday), February 9 (Thursday), February 13 (Monday), February 17 (Friday), 21 February (Tuesday), 25 February (Saturday), and 1 March (Wednesday).

The sample consisted in 11,530 minutes of broadcasting, 1,440 (24 hours) multiplied by eight days, equals 11,520 minutes. The coding units were each minute. We analyzed the television schedule in the sample using a list of programs, their duration, the name of the producer, the name of the parent owner if any, their classification (externally produced or acquired) and the nationality of the production company.

First, we classified each program into three categories: in-house production, external production (which includes independent production and co-productions) and acquisition (Table 2). The definition of each type of television production changes depending on the country and the legal framework in which it is produced. Following Fernández-Quijada (2013) we define both co-production and independent production as an "external production." Since one of the aims was to demonstrate the extent of international capital in Spanish TV production companies and therefore in Spanish TV broadcasting spaces, we only studied the externally produced (internal and independent —actual production—) and acquired programs. The results of each type of production are shown in Table 3. External production, which gathers co-production and independent, can refer to foreign content or national, while the acquired production usually refers to international global companies, mostly based in the United States. Thus, only the internal own production is the one that guarantees a national production, and on the contrary, the acquired programs are the ones that tend to be bought to, in most cases, European and/or American producers. There is a relation between the type of TV productions and the origin of the content they produce.

Table 2. Definitions of TV productions

Production	Definition
In-house	A program produced by a broadcaster for subsequent broadcasting
External (independent and co-production)	A program made by a producer and founded in part or in whole by a broadcaster. A variant of external production is co-production, when the program is made by the broadcaster and more than one firm. Independent production is another variant characterized by the fact that it is produced by firms that in accordance with the legislation in force in each territory, can be considered as independent.
Acquisition	A production that a broadcaster buys from the program market.

Source: Fernández-Quijada, 2013: 106.

Programs made by the channel using its own resources were classified as in-house production. Since no production company took part in the process of creating in-house programs, those programs were not included in our study, although they allowed us to see how limited programs made in-house are and how dependent on private production companies Spanish commercial TV is. The programs that were made by a production company (or more than one, as a co-production) and also partially by the channels or broadcasters will be tagged as external production. The third type is acquired production, which includes the programs made completely by one (or more) production company with no input from the broadcaster or TV channel, acquiring the rights for programming towards different audiences.

Table 3. Levels of in-house production, external production and acquisition in Antena 3 and TeleCinco

ANTENA 3			TELECINCO		
IN-HOUSE PRODUCTION	EXTERNAL PRODUCTION	ACQUISITION	IN-HOUSE PRODUCTION	EXTERNAL PRODUCTION	ACQUISITION
30%	45%	25%	15%	80%	5%
	70%			85%	

Once we classified the programs, we identified the production company that created each and whatever communication group(s) or transnational conglomerates, if any, that owned them in order to determine the degree of media concentration. We calculated the proportion (percentages) of the production company that belonged to the conglomerate (Spanish or foreign), also factoring in the duration of program space. Then, we calculated the capital source, according to the percentages of ownership and concentration in each company and producer to get the results.

5. Results

The first analysis made was the classification of each program. The analysis of the sampled spaces shows that only a small percentage of the broadcast spaces are in-house production for both cases (Table 3), although in-house production is larger (double time) in Antena 3 (thirty percent) than in TeleCinco (fifteen percent).

Higher levels of in-house production would guarantee no foreign capital in the production phase. Thus,

