

Transmedia Earth Conference
Medios, narrativas y audiencias
en contextos de convergencia

María Isabel Villa
Diego Montoya Bermúdez
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–Editores académicos–



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Transmedia Earth Conference

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Presentación. Transmedia not dead

Carlos A. Scolari*

Conversaciones en Medellín

A menudo me he encontrado con colegas que dicen: “Me hubiera encantado participar en la *Transmedia Earth Conference*”. No es algo muy común que los investigadores se lamenten por no haber participado en un congreso... Es que la *Transmedia Earth Conference* fue un evento que, por donde se lo mire, evidenció una lógica diferente a los tradicionales encuentros académicos en el sector de la comunicación. En primer lugar, porque no era un evento puramente académico, ya que participaron profesionales de la comunicación transmedia y académicos que han ido mucho más allá de la simple investigación o reflexión teórica.

En segundo lugar, la *Transmedia Earth Conference* fue un evento realmente internacional con participantes de países tan distantes entre sí como Argentina, Rusia, Brasil, Reino Unido, Holanda y Colombia. Esta diversidad geográfica se expresó en las riquísimas conversaciones sostenidas durante los tres días del encuentro realizado entre el 11 y el 13 de octubre de 2018 en la Universidad EAFIT: con total naturalidad se pasaba del inglés al castellano, y de ahí al *portuñol*. Este espíritu internacional, sin embargo, no limitó la emergencia de la especificidad latinoamericana durante los intercambios que mantuvimos en Medellín.

¿A qué me refiero con eso de “especificidad latinoamericana”? En la división internacional del trabajo, parecería que a América Latina le corresponde desarrollar proyectos transmedia de no ficción. Si hay un género que

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se está desarrollando en nuestros países es el documental transmedia (iy también multimedia!). En todas las latitudes, desde México hasta Argentina, se están llevando adelante iniciativas vinculadas a temáticas de gran impacto social como el cambio climático, los procesos de posconflicto, el narcotráfico o el feminismo. En muchos casos estos proyectos transmedia cuentan historias y difunden voces que los medios tradicionales, ya sean analógicos o digitales, no tienen en consideración. Y otro dato a tener en cuenta: muchos de estos proyectos se generaron desde las universidades. De esta manera, se cierra el círculo; las instituciones universitarias se mueven simultáneamente en tres frentes ya que: 1) enseñan a producir, 2) investigan y 3) producen narrativas transmedia.

Transmedia is dead. Long live transmedia!

Aprovecho la gentileza de los editores y la paciencia de los lectores para abrir una digresión. Mi ponencia en la *Transmedia Earth Conference* generó unos cuantos debates: ¿hasta dónde el adjetivo “transmedia” se está naturalizando? ¿Qué pasará cuando todas las producciones se asuman como transmedia? ¿De qué manera se diferenciarán los profesionales en un mercado altamente competitivo? ¿Qué otros conceptos vienen después de “transmedia”? Las conversaciones e intercambios fueron muy intensos.¹

Por mi parte, imagino para el adjetivo “transmedia” un futuro parecido al de “multimedia”. Si bien en un momento estaba muy de moda (digamos, en los años noventa), en la década siguiente el término dejó de tener el encanto de lo nuevo y los profesionales buscaron alternativas semánticas. Esto no implica que no se produzcan más obras multimedia: por el contrario, ¡todas las páginas webs y la mayoría de las plataformas y aplicaciones móviles son multimedia! El concepto también aparece en artículos científicos, libros y tesis doctorales.

Es muy probable que la evolución del concepto “transmedia” siga el mismo desarrollo: un incremento de la producción transmedia acompañada por la llegada de nuevos conceptos en el entorno profesional. De manera paralela, los investigadores y profesores seguiremos analizando las narrativas transmedia y promoviendo su enseñanza en las facultades de Comunicación. Un comunicador que no domina las estrategias transmedia

¹ En el post “Transmedia is dead. Long live transmedia!” de mi blog *Hipermediaciones* explico mi ponencia (Url: <https://hipermediaciones.com/2017/10/28/transmedia-is-dead/>).

es un comunicador a medias; un comunicador que “no piensa en transmedia” está condenado a la monomedialidad. Por el lado de la investigación, no cuesta mucho imaginarse tesis doctorales que se defenderán dentro de un par de décadas sobre “Las narrativas transmedia en el posconflicto colombiano” o “Narrativas transmedia, cambio climático y defensa del medioambiente (2005-2025)”.

Algún despistado se quedó únicamente con la primera parte del título de mi ponencia (“Scolari dice que las narrativas transmedia se murieron...”) y no leyó la segunda (“*Long live transmedia*”). Si hubiera estado en la *Transmedia Earth Conference*, se hubiera sumado a los fascinantes intercambios que mantuvimos con Vicente Gosciola, Dan Hassler, Diego Montoya, María Isabel Villa, Matthew Freeman, Renira Rampazzo, Camilo Tamayo, Jorge Iván Bonilla, Mauricio Vásquez o Rosane Svartman sobre esta interesante cuestión que, obviamente, sigue abierta al debate.

¿Qué podría venir después del “*transmedia storytelling*”? Se me ocurren varias alternativas... ¿Por qué no pensar la construcción de mundos narrativos transmedia como una rama del diseño? En ese caso se trataría de desarrollar una nueva disciplina: el “diseño narrativo transmedia”. ¿O por qué no hablar de “interfaces narrativas”? Espero debatir estas y otras propuestas en la próxima *Transmedia Earth Conference*.

Fin de la digresión.

Long live Transmedia Earth Conference!

El presente volumen emerge de la red de conversaciones sostenidas durante la *Transmedia Earth Conference*. Como podrán apreciar los lectores, las temáticas fueron muy amplias y las ponencias cubrieron producciones transmedia en el ámbito del deporte, la educación, la ficción, el periodismo o el turismo. La misma amplitud que se verifica en el sector profesional también se reproduce en el ámbito científico: se investigan tanto los procesos de producción transmedia como las estructuras narrativas o la siempre explosiva creatividad de los fans a la hora de generar nuevos contenidos. Estudiar las narrativas transmedia implica moverse en un ámbito multidisciplinario, y ese espíritu también se expresa en este volumen.

Un par de reflexiones para terminar. Necesitamos más eventos como la *Transmedia Earth Conference*. A medida que se incrementa la producción transmedia en América Latina, debe profundizarse su investigación

e incorporación en los programas universitarios de formación. En ese contexto, el diálogo entre el mundo académico y el profesional es fundamental. Una tarea pendiente para futuros eventos es la visualización de las producciones transmedia realizadas por mujeres (también en este campo América Latina marcó un hito con el proyecto *Quipu* de María Ignacia Court y Rosemarie Lerner) y los trabajos de las investigadoras que están expandiendo este campo de estudio. Finalmente, el espíritu global y multilingüístico de la *Transmedia Earth Conference* es un valor agregado que debería mantenerse y, dentro de lo posible, ampliarse a otros países y continentes. También en África y Asia las narrativas transmedia están siendo utilizadas en situaciones de posconflicto o para denunciar injusticias sociales.

Mientras esperamos el *Call for Papers* de la próxima *Transmedia Earth Conference*, este volumen nos permitirá continuar con las conversaciones que iniciamos en Medellín durante los tres días que duró el evento realizado en la Universidad EAFIT. Y a partir de ahora, si algún colega me dice: “Me hubiera encantado participar en la *Transmedia Earth Conference*”, podré responderle: “¿Pero has leído el libro?”.

