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Analytical Model of Transmedia Storytelling Ecosystems in Audiovisual Fiction: The Spanish Model of *The Ministry of Time*

Abstract

Transmedia storytelling has been widely researched as a new topic in the last decade. The transmedia field includes many publications exploring the topic from different perspectives, but it lacks a standard methodology that allows the measurement of different case studies under a unified pattern. This research suggests a model for transmedia ecosystems that will allow researchers to study them in-depth. Authors suggest a potential configuration based on a simplified image of the transmedia universe, in which projects are divided into well-differentiated narrative systems, allowing the obtention of precise details on their basic functioning. This paper provides an original methodology able to observe the transmedia universes from different perspectives. To test the validity of the paradigm, the model has applied to the case study of the Spanish-fiction product, *The Ministry of Time* (*El Ministerio del Tiempo*, in the original language), because of the multiplicity of content renders its study as highly efficient. Thus, we encounter a new transmedia universe that allows precise measurement and the obtention of conclusive data. The positive results confirm that the new methodological approach meets the initial expectations. At the same time, it offers the possibility of obtaining much more information than the one the limited space of this article allows to explain, which opens the door to new lines of research in the future.

Keywords

Broadcast and Film Studies, TV Fiction Series, Transmedia Storytelling, Convergence, *The Ministry of Time* (*El Ministerio del Tiempo*).

1. Introduction

Our current media ecosystem, formed by a wide variety of channels, media, platforms, and devices, offers us the possibility to develop new narrative models that will allow the general public to obtain a vast amount of information about their favorite audiovisual products. Also, nowadays, the web is central to the work and social lives of a substantial fraction of the world's population (Thelwall, 2020). However, digital media use in this way takes place in an online environment dominated by a few corporate actors, including Facebook and Google (Carragee, 2019, p. 364). In recent years, we have witnessed the emergence of new ways of storytelling,

prompted by new technology (González-Neira & Fernández-Martínez, 2019), and responding to the need from the audience to receive a large number of stories that will quench the thirst for knowledge about particular narrative universes. New ways of storytelling, such as multimedia, transmedia, and hypermedia, brought complexity to the media and content (Gosciola, 2011). There are many ways we can experience a fictional world, its events, characters, and stories in the present day. We can experience a fictional world, its events, characters, and stories in different ways, not only through the consumption of mono-media stories such as watching films, playing games, and reading books but also through traversing multiple media, known as transmedia storytelling (Javanshir, Carroll & Millard, 2020).

Therefore, international fiction products such as *Lost* (ABC, 2004-2010), *Fringe* (Fox, 2008-2013), *Star Wars* (Lucasfilms, 1977-2012; Disney, 2012-currently) or the Marvel cinematographic universe (Marvel Studios, 2008-2019), show the implementation of a new form of storytelling. Furthermore, these new storytelling formats are in high demand by the audience. In countries such as Spain, the production of such television programs is becoming the norm. Examples of such are fictions such as *Isabel* (TVE, 2012-2014), *Red Eagle (Águila Roja)* (TVE, 2009-2016), *The Ship (El Barco)* (Antena 3, 2011-2013) or *The Ministry of Time (El Ministerio del Tiempo)* (TVE, 2015-currently), all of these products that have relied on a narrative strategy that includes different media.

Jenkins (2003) argues that children that have been raised consuming products such as *Pokemon*, through media such as videogames and the television series, amongst other formats, will expect the rest of content to follow a similar strategy. Thus, the new audiovisual productions are forced to spread through the available media, which poses a challenge for production companies that need to produce relevant new proposals (Nieto, 2017). This new form of generating content allows creators to reach a wider audience because the new narrative strategies “reach the audience through different access channels” (Amorós-Pons & Comesaña-Comesaña, 2016, p. 165). For instance, spectators who regularly consume cinematographic products are more prone to approach other media unfamiliar to them, such as graphic novels, and podcasts.

It is all a result of the profound transformation suffered by traditional media in the age of media convergence (Scolari, 2009). The new consumer demands more stories focused on their favorite audiovisual fiction. Moreover, media convergence goes beyond a digital revolution (Jenkins, 2009a), because “languages begin to interact with each other and new hybrid spaces appear, allowing new forms of communication” (Scolari, 2009, p. 104). Users and content creators want to use the most significant media and platforms to tell their stories (Gosciola, 2019). In this context, techniques to tell stories through different media, such as narrative transmedia, are currently gaining importance. This technique structures storytelling around a single story, regardless of the media it uses to describe it. Therefore, it involves “the appearance of new social acts, new production systems, and new artist challenges in the universe of narrative fiction” (Vilches, 2013, p. 27).