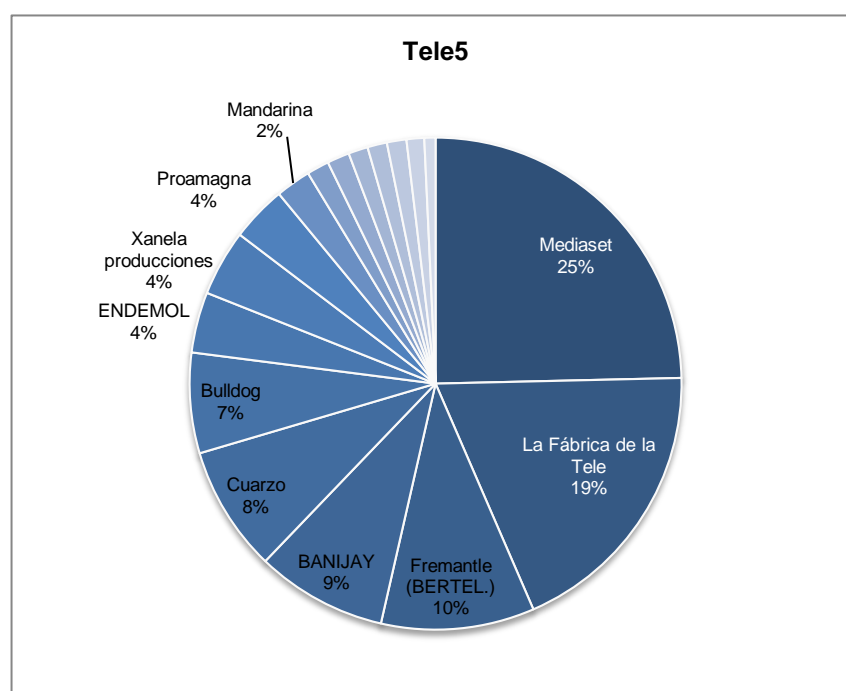
there is a great lack of internal native-owned production in the Spanish private channels. This trend is also taking place in the Public Broadcasting Television. In fact, a work made by Medina (2018) shows that the public television in Spain does not fulfill the minimum quotas set for the levels of in-house production: at least 20% of total time has to be in-house production. These low levels of Spanish in-house production programs do increase the opportunity for transnational foreign companies to participate in the creation of content.

In addition, acquisition could foster the penetration of transnational conglomerates in a more severe way than the independent or internal production. However, these two channels do not have very high proportions (25% and 5% each) than other of their thematic channels that have a specific programming.

5.1. Concentration in a few production companies

To study the oligopolistic concentration that takes place in Spanish production market we consider the levels of external production and acquisition, leaving aside in-house production, which is made completely by the broadcaster (Antena 3 or TeleCinco) and has no place in the study (Table 3).

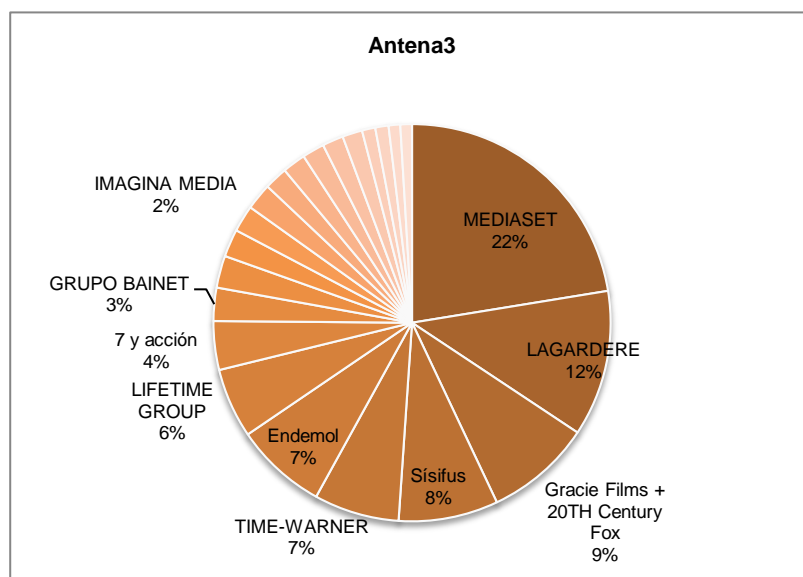
Figure 1. Proportional distribution of production plants in Anten3



Source: own production

Figures 1 and 2 clearly show that both channels are heavily dependent on a few production companies, so there is a production companies' concentration. First, it is notable that the production company Mediaset is the leading company in both channels with a presence of twenty-two percent in Antena 3 (Fig. 1) and a quarter (twenty-five percent) in TeleCinco (Fig. 2). Mediaset España Comunicación is the owner (parent) of the channel TeleCinco and the owner of the producer Mediaset. However, it is remarkable that even in its competitor, Antena 3, this production company leads by far the programming grid in terms of time (twenty-two percent).