Transmedia Storytelling and Cultural Heritage Tourism

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*Peter Arnds*****

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Introduction

Transmedia stories, largely situated in genre fiction, provide interconnected narratives rooted in one story on multiple digital and non-digital platforms (McNely & Teston, 2015) and have enough added value to be worth seeking out and consuming (Perryman, 2008, p. 33). Transmedia provides a strong foundation for adopting new methods of digital storytelling because it incorporates elements from both narrative and gaming into a “ludo-narrative construct” (Aarseth, 2012), which is immersive, pleasurable, and participatory for the audience. Transmedia is immersive because people are motivated to seek out and follow the narrative across different media and they “develop the skills to deal with the flow of stories and become hunters of information from multiple sources” (Scolari, 2009, p. 589). Each piece of a transmedia narrative functions as, what Ryan (2015) calls, a micro-narrative (small piece) that is part of a larger macro-narrative (full story). Each micro-narrative in a transmedia story can be understood on its own, but it also adds value to the whole macro-narrative system. Transmedia is

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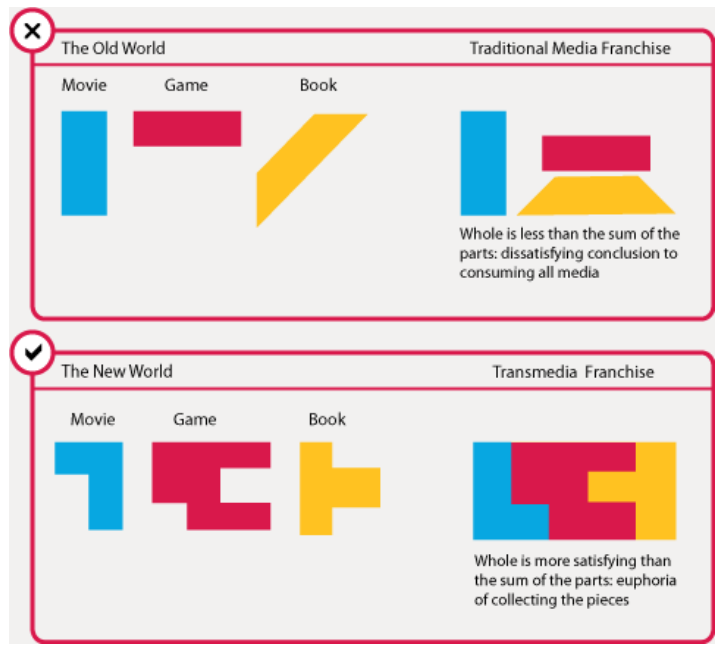
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also participatory/interactive because the audience experiences pleasure from collecting and piecing together the different narratives.

Figure 1 : Transmedia storytelling visualised



Source: Pratten (2011, p. 2).

Transmedia stories, depending on the formats, can fall under the umbrella description of Interactive Digital Narratives (IDNs). IDNs are described as “a form of digital interactive experience in which users create or influence a dramatic storyline through actions, either by assuming the role of a character in a fictional virtual world, issuing commands to computer-controlled characters, or directly manipulating the fictional world state” (Riedl & Bulitko, 2013, p. 67). The IDN format challenges the role of the author and the fixed state of content and structure because the audience takes on an active role and the narratives become malleable (Koenitz, Haahr, Ferri, & Sezen, 2013). A primary difference between transmedia stories and IDNs is that, in the latter, the interactors have agency, which Murray (1997) describes as “the satisfying power to take meaningful action and see the results of our decisions and choices” (1997, p. 126). While in the IDN format, the interactors create their own personalised

narrative path, in a transmedia, the stories are authored across platforms. Although there is user interaction, the audience often does not have the agency to change the direction or outcome of the story, being video games an exception. Even the term ‘audience’, used in transmedia, *versus* ‘users’ or ‘interactors’, as IDN consumers are commonly referred to, highlights the difference between the more passive and active roles, respectively. To date, IDNs have largely been developed and studied as fiction-based video games, such as *Facade*, *IDTension*, and *Half Life 2* (Koenitz *et al.*, 2013, pp. 29-30). However, IDNs are beginning to appear in non-fiction applications such as education and training (Riedl & Bulitko, 2013, p. 67).

Video games, with their high-level of interactivity, have steered a scholarly debate between narratologists (i.e., narrative studies) and emergent game studies (i.e., ludology) on whether video games actually contain narrative or narrativity (Aarseth, 2012). If narrative demands the receiver to recognize the authorial judgement of the text as a narrative, narrativity considers if the text author intended to do so on a script and whether or not there is an author (e.g., a painting, a song, or websites) (Ryan, n. d.). Some scholars have argued that video games are narratives, while others argue that they contain some narrative, or none. The aim of this work is not to delineate between the corresponding disciplines, but to draw upon the theories and practices from both transmedia storytelling and video games to address the “narrative paradox” or “ludonarrative dissonance”. This paradox or dissonance describes the tension between narrative and interactivity, where user interaction disrupts the narrative structure and may lead to confusion (Hargood, Jewel, & Millard, 2012, p. 1). Finding the balance between a narrative structure, while allowing user interaction, is a challenge that will be addressed in the context of creating interactive digital narratives (IDN) for cultural heritage tourists.

Background

Cultural heritage is commonly understood as the tangible (e.g., monuments, groups of buildings, sites), the intangible (e.g., practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills), and environments (e.g., archaeological sites) (Ahmad, 2006, p. 298). Many cultural heritage and preservation organisations like museums, libraries, and non-profits recognise the increasing importance of the digital medium and are digitising

their multimodal¹ materials (e.g., artefacts, books, photos, records, etc.), creating virtual tours, and personalising exhibitions for the public to see and experience histories and culture (Ardissono, Kuflik, & Petrelli, 2012). European scholars have recently become more engaged in “public history” research which focuses on non-academic audiences by finding present-day history applications, and developing collaborative practices (Cauvin & O’Neill, 2017, p. 2). Because cultural heritage is constructed by a community, there is not a single story; also, sharing memory through storytelling helps to provide a sense of identity and unifies people (Walker, 2010). People create narratives associated with places, monuments, events, and this contributes to collective memory making, following Walker’s theories (2010). On the other hand, Ryan says that the stories of a life or community are not only one epic narrative, but are made up of smaller episodes that can be read in different orders, and he suggests that projects that explore local history, or preserve cultural memory lend themselves well to the non-linear browsing navigation (2002, p. 606). This reinforces the idea of cultural heritage, with its many potential narratives, as a non-fiction application well suited to an IDN format.

Cultural heritage tourists seek local heritage through archaeological sites, historical landscapes, local architecture, museums, art expressions, traditions and practices of the past (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009 as cited in Dragouni & Fouseki, 2017, p. 1). Today’s tourists are influenced and informed by many transmedial sources such as books, movies, photos, websites, social media, and word of mouth. Fáilte Ireland’s statistics show that 80% of tourists used the Internet as a primary source for planning their trip, 28% asked friends/family, 12% consulted a travel agent, and 23% used guidebooks (Fáilte Ireland, 2016). Tourists are also participating in co-creation or co-performance of the experience (Stylianou-Lambert, 2011). There are blogs dedicated to different niche travel communities such as solo, female, adventure, sustainable, and quit-work-to-travel, to fill the gaps of the personalised content they seek. This information is spread across many different sources, both online and on physical locations. So, the curious explorers are required to find their contents of interest and sew them together to gain a cohesive understanding of the place they want to visit, which is a similar practice for transmedia stories seekers.

¹ Multimodality can be defined as “the simultaneous co-deployment of resources within a single communication process for meaning-making purposes” (Francesconi, 2014, p. 129).

Cultural heritage digital narratives are found in various media such as locative media games,² websites, videos, and exhibitions. Examples of scholar-led works include: *The Voices of Oakland Cemetery*, a mini-computer that provides auditory content to introduce virtual or in-person visitors to the history, architecture, and dramatised personal stories of notable people buried in that cemetery from the United States (Voices of Oakland, 2017); the mARCHive, a 360-degree video exhibition of the archives from Museums Victoria in Australia (Kenderdine & Hart, 2014); and “London: A City Through Time” iPad app with multimodal historical content about that city in the United Kingdom (HeuristicMedia, 2012). In the current landscape, many digital cultural narratives are scholar-driven and externally funded, with the focus of bringing cultural heritage into a digital space to engage the public. The end products are commonly a database-like website displaying thousands of searchable artefacts now accessible to the public, which brings the challenge that many become “ghost” or “dead websites” (Grabowska, 2017) because they are frequently accessed upon the post-publicity launch and then there is little reason for users to revisit.

Other common digital applications for cultural heritage are technology-enhanced museum experiences (e.g., audio guides and digital visualisations). While these applications improve visitor engagement, they often –for many reasons (e.g., limited source information, issues of copyright, lack of resources)– remediate a small amount of narrative content in different formats through printed placards, brochures and audio guides. Institutions and creative storytellers are experimenting with the digital medium and cultural heritage content, but the creators tend to be top-down focused and often do not conduct follow-up studies to evaluate the user experience in terms of content comprehension, the level of immersion, and satisfaction. Warwick (2012) says that user testing, in both academia and industry, is often left until too late in the project, and users are asked for input after the product has been built and when the prototype is being tested (p. 4). As a result of the digital era, the number of dispersed authoritative and user-generated

² Locative media is a “mobile media movement in which location and time are considered essential to the work” (Tuers as cited in Nisi, Oakley, & Haahr, 2008, p. 72), and require the user to physically move to progress in the game.

cultural heritage content has increased. Since public history projects are a growing field, there is a need to theoretically and empirically investigate how to create more cohesive digital narratives for cultural heritage, and the hypothesis is that IDNs are a potential solution to face the challenges related to storytelling cultural heritage.