Transmedia storytelling has received ample scholarly attention worldwide, especially authors such as Jenkins (2003, 2008) and Scolari (2013a), who established the base for more recent research studies. Jeff Gómez (PGA *New Media Council*, 2007) and Henry Jenkins (2009b) describe this narrative technique’s characteristics.

When it comes to research methods, most research has employed qualitative and or quantitative ways (Shin, 2020, p. 122). The majority of scholars in the field have paid attention to the need to expand the narratives through different models and audience participation at different levels (Pratten, 2011; Scolari, 2013a; Tur-Viñes & Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, 2014; Guerrero-Pico, 2015). Therefore, transmedia storytelling can be defined, as Miranda-Galbe (2017, p. 41) suggests, as “a narrative technique to tell stories in which various medium are involved creating more richness and narrative complexity, and increasing the experience and immersion from the users/spectators that wish to do so.”

The quantity of information, the audience is exposed to through different mediums to a vast quantity of information allows the follower base of these vast universes to engage with the story more profoundly than a single-media project. In turn, the expansion, which is considered as the main feature of this narrative technique (Piñeiro-Otero & Costa-Sánchez, 2012), allows stories to be included more information consistently, giving the audience varied data that significantly enriches the story, making it more interesting.

There are other strategies available in the transmedia universe beyond expansion. Scolari (2013a, 2013b) introduces a categorization of content based on four different strategies: addition, omission, transposition, and permutation. According to this author, addition generates narrative expansion, omission eliminates some aspects of a piece of content, reducing it through trailers or chapter recaps. Transposition involves an alteration of the previous order –synchronicity– or the addition of content in a language or format different than the original. Permutation substitutes some elements for others –false trailers or crossovers. According to the characteristics of transmedia storytelling, it would seem that its universes can only fit the content that generates addition. However, it will depend on each product’s type of communication; for instance, a journalistic story will be different from an advertising one.

Despite a large amount of research on the transmedia narrative, it still feels necessary to delimitate and establish the margins of such a technique. The narrative universes generated in these projects are enormous, which in call requires a new organization and a new strategic differentiation (Long, 2011; Vilches, 2013). Within these transmedia universes, “not all the transmedia extensions are equally relevant or important, some simply function as promotional claims and advertising pieces, while others are only conceived to grant access to the central content” (Rodríguez-Terceño, Barquero-Cabrero & Alonso-Mosquera, 2016, p. 11). Such pieces allow diverse communication forms, such as fiction, journalism, or advertising. Consequently, these revolve around a general connect that allows the development and expansion of these media universes. These ecosystems welcome any information, as long as they reference the same concept on which the entire universe clings on. Therefore, it becomes necessary to distinguish first the different content to, once located, organize them in narrative systems that include stories belonging to the same type of communication.

2. Methodology

The main goal is to create a proposal to organize transmedia universes to allow further analysis and obtain more information about these complex transmedia ecosystems. The creation of this new methodology is also designed to respond to the following research questions:

Q1. Is it possible to organize a transmedia universe according to its contents as our methodology suggests?

Q2. Are there differences between content in the production of a transmedia project?

In order to achieve the goal, we start with deductive reasoning to end with an inductive one. First, we analyzed the main theories regarding transmedia storytelling. Once studied the literature of the field, we suggest a theoretical approach to a potential organization of the transmedia universes. The following step includes the use of content analysis to test the theory, using the case study of the Spanish fictional television product *The Ministry of Time*. Once analyzed, a new set of more specific research questions arose:

Q3. Which storytelling systems are used in *The Ministry of Time*, and what is their impact?

Q4. Which storytelling strategies used in this project and which impact do they have on the transmedia universe?

Q5. Which textual typologies –audio, video, still images, texts– are the most widely employed in the transmedia project of *The Ministry of Time*?

The information gathered from the content analysis of *The Ministry of Time* will help understand how these complex universes operate, from functional and qualitative perspectives. Once this step is completed, we will proceed to quantify its impact on the final product.