Figure 2. Proportional distribution of women producers in Telecinco



Source: own production

The second point to highlight is that in Antena 3 only four producers —Mediaset, Lagardère, Gracie Films along with 20th Century Fox and Sísifus— make a half of total time (fifty-one percent). In addition, in TeleCinco the levels of concentration are more apparent because only three producers make fifty-four percent of total time. SiSifús (Antena 3) (Fig. 1) is the only producer that is not cross-owned by a group and has a notable presence. The company La Fábrica de la Tele (TeleCinco) (Fig. 2) is thirty percent owned by Mediaset España Comunicación and Mediaset, and Lagardère, Bertelsmann and Twentieth Century Fox are big conglomerates or big transnational media groups that have subsidiaries production companies under their command. In Table 4 the results are put together to analyze the percentages of both channels to see the predominance of some companies in both channels.

Programs made with a company's own resources represent less than a third (thirty percent) in Antena 3 and less than a fifth in TeleCinco (fifteen percent) (see Table 3). Table 4 shows proportionally, by time of broadcasting, that the first places are occupied by big international producers that in most cases have their capital diversified in different countries and in diverse sectors of production apart from the audiovisual industry. Only a small percentage of the contents are made by small foreign producers and/or Spanish production companies, such as Bainet (1%), 7 y Acción (1%), Proamagna (2%) or Xanela (2%).

The most important group that controls the major part of the total time analyzed is, by far, Mediaset —the subsidiary of the broadcaster Mediaset Italia that produces content for the channels operated by Mediaset España Comunicación— with a notable twenty-four percent (Figs. 1 and 2, and Table 4). The second place corresponds to a Spanish production company, La Fábrica de la Tele, which makes low-cost content for Mediaset in general and for the channel TeleCinco in particular. This producer is thirty percent owned by Mediaset, as we have already noted, so the majority (seventy percent) is not owned by the group, whereby it appears in the second position.

According to this, TeleCinco has developed a strategy of using “trusted producers” and the channel has shareholdings in several producers in exchange for exclusivity. In exchange for working

exclusively, TeleCinco offers them a guaranteed minimum production volume (Fernández-Quijada, 2013: 114). These producers are Mandarina Producciones (one percent) and La Fábrica de la Tele (eleven percent) (Table 4).

Table 4. Levels of concentration of the external production and acquisition in Antena 3 and TeleCinco

PRODUCTION COMPANY or COMMUNICATION GROUP	%
MEDIASET	24
La Fábrica de la Tele	11
BERTELSMANN	6
LAGARDÈRE	5
BANIJAY	5
Cuarzo Producciones	5
ENDEMOL	5
Bulldog	4
Gracie Films + 20 th Century Fox	3
Sisifús	3
TIME-WARNER	2
Xanela Producciones	2
A+E GROUP	2
Proamagna	2
7 y Acción	1
MANDARINA	1
BAINET Grupo	1
Boomerang TV	1
1% or less	14

*Eurodelta and Zip Zap are both not standard production companies. They make musical programs broadcasted in early morning hours due to low audience ratings and they were not part of the data analysis [1].

Six percent of total time is controlled by the Bertelsmann group, the owner of the producer FremantleMedia. The German conglomerate Bertelsmann is in third position. This transnational group reaches these figures (six percent) thanks to the British company FremantleMedia, which is completely owned by the German conglomerate. Five percent is controlled by French conglomerate Lagardère, (fourth position), through the company Boomerang TV, which belongs eighty-two percent to the conglomerate (Table 4).

Banijay is a global media group producer with wide presence in different counties of the European Union. It recently owned more than half of the Spanish company Cuarzo Producciones and has five percent of total time analyzed in the sample. Cuarzo Producciones, which used to be a small Spanish producer, is now majority-owned (fifty-one percent) by Banijay Group, a French global media group. Thus, we have to scroll down to position eight with Bulldog Producciones, a small Spanish producer. It is the first one in the list that is not owned by a broadcaster, by another group or transnational conglomerate. This producer, however, does not have an important presence in Spain.

It is remarkable that Grupo Mediaset—which is the broadcaster of the channel TeleCinco and also has a subsidiary to produce some programs—has owned seventy-five percent of Endemol since 2012. That is why Endemol appears in seventh place and it is the reason why Mediaset leads the ranking. Although Endemol Shine broadcast numerous minutes during the sample, either in Antena 3 (through Endemol Shine Iberia and the Spanish Diagonal TV, which now belongs 100 percent to Endemol since 2004) and in TeleCinco (through Zeppelin TV, also acquired by Endemol in 2004). They belong seventy-five percent to Mediaset. Specifically, Endemol broadcasted 1,660 minutes in Antena 3 and 1,305 in TeleCinco, which makes up 2,965 minutes. However, seventy-five percent of 2,965 minutes are owned by Mediaset, which increases to twenty-one percent the pie slice of Mediaset.