The well-established practices of transmedia storytelling and video game design can support the creation of an IDN system for cultural tourists. In addition to media convergence in an IDN platform, digital technology can also enhance the cultural tourists' experiences by providing missing narratives at physical sites, even in the form of historical visualisations and 3D reconstructions of ancient ruins, for example. The main question this article explores is: How can media convergence practices be used to create personalised experiences for cultural heritage tourists using transmedia stories through an IDN?

Proposed Theoretical Framework

The successful practices of transmedia storytelling can be applied to specific IDNs theoretical frameworks in non-fiction genres. Koenitz (2010) proposed a theory of IDN involving three main elements: *system*, *process*, and *product*. He explains that an IDN is an expressive digital narrative form fulfilled within a *system* that contains potential narratives, and is experienced through a *process* that results in *products* that are also different narratives (2010, p. 108). While Koenitz outlines these three key components, he does not provide a detailed methodology on how to apply them when creating an IDN, and his work mainly relies on fiction-based video games. This article focuses on cultural heritage narratives, which are a non-fiction genre, and thus moves towards expanding Koenitz's IDN theory to create a framework that practitioners could apply in non-fiction contexts. It is hypothesized that:

1. rhetorical³ and narratological theories⁴ can be used as guidelines for creating a *system*;

³ Rhetoric is defined by Aristotle as "the art (*techne*) of finding out the available means of persuasion" (as cited by Eyman, 2014, chapter 2, § 14).

⁴ Narratology is "a humanities discipline dedicated to the study of the logic, principles, and practices of narrative representation" (Meister, 2013).

2. new media theory/multimodality⁵ used in current digital storytelling practices (e.g., transmedia, and video games), and user-centred⁶ design can improve the *process*; and
3. personalisation⁷ through user modelling and adaptive hypermedia can create the unique *products* or emergent narratives –a term used in computer game studies to describe a desirable effect of interactive media that addresses the narrative paradox by reconciling the conflicting values of narrative satisfaction (cohesiveness) and player autonomy (Walsh, 2011, p. 72).

The following sections will briefly outline a proposed theoretical approach towards creating IDNS for cultural tourists.

Designing the System as a Digital Space

This first part of IDN theory focuses on what goes into a system and the way it is created. Koenitz describes a system as “the digital artefact, as it exists on a digital storage medium, combined with the hardware on which the artefact is executed” (2010, p. 128). The system contains the “potential narratives” or protostories to be explored (Koenitz, 2010, p. 128). We propose that the content of protostories can be determined with the aid of rhetorical theory and that the structure can be supported by narratology. Porter and Sullivan (1994) argue that rhetoric is an applied art and that rhetorical theory acts only as the guiding principles rather than the rules, where principles are always interpreted and adjusted for situations and rarely survive in pure form (as cited by Eyman, 2015, chapter 2, § 11). While rules are generally in the domain of video games, rhetorical principles may be applied to non-fiction narrative creation. For example, digital rhetoric can be adapted for the construction of an IDN system because it may help answering questions such as: what materials, resources, and information do we have in order to communicate the story?

⁵ A mode is a single type of semiotic communication such as verbal or visual communication. Multimodality is the presence of many modes in a single medium (such as TV or the Internet).

⁶ User-centered design, or user experience design, was coined by Don Norman, former VP of the Advanced Technology Group at Apple, to cover all aspects of a personal experience with a system including design, graphics, interface, physical interaction and the manual (Uxdesign, n. d.).

⁷ Personalisation “attempts to ensure that content and services are tailored to individual users personal preferences, goals, and context” (Lawless, Conlan, & Hampson, 2016, p. 172).

Which modes (e.g., text, photos, or video) are these materials in? What methods or situations can we use to persuade the audience to carry out an action and/or gain knowledge and understanding of a culture heritage site?

Once some protostory material has been created, as guided by rhetorical principles, narratology can be used to determine the narrative structure for an IDN system. The linear narrative structure has been used for hundreds of years (e.g., books and movies), but in the digital medium, the possibility for new structures has left the field wide open to experimentation. A possible emergent narrative structure that may be suitable for a cultural heritage IDN is Ryan's Action Space, where "interactivity takes place on the macro-level and the narrative plotting on the micro-level" (Ryan, 2015, p. 174). Since non-fiction does not require a single linear structure with a single plot, the Action Space allows interactors to create a personalised, emergent narrative by navigating through the story path and to make meaningful selections in the different narrative branches. The Action Space differs from a mostly linear narrative structure with some branching, because it functions more like a web with multiple, and possibly an infinite number of, connections. The advantage of the non-fiction genre is that, to make sense, it does not heavily rely on a chronological sequence of events.

The Process of the Interactive Experience

The process aspect of IDN theory occurs when "a user starts to engage with the system" (Koenitz *et al.*, 2013, p. 129). The process of an IDN system can draw upon transmedia storytelling practices to create more immersive, user-centred, experiences. Pratten (2015) explains,

placing the audience at the centre means fitting experiences around their existing behaviours—their pacing, their location, their personalised content [...]. So if we're going to build responsive environments that wrap the audience in an experience where you can't feel the edges—that's what transmedia storytelling does (as cited in Sánchez-Mesa, Aarseth, Pratten, & Scolari, 2016, p. 11).

Pratten also identifies a growing drive for non-fiction transmedia since authors, wishing to persuade them, want the audience to connect with the narrative (Sánchez-Mesa *et al.*, 2016). For example, they do not want audiences merely to watch a documentary about refugees, but to

metaphorically “live the life of a refugee” by putting themselves into the refugees’ shoes and to experience the narrative from their own point of view (Pratten, 2015 as cited in Sánchez-Mesa *et al.*, 2016, p. 14). This “lived experience” is a result of immersion, which can help to evoke an emotional response to the narrative. Designing narratives in a way that they immerse the user involves considering which modality is best suited for the type of content to be conveyed.

Transmedial narratology⁸ considers the constraints and affordances associated with a given medium and “disputes the notion that the story level of a narrative [i.e., fabula] remains wholly invariant across shifts in medium” (Herman, 2010, p. 85). Transmedial narratology can be used to address questions such as: “what is the narrative potential of media and of the modalities that they encode; how can the narrative affordances of a given medium be emulated in another medium, what is it that the narratives of a certain medium can do that others cannot?” (Ryan, 2016, p. 2). In other words, in non-fiction IDNs the medium can affect the message being transmitted, so using transmedial narratology to inform the mode choices could enhance immersion in cultural heritage narratives. Immersion can also be enhanced through interface design because it impacts the time someone will spend on a website. If an interface is difficult to navigate, has slow load speeds, or is confusing, a user is likely to leave quicker than if the experience is easy, pleasant, and immersive.

Immersion can also be improved through agency, which offers a different experience than interactivity. Murray (1997) explains that the pleasure of agency in electronic environments is often confused with activity, but activity is not agency (p. 128). In digital environments, agency happens when the actions of users bring tangible results and satisfying user experiences, because they have the power to take meaningful action and see the results of their decisions and choices (Murray, 1997, p. 126). There is an opportunity to personalise cultural heritage narrative experiences by giving agency to the users; video games are part of a genre that tends to offer the most agency to them. However, Murray (1997) identified that spatial navigation through virtual landscapes is one form of digital agency that does not depend on game structure and “can be

⁸ Transmedial narratology was coined in 2004 by Marie-Laure Ryan to expand the field of narratology to include media other than language, and to initiate a comparative study on the narrative power of different media (Ryan, 2016, p. 2).

pleasurable in itself, independent of the content of the spaces” (1997, p. 128). Therefore, the user interface would also need to be designed to provide people with the agency to explore an “Action Space” cultural narrative and through this navigation, make meaningful choices that result in an emergent narrative.

The Personalised, Emergent Narrative Product

The *emergent narrative* product, or what Koenitz (2010) calls the “instantiated narrative”, are different narratives that come from the same source (i.e., system), which are achieved through a participatory process (p. 129). The term *emergent narrative* communicates the way in which the resulting narrative is born from user interactions, and it is commonly used by other scholars (Louchart & Aylett, 2004; Swartjes & Theune, 2006; Conlan et al., 2013; Walsh, 2011; Bertrand & Haahr, 2015). As the digital medium breaks down the barrier between the author and the reader, there is a greater need to see the user as a participant, rather than just a passive reader. Iser (1989) argues that “a text can only come to life when it is read, and if it is to be examined, it must therefore be studied through the eyes of the reader” (1989, p. 4). In IDNS, the narrative comes to life through user interaction and results in different personal narratives, so the next question is: how can creators measure IDN success?