Therefore, this research exercise includes both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Using qualitative methodologies adds a “more rich and profound information on social phenomena than that obtained through quantitative techniques” (García-Galera & Berganza-Conde, 2010). These, in turn, offer us the possibility to study this social reality through data, facilitating understanding, and explaining the resulting phenomena.

A transmedia project includes both official content –the cannon– as user-generated content –the fan phenomenon. This research concentrates only on the official content generated for *The Ministry of Time*, those stories created by the producers and the television network, excluding fan-generated content.

The search for content has been conducted through the show’s official website, the place where, in principle, all the official content should be hosted. However, we have also searched online through the search engine *Google*. Once the search was conducted, we discovered 833 individual content pieces referred to the transmedia project of *The Ministry of Time*. These pieces of content become the sample for our projects, and all of them will be individually analyzed to determine their position in the transmedia universe.

2.1. *Justification of the case study: the transmedia project of The Ministry of Time*

The Spanish TV series titled *The Ministry of Time* is a fictional project created by brothers Javier and Pablo Olivares and produced by *Onza Partners and Cliffhanger*. It depicts an exclusive police squad’s adventures working for a secret Ministry part of the Spanish Government. The mission of *The Ministry of Time* is to avoid any changes in the history of Spain as we know it today (Magallón Rosa & Dios, 2018). To achieve the goal, the ministry members travel back in time using a series of time doors that transport them to different moments in the past. At the same time, different individuals and groups, aware of the possibility of time travel, will try to take advantage of it. It is a story that, as Rodríguez-Mansilla (2015, pp. 75-76) explains, “suggests a journey through historical moments crucial for modern Spain, establishing a dialogue with the collective memory, swapping that dialogue inclusively, and inside a critical and cultural tradition of understanding national history.”

The choice of *The Ministry of Time* as a case study is due to its clear transmedia vocation from the development stages, something innovative in Spain until that time (Cobo-Durán & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2018). This fiction show “projected a complex strategy of narrative expansion with surprising richness –in its combination of new and traditional media– and coherence” (Cascajosa-Virino & Molina-Cañabate, 2016, p. 121). Although it is not the object study of our paper, it is essential to note the enormous repercussion this show had on Spanish television audiences (Sánchez-Castillo & Galán, 2016). The fans of the shows, known as *Ministéricos*, have “flooded the web with fan-created content that amplifies the narrative and interpretative universe of the show” (Miranda-Galbe & Figuero-Espadas, 2016, p. 129). The result is a cult-like following (Scolari & Establés-Heras, 2017).

To this day, the show has aired three seasons, but the producers are working on the fourth season of the television show with their corresponding transmedia extensions. The show’s duration becomes a perfect sample to analyze because we can observe the entire universe at once. Audiences may follow it on the Spanish Public TV, *Televisión Española* (TVE), and HBO. The success of the show, both from the audience and the critics, has rendered different academic approaches to study the project from various world views. This research continues works started by Rueda-Laffond and Coronado-Ruiz (2016), Rodríguez-Mateos, and Hernández-Pérez (2015), and Cascajosa-Virino (2015).

3. Transmedia universes, storytelling systems, and star media

Scolari *et al.* (2012) understand the transmedia universe defined as *paratexts* as the content that does not belong to the same type of communication as the primary medium. According to Mitell (2014), these storytelling forms refer to those that belong to the transmedia universe. Rodríguez-Ferrándiz (2015, p. 27) defines *paratexts* as an “indecisive space situated inside and outside the story.” Those are stories that motivate the spectator to demand more and attract them towards the storytelling universe. Defining these contents certainly helps us to perceive the enormity and complexity of such projects, thus rendering the need for clarification even more urgently. Therefore, the transmedia universes will be able to be analyzed with more depth. To accurately discern the limits of a project of such characteristics, and allow internal differentiation, we will use a metaphor that will help make it more understandable, for instance, a simplified image of the universe.

As we have seen, transmedia projects represent a media ecosystem by themselves capable of housing in their interior any existing communication type. Every transmedia project, regardless of whether it is, for instance, fiction, journalism, or documentary, generates a universe filled with well-differentiated stories. In turn, these stories are united to create storytelling systems that will only allow content belonging to the same type of communication, “each one with its particular variables that make them independent, and in some cases, different from the rest” (Vivar-Zurita & García-García, 2009, p. 208). These narrative systems are clearly distinguished from the rest –each type of communication includes its characteristics–, allowing the presence of as many storytelling systems and types of communication as the project can hold.