As a lesser presence, important transnational companies take place in the sample such as the conglomerate Time-Warner, with a presence of about two percent of total time, as well as A+E Group, and the company 21st Century Fox takes place along with Gracie Films (three percent). Thus, Table 4 shows a larger presence of big production companies (Mediaset, Bertelsmann, Lagardère, Banijay, Endemol, Time-Warner, and A+E Group), in comparison with small companies, which is a trend. This is the reason why a great penetration of foreign capital dominates the whole space of production and broadcasting contents on television. However, the biggest conglomerates, Time-Warner, A+E, 21st Century Fox, have presence through acquisitions, while the Europeans (Endemol, Banijay, Lagardère) penetrate through external productions.

5.2. Foreign capital in Spanish TV production

The analysis of the production companies' concentration was made by analyzing the different origins and nationality of each producer, including both external production and acquisitions. Table 4 indicates a high presence of big media groups, such is the case of Mediaset, Bertelsmann or Lagardère. Once we have analyzed the levels of ownership of all the producers that took place in the sample, we can deduce the origin of the capital of these communication groups and production companies. Every program was analyzed by length and the nationality of the producers was calculated.

We recognize that the largest percentage reflects Spanish capital—with approximately thirty percent in Antena 3 and fifty percent in TeleCinco—which makes an average of forty percent of Spanish contents (Table 5). However, this means that approximately sixty percent of the contents come from foreign capital. In particular, Italy leads (19.15 percent), followed by France (seventeen percent), the United States (twelve percent, only in Antena 3), Germany (5.38 percent), and the Netherlands (4.58 percent).

Table 5. Origins of the capital in production companies of Antena 3 and TeleCinco

	ESP	ITA	FRA	US	DEU	NLD	CAN	US + ESP + MAR	FRA + US
Antena 3	29.9 %	16.1 %	23%	23%	0	5.4%	2.6%	0	0
TeleCinco	50.1 %	22.2 %	10.8%	0	10.75%	3.75%	0	1.2%	1.2%
Average	40%	19.1 5%	17%	12%	5.38%	4.58 %	1.3%	0.6%	0.6%

Data show that although Spanish capital has a low presence, United States' capital also has a small representation, with a scarce twelve percent compared to other nationalities. Thus, foreign capital comes mainly from Europe (46.11 percent): Italy, France, Germany, and Netherlands. In a smaller proportion, it comes from English-speaking North-American countries (United States and Canada, with 13.3 percent).

US capital appears in a third position (twelve percent) but has no presence in Mediaset's channel TeleCinco. TeleCinco, at the most, had Canadian capital in its productions. Antena 3 bases its production on French (twenty-three percent), US-American (twenty-three percent), Italian (16.1 percent), and Dutch capital (5.4 percent), while TeleCinco favors Italian capital (22.2 percent) in the largest proportion, followed by French (10.8 percent), Dutch (3.75 percent), and German (10.75 percent) instead of Anglo-Saxon. The European presence is therefore important, as it reaches 46 percent versus thirteen percent of Canadian-American capital.

Although the objectives of this study did not include the quality of the contents made or acquired by these producers, we can affirm that the US-American presence is linked to fiction spaces through acquisitions, such as *The Simpsons* and several films. On the contrary, European groups are centered more specifically in game shows and info-show.

6. Discussion and conclusions

From the analysis of the international presence in Spanish television, it should be highlighted that the shareholding of the two major operators in Spain, AtresMedia and Mediaset, is Italian. As the producer Mediaset is the company that made most of the contents, the Italian nationality is the one that leads—behind the Spanish—the television space.

Mediaset España Comunicación is part of the company Mediaset, which belongs to the Italian magnate Silvio Berlusconi's holding Fininvest. Moreover, AtresMedia is owned by Planeta de Agostini (41.7 percent), which is made up of the Spanish company Planeta and the Italian company DeAgostini. AtresMedia's second shareholder is the German conglomerate Bertelsmann (19.2 percent). Therefore, this study shows that the Spanish audiovisual sector, in the cases of the most watched channels, is largely in the hands of Italian capital (19.15 percent). Table 4 shows that almost a fifth of the total broadcast time comes from the Italian production company Mediaset. Both private TV contents and broadcasters' shareholding are to a great extent controlled by Italian capital.