One way to measure success is by determining whether the original rhetorical goal was achieved. In this study, the goal for a cultural heritage IDN is to create an experience that is immersive, offers agency, and results in satisfaction and, ideally, new knowledge. Rhetorical theory can be also applied to evaluate IDNS. For example, Chen (2014) argues that “interactivity presents the essential element of rhetoric: the art of persuasion or convincing; it further epitomizes the three rhetorical elements: *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*” (2014, p. 126), which are used in the art of persuasion. *Ethos* is traditionally referred to the rhetor (i.e., orator), *pathos* to the emotions elicited through the delivery techniques, and the *logos* to the logic or arguments. Chen (2014) draws parallels between the concept of *ethos* and the designer, *pathos* and the player, and *logos* and textual, visual, and audible emplotment (p. 130). In the case of IDNS, the *ethos* would be the negotiation between the primary content creator(s) and the participatory agents, the *pathos* would be connected to the incorporation of carefully-selected multimodal content to enhance comprehension and immersion, and the

logos would apply to the system, including structure/navigation, content, and argument/macro-narrative plot. These three aspects of rhetorical persuasion could be used to frame questions for interactors that could be administered in the form of a survey. While the guiding principles are outlined here, a more detailed evaluation framework would be necessary to determine if an IDN successfully communicates a narrative.

Conclusion

Transmedia stories are complex, immersive, and participatory, and they take advantage of different media. IDNs provide people with agency to change their individual experience, and they are a new genre of storytelling that currently lacks conventions. As influenced by digital culture, cultural heritage tourists desire individual experiences based on their unique interests, and the hypothesis is that an IDN could create a deeper level of immersion and provide educational content while maintaining a macro-narrative thread. An IDN theoretical framework could provide conventions for creating new products and help expand this newer non-fiction storytelling genre. Rhetorical theory can help focus the narrative before it is created, and can act as a reference point for making further decisions upon building the system. Narratological theory can help to determine the narrative structure and may act as a wireframe, or blueprint, before an IDN is built, and could help to inform how to incorporate different content modalities. Technical and design teams could consider the role of agency and create opportunities for users to make meaningful choices, while interface design may improve immersion so that users do not navigate away from the website. Finally, the IDN can be evaluated in terms of user perception during the co-creation process, between themselves and the creator(s) (*ethos*); their emotional reaction to immersion during the experience (*pathos*); what they learned or gained from the narrative; and whether they desire to revisit the narrative in the future (*logos*). An IDN theoretical framework could lower the need to experiment with the medium, improve the impact of future non-fiction stories, and benefit people who could have a more memorable and affective experience. A cultural heritage IDN system could preserve and uncover local history, lost cultural stories and customs, and allow people to explore and learn about their own and other cultures.

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Recursos y prácticas transmedia en el ámbito educativo

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Introducción

Cuando se habla de transmedia, por lo general se piensa en las grandes franquicias del entretenimiento como *La Guerra de las Galaxias* o *Juego de Tronos*. Sin embargo, no es común asociar el adjetivo de transmedia con los recursos educativos y se cree que la principal razón para ello es porque son muy pocos los contenidos educativos transmedia disponibles, y aún más escasos en idioma español. Así las cosas, el propósito de este artículo es proponer el diseño de experiencias educativas transmedia como una vía para aprovechar dicha tendencia en la esfera educativa, sin depender necesariamente de la disponibilidad de recursos educativos creados o producidos bajo la etiqueta “transmedia”.

Por otra parte, el presente trabajo es el resultado de más de diez años de seguimiento a la noción de lo transmedia en el ámbito educativo. La exploración inició con un proyecto de investigación realizado entre 2005 y 2008 en el Reino Unido, cuyo principal objetivo fue analizar y documentar las relaciones intertextuales en diferentes recursos educativos de *BBC Schools*, principalmente en los soportes televisivo y web. De este proyecto surgió la propuesta de una taxonomía de intertextualidades transmedia (Zorrilla, 2008, 2016a), la cual propone diez tipos de intertextualidad transmedia en productos educativos que comentaremos más adelante.

El acercamiento a los recursos educativos transmedia derivó en la inquietud por experimentar más allá de los productos y de las experiencias a cargo de terceros. Así, en 2014 la autora de este trabajo publicó, con apoyo del Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (CONACULTA), una novela transmedia para lectores adolescentes titulada *La flauta de*

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Acuario (Zorrilla, 2014). Se denominó transmedia porque consta de tres soportes mediáticos: el libro impreso, el diario en línea de la protagonista y un artefacto web, denominado “el dúo digital” que forma parte de la propia narrativa.

En 2015-2016 se presentó la oportunidad de poner a prueba algunos supuestos que habían emergido en torno a las experiencias educativas transmedia y, mediante un apoyo SEP-CONACYT,¹ se llevó a cabo el proyecto denominado “Fomento a la lectura y reflexión inclusiva a través de narrativas transmedia”.² Algunos resultados preliminares de este proyecto se han presentado en diversos foros. En esta ocasión, el propósito es perfilar una propuesta propia de lo transmedia en el campo educativo, a partir de la confluencia de las experiencias antes referidas.

Lo esencial en el concepto de transmedia³

Resulta difícil plantear la posibilidad de la transmedia educativa si no tomamos como punto de partida el origen del término “transmedia”, el cual se asocia en su origen a las narrativas, en el contexto de las industrias culturales y del entretenimiento.

Si bien Marsha Kinder (1991) fue la primera en acuñar el término “intertextualidades transmedia”, es Henry Jenkins quien popularizó la noción de narrativa transmedia y quien ha venido trabajando el concepto desde 2003 con el propósito de definir sus elusivos contornos. En su libro *Convergence Culture* de 2006 encontramos una de las definiciones de transmedia más citadas: “Una historia transmedia se desarrolla a través de múltiples plataformas mediáticas, en donde cada nuevo texto hace una contribución distintiva y valiosa al todo. [...] Cualquier producto dado es un punto de entrada a la franquicia como un todo” (2006, pp. 95-96).⁴

En esa fase de su construcción conceptual, Jenkins destaca dos aspectos que consideramos modulares:

- Cada elemento o producto de la franquicia debe contribuir con algo nuevo o diferente al desarrollo de la historia.

¹ La sigla SEP corresponde a la Secretaría de Educación Pública, en México, y CONACYT al Consejo Nacional para la Ciencia y la Tecnología.

² Proyecto de Intervención en Educación Básica SEP/CONACYT 2013: N.º 231304.

³ Este apartado es un resumen del Marco teórico de la ponencia de Zorrilla (2016b).

⁴ Todas las traducciones de los textos en inglés son de la autora.

- Los elementos narrativos de la franquicia pueden provenir de la entidad productora (empresa mediática), pero también pueden ser generados por los seguidores (fans), lo que se conoce como *fan fiction* o *fanfic*.

Este segundo elemento también es señalado por Pratten, quien afirma que la narrativa transmedia es una forma de contar una historia a través de múltiples medios y preferiblemente, aunque no siempre sucede, con un grado de participación, interacción o colaboración del público (Pratten, 2011, p. 1).

Carlos Scolari (2009) analiza el concepto de transmedia y otros asociados, como cross-media, plataformas múltiples, medios híbridos, multimodalidad, intermedia, entre otros, e identifica cuatro estrategias para la expansión de mundos ficticios: creación de microhistorias intersticiales, historias paralelas, historias periféricas y contenido generado por los usuarios.

Scolari también refiere el aporte de nuevos ángulos a la historia a través de sus diferentes soportes mediáticos, así como la cocreación por parte de los lectores, entendida la noción de “lector” en un sentido amplio que abarca todas las posibilidades de lectura mediática.

Metodología

Dado que el presente artículo se nutre de dos proyectos de investigación y una experiencia de creación transmedia, a continuación se resume el abordaje metodológico de cada uno de estos insumos.

El proyecto de identificación y análisis de las intertextualidades transmedia se diseñó a partir de los estudios culturales, por lo que los productos y las prácticas se estudiaron desde tres ángulos: a) el de la producción, a partir de entrevistas con directores y productores de *BBC Schools*; b) el de los productos culturales, que se enfocó en el análisis textual de recursos televisivos y web de *BBC Schools*; y c) el de los usos, que se trabajó a partir de observación participante en dos escuelas en el Reino Unido, con docentes y estudiantes de diferentes niveles de educación básica en el ciclo escolar 2006-2007.