In general, the storytelling systems include one “star medium” that acts as the primary medium, also known as the “mothership” (Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, Ortiz-Gordo & Sáez-Núñez, 2014). These stories contain what we can define as the main story. Around that story, there are other contents – narrative worlds. The main story is the style guide for the rest, and also brings the most massive audience. The “star media” acts as the main claim for users to access that transmedia universe and define the project’s character. In the meantime, the rest of the content protects it (Mitell, 2014). In the case of fiction, the main story will dictate the laws of the storytelling system and serve as the starting point for future expansions.

In some cases, we have observed two mediums that describe the same story, an adaptation, and in those cases, both equally important and audience-grabbing. In such situations, one narrative system can include two “star media,” creating then a new binary storytelling system. An excellent example of this is the transmedia fiction narrative system of *The Lord of the Rings*, in which the entire literature saga from J.R.R. Tolkien and the entire film sequence directed by Peter Jackson, serve the role of two “star media.”

According to the characteristics of transmedia storytelling, each narrative world that revolves around a “star medium” must be considered as an independent story. Each world has its entity and able to include unique and differentiated elements of the central story. These storytelling worlds will add new storylines, new characters, new locations. Similarly, other content revolves around the narrative worlds as sort of satellites. These depend directly on the story they surround and are not understandable without previous knowledge of the history represented by the central medium. In such cases, we are witnessing stories that resort to a cross-media, not a transmedia strategy, which leads us to think that one story can be inside other types of storytelling techniques.

Storytelling systems also have a set of contents that act as an asteroid belt. These are the contents generated by fans of the storytelling universes so many that it is impossible to quantify their number (Miranda-Galbe & Figuero-Espadas, 2016). Besides, each one has its characteristics, being able to occur in the form of different textual typologies. They make the mass of contents of the narrative system increase considerably, giving the project higher

quality. Inside a transmedia project, each storytelling system includes its development, but they cannot gravitate randomly inside the generated universe. All of them are did to the nuclear center of the project. For instance, in the case of fiction, it would be the story we are telling. The rest of the storytelling systems and contents will revolve around the story. Moreover, without a good story, there is no project at all.

It is essential to point out that, as Giovagnolli (2011, p. 35) indicates that “each universe is governed by specific narrative laws” that must be meticulously accepted. In the case of fiction projects, they may be defined in the *mythos*, *topos* and *ethos* (Klastrup & Tosca, 2014), inside of the transmedia bible of the project. These three concepts are known as *worldness* or the mental image that both the creators of the project and the fans end up creating. *Mythos* refers to the cultural backdrop of the story, *topos* explains the geographical space and the timing of the events, and *ethos* defines the ethics and morality seen in the behavior of the main characters. It is crucial to pay attention to all of the above when creating these vast universes to avoid potential narrative discrepancies between different stories.

Summing up, a transmedia universe is formed by different storytelling systems, each one belonging to a different communication type. They are made of different storylines, which, in general, revolve around a “star medium” that acts as the cornerstone or guide for all the other content. Simultaneously, transmedia universes include general user-generated content, which orbits around the storyline, increasing the overall project’s width.

4. Results and discussion. Analysis of the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time*

4.1. Impact of the narrative systems over the transmedia universe

Before the release of its fourth season, the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time* includes eight hundred and thirty-three individual pieces of content that, as we will see, are categorized into different types of communication. The show’s official webpage includes different sections with specific content. Together with the additional online search, it sums up to thirty-three sections filled with stories.