A major aim of this paper was to verify whether those mostly-foreign production companies that broadcast in Spain are concentrated in bigger communication groups. Data show that there is a high presence of production companies that belong to transnational companies (fifty-four percent). There is also a significant content concentration in the hands of international companies.

Connections with international capital and low levels of Spanish TV production are understandable due to gradual acquisitions by transnational conglomerates, such as Endemol (Dutch-American capital), Lagardère (French capital), and Banijay (French capital). These dynamics are characteristic of the system. Zeppelin TV and Diagonal TV were thriving independent Spanish producers that have eventually been owned by Endemol and, recently, in turn, by Mediaset (seventy-five percent), although nowadays belongs 50% to 21st Century Fox. Boomerang TV was also a Spanish production company that was acquired (eighty-two percent) by the French conglomerate Lagardère in 2012.

It must be noted that the percentage of American content on TeleCinco is non-existent, which indicates a difference in their strategy compared to Antena 3, where the American content consists of a remarkable twenty-three percent. Around seventy percent of programs in Antena 3 and about fifty percent in TeleCinco—in terms of time—come from foreign companies and are not created by Spanish producers but by international companies (Table 4 and 5).

The main international production companies that control the business in Spain are Mediaset, Bertelsmann, Lagardère, Banijay, and Endemol. Forty-two percent of content originates with six transnational conglomerates: Mediaset (twenty-four percent), Bertelsmann (six percent), Lagardère (five percent), Banijay (five percent), Endemol (five percent), Time-Warner (two percent), and A+E-Lifetime Group (two percent).

In general, the acquired production has a lower presence and it is mostly concentrated in the conglomerate Time-Warner and A+E-Lifetime. On the contrary, groups like Mediaset, Bertelsmann or Endemol, which are smaller media groups, are the ones that really “make” their programs through external production. Big American conglomerates penetrate the Spanish TV through fiction spaces and acquisitions.

Endemol belonged 75% to Mediaset and currently 50% to Time, and the remainder belongs to Goldman Sachs and John de Mol. This production group operates through three of its audiovisual producers: Gestmusic, Zeppelin TV, and Diagonal TV. Additionally, Mediaset also has a presence through La Fábrica de la Tele and Mandarina Producciones. The German-owned Bertelsmann (six percent) penetrates the market through the production company FremantleMedia (the British subsidiary of the group). The giant Lagardère reaches the market through the Spanish Producer Boomerang TV. Although it is a Spanish company, eighty-two percent of it belongs to the French group, while only the remaining eighteen percent is owned by Spanish funders. Banijay’s market penetration is due to its current ownership of fifty-one percent of the Spanish production company Cuarzo Producciones. Banijay’s shareholding include the LOV Group and DeA Communications, which also belong to the Italian firm DeAgostini. US-American capital, through the participation of Time-Warner, one of the largest conglomerates in the world, has not a big presence in the analysis (two percent). Also Gracie Films, along with Twentieth Century Fox (three percent) and A+E (the owner of Lifetime), for a share of two percent, appeared in the sample.

Therefore, this study clearly shows that the production companies in Spain follow the trend towards consolidation and transnationalism that already exists in the telecommunications industry. Specifically, certain European conglomerates which control numerous producers and make up an oligopoly of some groups that dominate the majority of the Spanish TV. This situation impedes the existence of formats made in Spain and consequently affects the presence of national production

companies and the development of a strong national audiovisual industry. These data shown here could be useful for a future qualitative research about the contents of commercial television to highlight the values transmitted by these producers and the quality of its content.

7. Nota

[1] We avoided from the analysis the company Eurodelta and ZipZap because they are not standard production companies. In Spain both public and commercial channels broadcast hours of music programs (Minutos Musicales–*Musical Minutes*–in Antena 3 and in Televisión Española) in the early morning hours due to low audience ratings. This type of program cannot be considered standard. The same happens with the company Zip Zap broadcasted in TeleCinco. This small production company is, as Eurodelta, focused on making music videos under the name of Fusión Sonora (*Sound Fusion*) and Mira mi Música (*Watch my Music*).

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