La experiencia de creación transmedia abarcó la conceptualización de la obra, su escritura y una participación directa en el proceso de producción para los diferentes soportes mediáticos. Ello se llevó a cabo de

2012 a 2014. El producto fue la obra denominada *La flauta de Acuario: Una novela transmedia* (2014).

El proyecto de intervención-investigación en una escuela secundaria en torno a la lectura de la obra antes mencionada, se diseñó para que tuviera dos dimensiones transmedia: 1) el producto, es decir, la propia novela transmedia; y 2) la experiencia de consumo, la cual también se diseñó como transmedia, a partir de un círculo de lectura enriquecido que se efectuó a lo largo de seis semanas con tres grupos de segundo año de secundaria, en la ciudad de Cuernavaca, en forma presencial, y con el apoyo de un grupo cerrado en Facebook. Esto se llevó a cabo en el ciclo escolar 2014-2015. La metodología en este proyecto fue la de una intervención educativa (investigación basada en el diseño o DBR, por sus siglas en inglés), documentada a través de la observación participante en las sesiones presenciales y la e-observación en las actividades de Facebook.

Resultados

Los resultados de la primera fase de investigación en el Reino Unido se presentan en Zorrilla (2008; 2011; 2016a). En este trabajo nos enfocamos en la relevancia de estos resultados previos para los procesos de creación y lectura de la novela transmedia en los proyectos 2012-2014 y 2015-2016. Cabe señalar que la autora del presente trabajo adelanta actualmente la edición de una segunda novela, que es continuación de la primera, también a partir de un diseño transmedia.

Zorrilla (2008; 2016a) propone una tipología de intertextualidades transmedia en contenidos educativos que incluye diez tipos. De estos, cinco representan oportunidades de amplificar o transformar el contenido del denominado texto nuclear: expansión, complementación, repropósito (*Repurposing*), transmutación y generación. Cuatro tipos se identifican como formas de intertextualidad transmedia reiterativa (lo que Jenkins denomina *redundante*), a saber: resumen, repetición, imitación y referencia, que, aunque proscritas en las narrativas transmedia de las industrias culturales y del entretenimiento, en educación pueden cumplir funciones de reforzamiento y síntesis por su valor intrínseco en los procesos de aprendizaje. Por último, como décimo tipo, está la inconsistencia, que puede ser el resultado de errores en la producción, pero también es una forma intencional de presentar diferentes voces o ángulos en un contenido.

La novela transmedia *La flauta de Acuario* se construyó a partir de varias premisas que respondían a diferentes objetivos del proyecto.

Su principal propósito es la promoción de la lectura entre el público adolescente a partir de una experiencia transmedia. Por tanto, a diferencia de las franquicias comerciales, en este producto la puerta de entrada obligada es el libro impreso. En él se encuentran las claves para tener acceso a los contenidos web.

Un segundo objetivo es proveer elementos detonadores para una reflexión sobre la inclusión social de personas con discapacidad. Si bien el personaje protagonista de la obra y la forma en que es introducido responden a este propósito, el cumplimiento y evaluación del mismo requieren el acompañamiento del lector, a partir de una estrategia como la del círculo de lectura enriquecido.

El tercer objetivo es promover nuevas literacidades entre los adolescentes, incluida la navegación transmedia (Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, Clinton, & Robison, 2009) y la cocreación en diferentes soportes mediáticos (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013). Su logro y evaluación también requerían una estrategia de acompañamiento.

Es en este punto donde se entrecruzan la novela como creación transmedia y el círculo de lectura enriquecido como experiencia transmedia.

A continuación se discuten y comentan los principales resultados de esta intervención-investigación, agrupados en tres aspectos: las diferentes prácticas y trayectorias de lectura transmedia; algunos rasgos de los productos transmedia que pueden generar diferentes experiencias de lectura, y el diseño e implementación de una experiencia educativa transmedia.

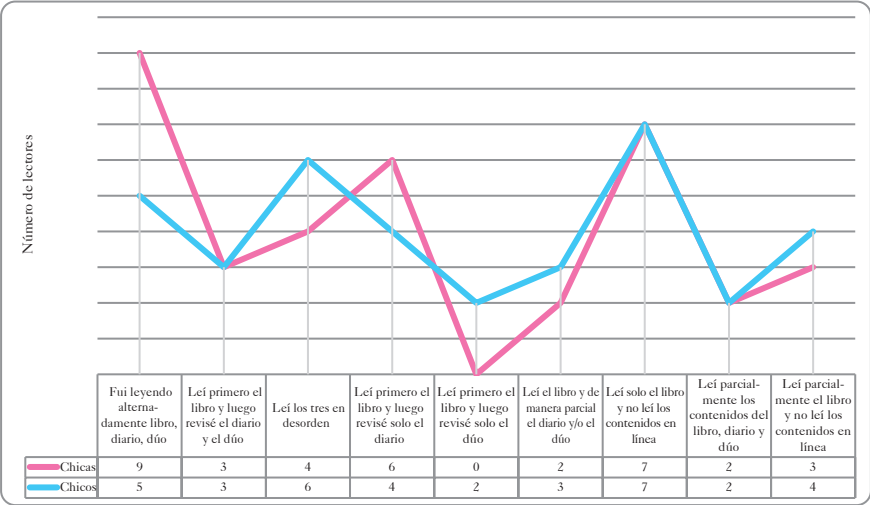
Prácticas y trayectorias de lectura transmedia

Si bien la premisa original del libro impreso como puerta de entrada a la historia se sostuvo, dado que el acceso a los contenidos web depende de la identificación de las claves en el componente impreso, lo que no necesariamente se sostuvo fue la trayectoria de lectura sugerida por la autora o incluso la propia transmedialidad de la obra.

Al final de determinados capítulos del libro, la autora sugiere al lector que puede consultar ciertas fechas del diario de Sara o determinados recuerdos almacenados en el dúo digital, puesto que ya cuenta con la información necesaria para identificar las claves de acceso.

Sin embargo, la interacción con los 75 jóvenes lectores participantes en el círculo de lectura enriquecido permitió identificar que las prácticas y las trayectorias de lectura fueron muy variadas. Para recuperar esta información se aplicó un cuestionario que respondieron 72 de los 75 participantes, cuyos resultados se reportan en la Figura 1.

Figura 1. Prácticas y trayectorias de lectura transmedia



Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir del análisis de datos de la encuesta aplicada a los participantes.

Al ser igual el número de mujeres y hombres que participaron, es posible identificar en este grupo algunas diferencias de género en la aproximación a la lectura. Las mujeres fueron más “dóciles” en seguir el flujo transmedia propuesto por la autora; en contraste, se aprecia que fueron más los hombres que alternaron en forma desordenada la lectura de lo impreso y los componentes web, es decir, que siguieron su propia trayectoria transmedia. Este “desorden” provocó en varios casos que intentaran abrir contenidos web para los que no disponían de las claves, lo cual generó frustración y abandono de la lectura de dichos componentes. También se aprecia que hubo más mujeres que leyeron todo el libro primero y luego revisaron el diario, sin leer el dúo, a diferencia de los hombres, en donde hubo algunos que leyeron todo el libro y después solo revisaron el dúo, situación que no se presentó entre las mujeres.

Esto es congruente con la naturaleza de los propios contenidos, pues el diario como producto es comúnmente asociado con lo femenino, y, dado que la protagonista es una joven adolescente, el tono y las confidencias del diario fueron más del agrado de las chicas que de los chicos. El dúo en cambio, tiene más una lógica de videojuego y en la propia narrativa es desarrollado por dos jóvenes adolescentes, por lo que es natural que haya despertado más interés entre los chicos.

La premisa del libro como puerta de entrada tuvo como resultado una mayor tasa de lectura del libro que de los soportes web. Varios participantes explicaron que no consultaron los contenidos en línea (o que solo consultaron algunos) porque no disponían de conectividad o de un dispositivo apropiado para la lectura en el momento en que estaban leyendo el libro impreso. Otros expresaron que se “picaron” leyendo el libro y olvidaron consultar los componentes web.

Lo expuesto indica que aun cuando el autor establezca una trayectoria de lectura, el consumo depende del gusto, el interés y la circunstancia del lector.

Algunos rasgos de los productos transmedia que pueden generar diferentes experiencias de lectura

Los resultados antes comentados se relacionan con las prácticas de lectura transmedia, pero también están íntimamente asociados al propio diseño de la obra.

La narrativa en el libro se construyó como un producto “*standalone*”, es decir, que pudiera sostenerse sin la contribución de los contenidos web. Esto precisamente en anticipación a la posibilidad de que los lectores no pudieran acceder a los contenidos web por alguna razón.