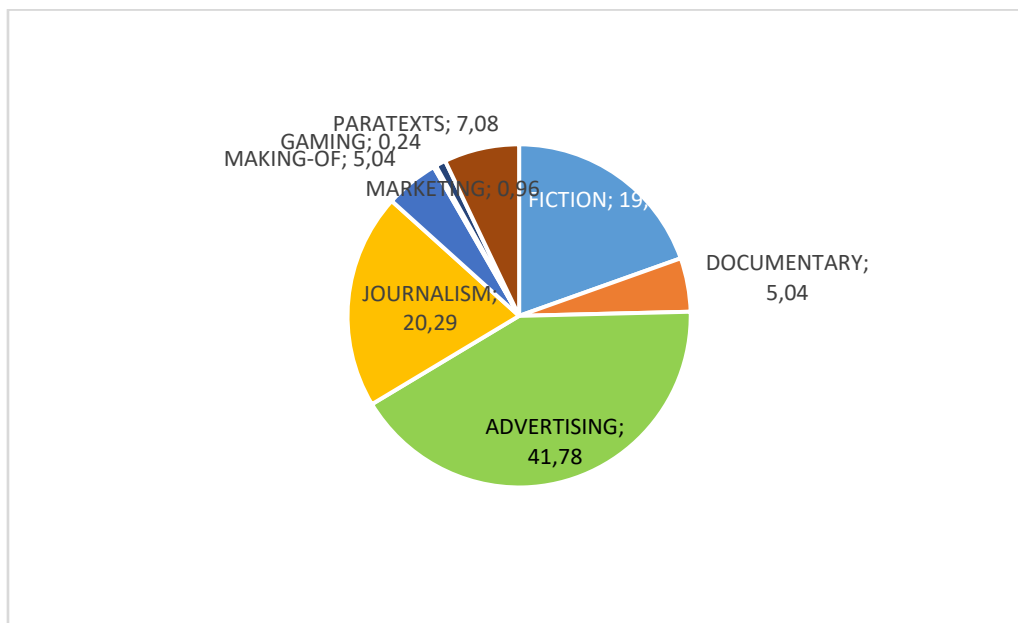
These categories do not necessarily indicate that we are in front of thirty-three different types of communication, but some, such as “The Ministry Intranet” that includes thirty-eight pieces of content that include different narrative systems and different text typologies. Once analyzed and categorized, we have discovered how the transmedia project includes a large variety of stories that create eight transmedia narratives, as described below:

- Fiction transmedia narrative system: One hundred and sixty-three elements. Logically, this is the core of the media universe of *The Ministry of Time* project. It is the central narrative system around which everything else revolves. Without it, the entire structure lacks any logic. Television chapters act as the “star medium” of this system, which places them as the core of the transmedia universe. This system occupies 19.57% of the universe.
- Historical document transmedia storytelling system: Forty-two elements. Here we find the content that narrates the real history, which serves as the backdrop for the events of each episode of *The Ministry of Time*. In this case, we do not find any medium that adopts the role of “star medium,” and together, they amount to 5.04% of the transmedia universe.
- Advertising transmedia storytelling system: Three hundred and forty-eight elements. These are the items that, in different ways, advertise the transmedia universe of the project. Similarly to the category above, there is no clear “star medium.” They amount to 41.78% of the transmedia universe.
- Journalism transmedia storytelling system: One hundred and sixty-nine examples. The content of these is journalistic, informing about different issues of *The Ministry of Time*. In this case, there is a clear “star medium:” the official Twitter account, since it is the platform with the most extensive follower base of the narrative system. At the time of

this writing, in March 2020, the official Twitter for this fiction was followed by a total amount of 170.400 users. The weight of this system overall is 20.29%.

- Making-of transmedia narrative system: Forty-two elements. It includes all the content related to the production of the show. The “star medium” is “The Ministry Archives,” a show that explains the production and set up of each chapter of the show. A total of 5.04% of the transmedia universe.
- Gaming transmedia storytelling system: Two elements. Consists of content that allows users to play with the game. The “star medium,” in this case, is a board game. It amounts to 0.24% of the transmedia universe.
- Marketing transmedia storytelling system: Eight elements. Content that belongs to the marketing efforts of *The Ministry of Time*. The “star medium” is the online store, and it engulfs 0.96% of the transmedia universe.
- Paratexts: Fifty-nine elements. As we defined them before, this system encompasses all the materials belonging to the entire project’s transmedia universe that do not fit any previous categories. There is no “star medium,” and they occupy 7.08% of the transmedia universe.

Graphic 1: Impact of the narrative systems over the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time*.



Source: Own elaboration.

Overall, the results obtained after the analysis show the advertising storytelling system like the one with the most impact. This is because to attract the audience, we need to communicate the existence of the project. Therefore, the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time* includes most of the content of such characteristics.

The second type of communication is related to the journalistic content, closely followed by the fiction transmedia universe. As we have previously mentioned, this acts as the core of the universe, making the other storytelling systems complete and protect the story, giving the show more significant visibility and serving as different points of access. It is relevant that the primary storytelling system is not the one that has the most significant impact. However, it is reasonable because producing fiction for television comes to a high economic cost and requires long periods of filming, editing, and preparation. Therefore, it seems evident that there is no need for the central storytelling system to be the largest in terms of numbers. The

real essential element is that the system holds inside the “star medium” that will allow the creation of the rest of the content that will make up the project.