Las intertextualidades transmedia entre libro y diario y libro y dúo se construyeron a partir de la tipología propuesta por Zorrilla (2008; 2016a):

El diario de Sara permite una intertextualidad transmedia expansiva, pues presenta información nueva y diferente que no está en la novela, desde la voz y el punto de vista de la protagonista. Algunas entradas del diario llevan incluso a contenidos web externos a la obra. El formato del diario es multimedia, pues incluye texto, imágenes y audio (grabaciones hechas por Sara).

El dúo digital permite dos tipos de intertextualidad transmedia: síntesis y transmutación. Representa la síntesis, porque es un resumen de

recuerdos que está construyendo Sara para un futuro lector hipotético; es transmutación porque constituye en sí mismo la digitalización de un objeto mágico que en la novela se presenta como de naturaleza material y que forma parte de la propia narrativa. En su formato es multimedia, pues incluye texto e imágenes.

En una creación transmedia, incluir un producto *standalone* —es decir, que lleva el mayor peso de la narrativa y funciona para el lector incluso sin consultar los otros soportes mediáticos— puede resultar contraproducente y operar en contra de la lectura transmedia, pues hay lectores que optan por prescindir de los medios que consideran periféricos o accesorios. En contraste, generar una fuerte interdependencia entre los diferentes soportes puede derivar en una lectura fragmentaria que obliga al lector a moverse entre plataformas, cuando no necesariamente desea pasar de un cómodo sofá en el que está leyendo un libro o un cómic, a sentarse frente a una pantalla, lo que a su vez puede provocar frustración si no le es posible continuar la lectura debido a la carencia en el momento de un dispositivo tecnológico o de conectividad a la internet.

La autora ha procurado capitalizar lo aprendido en la creación de la siguiente entrega de esta saga, *El abanico de Libra*, donde si bien el libro impreso es nuevamente un producto *standalone*, se da mayor peso narrativo al diario de Sara, reforzando su rol expansivo. También se da mayor importancia al dúo digital, que contribuye con intertextualidades transmedia de síntesis, expansión, complementación y transmutación.

Diseño e implementación de una experiencia educativa transmedia

Si bien en las industrias culturales y del entretenimiento hay experiencias transmedia como las atracciones vinculadas a *Harry Potter* o *La Guerra de las Galaxias* en los parques temáticos, en general lo transmedia está más vinculado a productos que a experiencias.

En nuestra investigación encontramos que, en el campo educativo, sucede lo contrario: es más factible encontrar experiencias transmedia que productos transmedia.

Lo anterior probablemente se debe a que la generación de productos transmedia originales, como algunos de la BBC analizados por Zorrilla (2008; 2016a), requiere importantes inversiones que son poco usuales en el ámbito educativo, especialmente en América Latina.

Por tanto, para llevar lo transmedia a las aulas como recurso educativo, resulta más viable diseñar experiencias transmedia que generar productos transmedia.

Aunque la investigación realizada en Cuernavaca en torno a la lectura de *La flauta de Acuario* partió de un producto transmedia creado *ex profeso*, como se puede apreciar en el apartado de prácticas y trayectorias de lectura transmedia, la experiencia transmedia no sucede por decreto del autor ni se da necesariamente en la forma concebida por este.

Sin embargo, la experiencia puede generarse a partir del propio acompañamiento de la lectura, como sucedió en la intervención-investigación realizada, mediante el diseño de un dispositivo transmedia. Dicho dispositivo fue el círculo de lectura enriquecido, y se denomina transmedia dado que fluyó entre sesiones presenciales cara-a-cara para discutir la lectura del libro y actividades en línea, en Facebook, cuya finalidad era detonar la creatividad de los participantes en torno a la propia lectura, para que generaran productos originales en diferentes formatos, principalmente textos e imágenes.

Las actividades en línea buscaban emular experiencias similares a las de la creación *fanfic*. Entre las actividades que se diseñaron para Facebook, se les pidió que describieran cómo se imaginaban a Sara, la protagonista, y que la dibujaran o buscaran imágenes en la internet que se acercaran a la imagen mental que tenían de ella. Otra actividad requirió que investigaran algunos aspectos de la novela para determinar si eran reales o ficticios. También se les pidió que publicaran una imagen que representara su reacción a una revelación importante a la mitad del libro. Por último, se les pidió que generaran un final alternativo para la obra.

Las actividades del círculo de lectura enriquecido constituyeron espacios para explorar otros tipos de intertextualidades transmedia no cubiertos por la propia obra, como la imitación, la reproposición (*Repurposing*), la inconsistencia y la generación.

Aunque el pretexto para este círculo de lectura enriquecido fue una novela transmedia, después de realizarlo quedó claro que la metodología funcionaría igualmente si la obra leída no fuera transmedia. Sin embargo, la experiencia lo seguiría siendo, mientras mantuviera el uso de diferentes medios, como en este caso Facebook y la propia Red.

El docente puede generar una experiencia educativa transmedia a partir de diferentes contenidos que no necesariamente fueron producidos para funcionar en una lógica transmedia, pero también puede diseñar

actividades que permitan que la lectura y la creación de los estudiantes fluyan entre diferentes medios.

Otro punto importante a considerar es que estas experiencias no se ajustan a las reglas de las narrativas de ficción, pues pueden y a veces deben ser redundantes. Con relación a esto, Teske y Horstman (2012) mencionan como un propósito importante de lo transmedia, lo que denominan “comprensión aditiva”, en la que cada nuevo texto suma a nuestro entendimiento de una historia como un todo.

Un aspecto a enfatizar es la noción de experiencia, ya que lo transmedia, como afirman Teske y Horstman, incluye la cocreación de los lectores, su involucramiento como coproductores. El docente puede generar oportunidades para que se dé esta participación creativa en diferentes formatos y soportes.

Al igual que Zorrilla (2008; 2016a) y Zorrilla, Cruz y Hernández (2016), Montoya y Arango (2015) también proponen la intertextualidad como la piedra angular que posibilita las experiencias educativas transmedia, a través de la lectura y la escritura en diferentes formatos. En este sentido, la lectura transmedia y la generación de experiencias al estilo *fanfic* entre los estudiantes origina textos en diferentes formatos, lo que a su vez permite la adquisición y desarrollo de habilidades que forman parte de la cultura digital. Scolari propone el término de alfabetismo transmedia para referirse a estas nuevas habilidades que se desarrollan a partir de experiencias transmedia:

En este contexto, el alfabetismo transmedia se entiende como un conjunto de habilidades, prácticas, valores, sensibilidades y estrategias de aprendizaje e intercambio desarrolladas y aplicadas en el contexto de la nueva cultura colaborativa. Si la alfabetización tradicional estaba centrada en el libro –o, en el caso de la alfabetización mediática, especialmente en la televisión– la alfabetización transmedia coloca a las nuevas experiencias mediáticas digitales e interactivas en el centro de su propuesta analítica y práctica. Pero una nueva concepción del alfabetismo no puede limitarse a los soportes materiales. Si las formas tradicionales de alfabetismo interpelaban a los sujetos principalmente como iletrados (un sujeto ‘ni-ni’, que no escribe ni lee) o consumidores (lectores, espectadores), el alfabetismo transmedia los considera ‘prosumidores’ (productores + consumidores) (Scolari, 2016, p. 8).

Conclusión

En lo que toca a la creación y el consumo de productos transmedia, el trabajo realizado a la fecha permite identificar diversas formas de involucramiento del público meta, desde la lectura, con sus diversas prácticas y trayectorias en el transitar a través de los componentes mediáticos de la obra, hasta su participación en la cocreación de la misma.

Las intertextualidades transmedia fluyen entre lo físico y lo digital, en experiencias que hoy algunos denominan figitales (*phygital*).

Hoy por hoy, estos flujos en el ámbito educativo no dependen de las empresas productoras de contenidos, que poco han incursionado en lo transmedia, al menos en México. Dependen principalmente de los docentes, quienes tienen la posibilidad de diseñar experiencias transmedia, no solo a partir de las intersecciones entre diferentes contenidos ya existentes en variados soportes mediáticos, sino también a partir del uso y aprovechamiento de los diversos canales hoy disponibles y de las prácticas y herramientas que usan los estudiantes, como las redes sociales. Es importante recalcar que estas experiencias pueden perfectamente fluir entre lo físico y lo digital, entre lo presencial y lo virtual.

El diseño de experiencias educativas transmedia implica pensar en contenidos transmedia, pero también en actividades transmedia, y en estas últimas el componente de la creación, de la expresión en diferentes soportes y formatos mediáticos, es clave para lograr un doble aprendizaje, el del tema objeto de la experiencia transmedia y el desarrollo de la propia literacidad transmedia como un aprendizaje transversal.