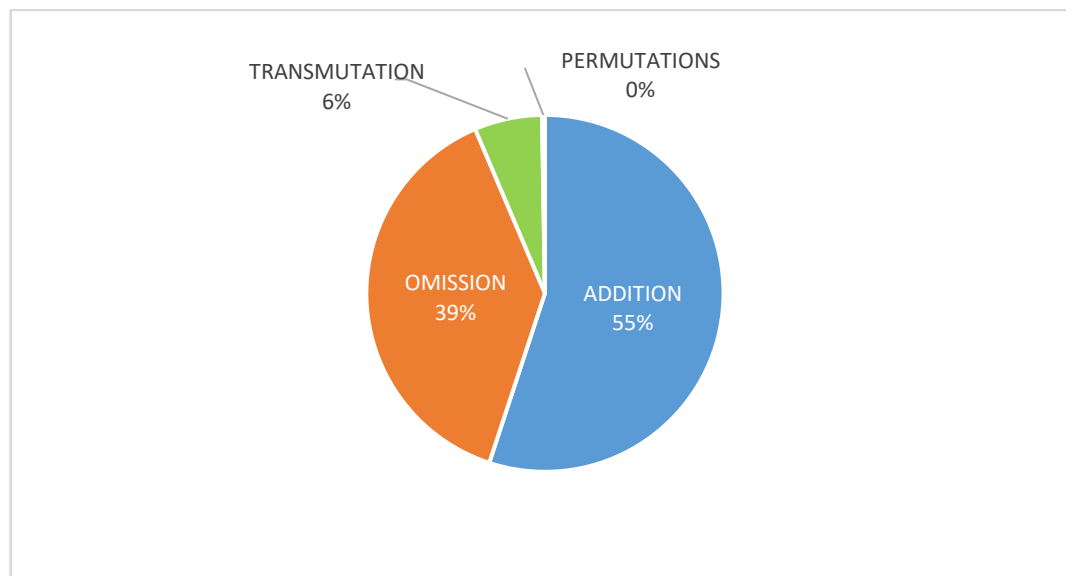
Thus, the amount of content is not indicative of the degree of importance of the storytelling systems. The value of these will be measured depending on the type of project they belong to. The journalism narrative system’s relevance is not the same inside a journalistic transmedia project as it would be in a fiction project, such as our case study. Therefore, we consider that a qualitative analysis of such universes is crucial to obtain insightful results.

4.2. *Cataloguing the content of the transmedia universe of The Ministry of Time*

Once defined how the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time* is distributed, it is necessary to catalog the content regarding their strategy. Following the methodology suggested by Scolari (2013a and 2013b), we have been able to unlock relevant results that interpret quantitatively and qualitatively the quality of the developed project. The transmedia narrative operates through narrative extensions, which implies that, as much as possible, all the content created must increase the information of their narrative systems. However, there are other strategies available for the study of such productions. In the case of *The Ministry of Time*, the analysis of the strategy utilized to produce content, we have found the following results:

- Four hundred eighty-one pieces of content present a strategy of information addition, generating an expansion of their transmedia storytelling system. They amount to 57.74% of the total.
- Three hundred two elements of content utilize the strategy of information omission, which adds up to 36.25% of the show’s transmedia universe.
- Forty-eight elements of content show the transposition strategy, which amounts to 5.76% of the total.
- Only two pieces of content use the permutation storytelling strategy, which sums up to only 0.25% of the entire project.

Graphic 2: Cataloguing the content of the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time* according to the strategy utilized.



Source: Own elaboration.

The addition is the strategy more utilized in this transmedia universe, which is the expected result for such a project. Therefore, we can safely argue that the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time* has been correctly developed since most of the content amplifies the information of their perspective storytelling systems. The resulting added storytelling richness greatly benefits the audience.

Thus, this fiction project can be considered a clear example of setting up a transmedia universe. The majority of the content adds new information, expanding and making the universe more interesting, all the essential features of any transmedia project.

4.3. Textual typologies used in *The Ministry of Time*

In such comprehensive projects as those who use transmedia narrative as a technique to generate large amounts of content, we tend to find different textual typologies, such as video, still image, audio, text, and other formats. The case of *The Ministry of Time* is no exception.

When organizing the transmedia universe in the format previously stated, it is possible to identify each of these typologies in the project. The results obtained from the analysis indicate that the video format's content is the most widely employed in this case. We have found a total of five hundred and forty-seven, a total of 65.67% of the project. The implication is a massive production undertaking because video editing is always the costliest endeavor compared to other typologies, such as still images or texts.

Still-images are used in one hundred and eighty content pieces of *The Ministry of Time*, which adds up to 21.61% of the total. It is essential to point out the crucial function that Instagram plays in this area since it brings one hundred and twelve pieces of content that expand the knowledge of the history of the project.

There are nineteen pieces of content using the audio format, which adds up to 2.28% of the transmedia universe. It is interesting to point out the two podcasts shows that explore the adventures of two of the most important characters of the show, showing that the qualitative aspect of the content must prevail over the quantitative considerations. The text format content reaches two-hundred and forty appearances, amounting to 28.81% of the project. The majority of these pieces are included in the journalism transmedia narrative system, adding significant value to the universe.

We have also detected other types of content, and although they reference the previously studied content, they differ in format and cannot be cataloged in any category. Examples of these are social media content, online store, or interactive games, among many others. We have found thirty-nine examples, which represent 4.68% of the total. We must point out that some pieces of content use more than one textual typology, for instance, the content found in the section "The History of the Chapters." In many instances, they mix video, text, and images in their content. That explains why the added value of all the percentages is more significant than one hundred.

Graphic 3: Textual typologies of the transmedia universe of *The Ministry of Time*.



Source: Own elaboration.

5. Conclusions

The organization of a transmedia project suggested in this article, as if a clear vision of the universe was, seems to work more efficiently when it comes to analyzing such projects. It allows differentiating content according to each format, facilitating an understanding of its structure and functioning. Also, as the research results indicate, it offers a vast amount of information.

At the same time, this new suggested methodology opens a new way to understand how to analyze transmedia projects since it allows us to study a significant number of details. For instance, as a future research project, this method can be applied to different storytelling projects (fiction, advertising, or journalism) or even to specific content, such as a chapter of a television show, which can become a small transmedia universe. Therefore, the first research question of this article must be answered affirmatively. It is possible to organize a transmedia universe according to its content, as this investigation suggests.

Regarding the second question, and once analyzed the case study of *The Ministry of Time*, it is possible to detect substantial differences between the content of the transmedia universe. This is primarily seen in the different storytelling systems, which reference a particular type of communication. The content will be related to a series of production processes that are different from, for instance, fiction, journalism, or documentary products. Future analysis as fictional worlds that belong to a specific system will require establishing a series of variables that indicate the project's adequacy. The cataloging of the content allows us to establish distinctions between them depending on the strategy utilized, whether it be addition, omission, transposition, or permutation.

The analysis of the case study *The Ministry of Time* shows the capacity of a transmedia universe to host a large amount of well-differentiated storytelling systems (Vivar-Zurita & García-García, 2009, p. 208). However, this is a project of fiction. We must remember that each project has specific needs. Therefore, storytelling systems will not always coincide. In other types of projects, we will find different storytelling, and the total impact of each one of them will vary.

As discussed, the primary literature in the field (Jenkins, 2008; Gosciola, 2011; Javanshir, Carroll & Millard, 2020) describes the complex reality of the transmedia universe. *The Ministry of Time* is a perfect example of a project divided into different narrative systems that allow individual exploration. The show confirms the scholarly theories about the presence of multiple channels to engage with the audience (Gosciola, 2019; Amorós-Pons & Comesaña-Comesaña, 2016), including the four categorizations developed by Scolari (2009).

Our analysis has proven that regardless of what was previously accepted (Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, Ortiz-Gordo & Sáez-Núñez, 2014), not all the storytelling transmedia projects must include a “star medium.” However, it seems to need that the central system includes at least one. Therefore, the universe will be able to expand by itself and serve as the guide and the core of the entire project.

On the other hand, *The Ministry of Time* has become a paradigmatic example that perfectly exemplifies a transmedia project brilliantly executed. Due to the expansion of its universe created by its producers, the analysis allows us to confirm the methodological approach suggested in this paper. Our methodology allows a wide array of possibilities since it allows for the in-depth analysis of these vast transmedia universes.

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