Las actividades transmedia detonan en los jóvenes habilidades e inquietudes que son propias de su cultura digital, como la representación y la apropiación (Jenkins, 2009).

Hoy día, en México y otros países de similar nivel de desarrollo, la incorporación de lo transmedia en la educación depende en gran medida de la creatividad de los docentes para descubrir intertextualidades transmedia entre productos aparentemente no relacionados entre sí, como puede ser el propio libro de texto y una película comercial y diseñar rutas para su

exploración, así como para crear actividades de aprendizaje que involucren la lectura y, sobre todo, la escritura en diferentes medios y formatos, concebida esta última en un sentido amplio para abarcar diversas formas de expresión que van desde la palabra escrita, hasta el video, pasando por la fotografía, el dibujo, la ilustración, el arte dramático, la danza y la composición musical, por mencionar solo algunas.

Falta mucho por hacer y por descubrir en materia de usos y aprovechamiento de lo transmedia en la esfera educativa. Lo aquí presentado es solo un atisbo.

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Cultura colaborativa y cultura participativa en la narrativa transmedia

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Introducción

El estudio sobre los diversos modos de colaboración en los proyectos transmedia pone de manifiesto la necesidad de establecer una diferencia entre la cultura colaborativa y la cultura participativa. Para ello es preciso identificar las iniciativas de colaboración que recurren o se encuentran en la narrativa transmedia, así como indagar en las formas en que la sociabilidad se organiza en movimientos colaborativos en la historia reciente de la comunicación. En ese orden de ideas, en este trabajo buscamos responder la pregunta de cuál es el alcance y el impacto de la cultura colaborativa en el contexto de la narrativa transmedia. Con esto en mente, partimos de la noción de “Zona Autónoma Temporal” de Hakim Bey para luego retomar los conceptos de Henry Jenkins y Jane McGonigal, entre otros autores que se han ocupado de la materia en cuestión.

El concepto de Zona Autónoma Temporal (TAZ, por sus siglas en inglés) de Hakim Bey (2011) no constituye un pensamiento político, crítico o filosófico a seguir. Es un pensamiento reflexivo, en respuesta a un Estado dominante en medio de la denominada globalización. Hakim Bey (seudónimo del historiador estadounidense Peter Lamborn Wilson) deja

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claro que no se trata de una rebelión u oposición directa a un Estado que detenta el control de la información como un todo, sino de una resistencia que piensa y actúa de modo autónomo y ocupa espacios aún no llenados por él. Se trata de una sociedad con la capacidad y los mecanismos para proponer sus propios cambios a partir de un objetivo común:

La TAZ es una especie de rebelión que no confronta al Estado directamente, una acción de guerrilla que libera un área (de tierra, de tiempo, de imaginación) y que se disuelve para rehacerse después, en otro lugar y otro momento, antes de que el Estado pueda aplastarla (Bey, 2011, p. 17).¹

El internet y la expansión de las nuevas tecnologías en la web –definida por Bey como una estructura abierta, alternada y horizontal de intercambio de información en oposición a la *Red*, que sería jerarquizada y elitista (la totalidad de todas las transferencias de información y de datos)– contribuyó de manera relevante al desarrollo de herramientas de comunicación independiente para distintos movimientos sociales que antes no habían tenido voz. Con lo cual pudieron alcanzar un mayor número de audiencias sin que el Estado tuviera o pudiera obtener algún control sobre esas acciones:

La web no solo proporciona un apoyo logístico a la TAZ, también ayuda a crearla. En términos generales, podríamos decir que la TAZ “existe” tanto en el espacio de la información como en el “mundo real”. La web puede compactar el tiempo, en forma de datos, en un “espacio” infinitesimal. Decimos que la TAZ, por ser temporal, no ofrece algunas de las ventajas de una libertad con una duración y localización más o menos estable. Pero la web ofrece una especie de sustituto en sí misma –pues ella puede informar a la TAZ, desde su inicio, con vastas cantidades de tiempo y espacio compactados en forma de datos que estaban siendo “infrautilizados” (Bey, 2011, p. 33).

De acuerdo con Bey, la TAZ ocupa tanto el mundo real como el virtual. Está presente en ambos espacios y los movimientos sociales pueden y deben seguir la misma lógica de ocupación haciéndose cada vez más presentes en un universo que pertenece a todos por igual, y donde el flujo de datos e informaciones pueden ser pirateados dentro y fuera de la web. La interacción y la conexión entre las redes de los diversos movimientos

¹ Todas las traducciones de los textos citados en portugués e inglés son nuestras.

sociales y organismos independientes se ha organizado y ganado cada vez más espacio por medio del activismo digital lo que se traduce en importantes acciones fuera del espacio virtual al conectar el ciberespacio con el espacio urbano. Los vehículos de comunicación masiva dejaron de ser la única fuente de información para dar espacio a nuevos vehículos. En palabras de Castells (2013):

La comunicación masiva se basa en redes horizontales de comunicación interactiva que generalmente son difíciles de controlar por parte de los gobiernos o las empresas. Además, la comunicación digital es multimodal y permite la referencia constante a un hipertexto global de informaciones cuyos componentes pueden ser remezclados por el actor que comunica de acuerdo con proyectos de comunicación específicos. La autocomunicación masiva proporciona la plataforma tecnológica para la construcción de la autonomía del actor social, ya sea individual o colectivo, en relación con las instituciones de la sociedad (p. 12).

En tiempos de conectividad lo colectivo gana fuerza, y en el nuevo modo de generar contenido –resultante de la convergencia digital– surge la llamada cultura participativa y la cultura de la colaboración. Sin embargo, hay diferencias entre la cultura participativa y la cultura colaborativa en lo que se refiere a los procesos de expansión o construcción de contenido, como lo señalan en sus obras Henry Jenkins y Jane McGonigal.

Cultura participativa y cultura colaborativa

Con el advenimiento de la web 2.0, la presencia de las redes sociales y el auge de los *smartphones*, hubo un cambio en el proceso de comunicación y en el hábito de consumir información, en el que el ciudadano deja de ser pasivo (recibe y procesa la información) y pasa a ser un agente de producción de contenido. Jenkins (2009) le da a este momento el nombre de cultura de convergencia.

El investigador estadounidense presenta tres conceptos para explicar la convergencia: inteligencia colectiva, cultura participativa y convergencia de los medios de comunicación. En 1978, Roxanne Hiltz y Murray Turoff fueron los primeros en acuñar el término “inteligencia colectiva” para describir un sistema computacional (Malone & Bernstein, 2015, p. 6). En 1993, el texto de Hiltz y Turoff fue retomado por Howard Rheingold para referirse a las primeras experiencias de socialización y comunicación

en Arpanet, la predecesora de la Internet (Rheingold, 2000, p. 113). La evolución de la aplicación del término se da con Derrick de Kerckhove en 1995, cuando recupera la idea de inteligencia colectiva de un sistema computacional colectivo y conectado y lo expande a la sociedad en una nueva ecología de las redes, constatando ciertas formas de agrupación colectiva que parecían sincronizadas “como si cualquier persona supiera lo que otras personas están haciendo” (Kerckhove, 1997, p. 252). Es en esta lógica que tenemos, la convergencia de los medios de comunicación como un flujo de información entre diversas plataformas. Representa, así, una modificación cultural que incentiva al usuario a buscar nuevas informaciones y a efectuar conexiones con el contenido expuesto en otros medios.

El origen de la cocreación, sea en forma de cultura participativa o cultura colaborativa, ciertamente se dio con las vanguardias artísticas. Así, por ejemplo, en una ponencia sobre el acto creativo presentada en la Convención de la *American Federation of Arts*, en abril de 1957, Marcel Duchamp exponía la siguiente reflexión:

Después de todo, el acto creativo no es realizado solo por el artista; el espectador pone a la obra en contacto con el mundo exterior, descifrando e interpretando su calificación interna y, así, añade su contribución al acto creativo. Esto es aún más obvio cuando la posteridad da un veredicto final y a veces restituye a los artistas olvidados (Duchamp, 1957, citado en Lebel, 1959, p. 78).

Un pionero del arte colaborativo fue László Moholy-Nagy, en una experiencia que refleja nuevos comportamientos y nuevas técnicas, derivados sobre todo de la revolución en las comunicaciones:

En 1922, pedí por teléfono a una fábrica de lacas cinco pinturas para porcelana esmaltada. Tenía la tabla de colores de la fábrica, con la que bosquejaba las pinturas sobre un papel cuadriculado. Al otro lado del teléfono, el supervisor de la fábrica tenía el mismo tipo de papel, dividido en cuadros. Él trazó las formas dictadas en la posición correcta. (Fue como jugar ajedrez por correspondencia). Una de las pinturas me la enviaron en tres formatos diferentes, para que pudiera analizar las diferencias en las relaciones de color causadas por la ampliación y la reducción (Moholy-Nagy, 1947, p. 79).

Con todo, las intervenciones artísticas colectivas en tecnologías de comunicación y computación tuvieron lugar a partir de la década de los

setenta, como el trabajo de Kit Galloway y Sherrie Rabinowitz en el *Satellite Arts Project* '77 “*A space with no geographical boundaries*” (1977), llevando al extremo, para la época, el concepto de la imagen como lugar, gracias al uso del satélite para la transmisión y recepción en vivo entre dos puntos distantes en Estados Unidos, donde los artistas creaban colectivamente y se veían en una performance “telecolaborativa”.² Aunque aquí el trabajo artístico sea menos estudiado que los flujos sociales de contenido entre las redes digitales, Nicolas Bourriaud apunta a la relevancia de aquel experimento:

El surgimiento de nuevas tecnologías, como el Internet y el multimedia, indica un deseo colectivo de crear nuevos espacios de convivencia y de inaugurar nuevos tipos de contacto con el objeto cultural; así, a la ‘sociedad del espectáculo’ le seguiría entonces la sociedad de los figurantes, en la que cada uno encontraría en los canales de comunicación [...] la ilusión de una democracia interactiva (Bourriaud, 2009, p. 36).

Jenkins (2009) cree que el factor cultural es el que conduce todo el proceso de la convergencia, y destaca el concepto de cultura participativa. Nosotros consideramos que es necesario explicar más detalladamente el concepto. Por tanto, buscamos las diferencias entre las definiciones de cultura participativa y de cultura colaborativa en el contexto social y mediático.

Como punto de partida, tomamos las acepciones de colaboración y participación del *Diccionario Aurelio* (Ferreira, 2008) para entender el sentido de las palabras y sus acciones. La colaboración hace referencia a “desarrollar un trabajo en común, con una o más personas en una obra y contribuir con el desarrollo del trabajo, efectuar un trabajo de cooperación” (2008, p. 244). La participación, en el mismo diccionario (2008, p. 611), se refiere a “hacer saber [de algo], comunicar, informar, compartir, tomar parte, asociarse por el sentimiento o pensamiento –del dolor, la alegría, el luto, etc.–”.

Observamos y asumimos, entonces, que existe una diferencia de acciones entre las acepciones citadas. Colaborar es construir en conjunto y participar es estar presente o interactuar de alguna forma, no necesariamente contribuir.

Jenkins, Ford y Green (2014) afirman que los debates sobre la cultura participativa surgieron antes que las nuevas plataformas de comunicación.

² <http://www.ecafe.com/getty/SA/>

A la mitad del siglo XIX, las personas escribían a mano o mecanografiaban contenidos sobre temas de política, cultura o de asuntos cotidianos que luego entregaban a la población en forma impresa, haciendo circular así la información. Es algo similar a lo que hoy se etiqueta en las “redes sociales” (Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, Clinton, & Robison, 2009) por el hecho de distribuir contenidos y al mismo tiempo compartirlos para quienes deseen tener acceso a ellos.

Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, *et al.* (2009) destacan que la historia de la cultura participativa tuvo avances en las décadas del 60 y 70 con el movimiento de contracultura, el crecimiento de los medios (radio y TV) y la relación entre la política, la cultura y los ciudadanos en la democracia. Hubo una expansión de las producciones culturales de diversas comunidades en línea, como por ejemplo el *podcasting* que llevó la radio a la internet y le dio participación a otros grupos diferentes para producir y hacer circular contenidos.

Al describir el concepto de cultura participativa, en su libro *Cultura de la convergencia*, Henry Jenkins (2009, p. 29) dice que la convergencia de los medios de comunicación en múltiples plataformas va más allá de la tecnología, pues para que esto suceda se necesita una transformación cultural en la mente de los consumidores. Es decir, el consumidor construye la propia historia y la fragmenta de acuerdo con su cotidianidad:

La expresión *cultura participativa* contrasta con nociones más antiguas sobre la pasividad de los espectadores de los medios de comunicación. En lugar de hablar sobre productores y consumidores de medios como roles separados, podemos ahora considerarlos como participantes que interactúan de acuerdo con un nuevo conjunto de reglas, que ninguno de nosotros entiende por completo (Jenkins, 2009, p. 30).

Jenkins destaca que cada consumidor recibe la información de forma individual y participa de acuerdo con su cultura emergente. Por eso, un contenido mediático puede ser compartido de acuerdo con la cultura, la comunidad y el modo de participación del individuo, independientemente de su posición geográfica, gracias al cambio del proceso de comunicación que pasa de la distribución a la circulación. Este modelo incrementa la participación de la cultura del público, que ya no es visto como consumidor sino como agente capaz de moldear, compartir y remezclar el contenido mediático.

Clay Shirky (2011), por su parte, plantea que en el siglo xx la comunicación giraba en torno al consumo y la producción, lo cual cambió cuando las personas empezaron a producir y compartir lo que consumían. Este investigador describe que la revolución se origina con la máquina digital, el *smartphone*, por ejemplo, con el que se puede compartir, producir y consumir contenido, acciones básicas en el producto digital. Shirky resalta que la cultura participativa le dio voz a quien no podía opinar; ganar seguidores a un cantante desconocido; publicar sus textos (en forma de blogs o en las redes sociales digitales) a escritores que no contaban con el apoyo de una editorial; obtener recursos por medio de financiación abierta a las ONG, etc.; es decir, los individuos anónimos se convirtieron en productores de contenidos (aficionados, pero productores, al fin y al cabo).

Otro punto importante para este cambio es el escenario económico contemporáneo, en el cual el consumo se destaca y proporciona productos con más facilidad para la sociedad. En el libro *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture*, Jenkins *et al.* (2009) exponen el resultado de una investigación realizada con niños, jóvenes y adultos en Estados Unidos, sobre la cultura participativa en las escuelas y las redes sociales, y presentan cinco características que definen dicho concepto dentro del grupo estudiado (2009, p. xi):

- 1 Pocos obstáculos para la expresión artística y el compromiso cívico.
- 2 Gran soporte para la creación de contenidos y recursos compartidos.
- 3 Distintos tipos de tutorías proporcionadas por personas que cuentan con determinada experticia.
- 4 Productores que creen en la importancia de sus contribuciones.
- 5 Personas que sienten una conexión social con otras (o al menos, se preocupan por lo que otras personas piensan sobre lo que crearon).

En este contexto, Jenkins *et al.* (2009) explican que no todos deben contribuir con la creación de contenido, pero todos saben que pueden aportar cuando lo deseen. Otro dato señalado por la investigación es que la cultura participativa se subdivide en cuatro categorías –afiliaciones, expresiones, soluciones colaborativas y circulaciones–, descritas de la siguiente forma:

Afiliaciones: Las asociaciones, formales e informales, en comunidades en línea centradas en varias formas de medios, tales como *Friendster*, *Facebook*, *MySpace*, foros, *metagaming* y clanes de jugadores.

Expresiones: Producir nuevas formas creativas como muestreo digital, desmonte y modificación, videos de fans, *fan fiction*, *zines* y *mash-ups*.

Solución colaborativa de problemas: Trabajar en conjunto por equipos –formales e informales– para completar tareas y desarrollar nuevos conocimientos; por ejemplo, a través de *Wikipedia* y juegos de realidad alternativa.

Circulaciones: Darle forma al flujo de medios, como *podcasting* o *blogging* (Jenkins *et al.*, 2009, pp. xi-xii).

La investigación también aborda la brecha de participación entre adolescentes, jóvenes y adultos, puesto que estos tienen cierta dificultad en producir su contenido mientras que entre los niños y jóvenes tal acción es común en sus rutinas. Jenkins *et al.* (2009) señalan que es necesario incluir el desarrollo de habilidades de la cultura participativa en la educación con el fin de lograr una interacción entre el conocimiento, la producción de conocimiento y la enseñanza para el nuevo escenario de la comunicación. Ellos clasifican dichas habilidades como se cita a continuación:

Juego: La capacidad de experimentar con el entorno como forma de resolución de problemas.

Desempeño: La habilidad para adoptar identidades alternativas con el propósito de improvisar y descubrir.

Simulación: La capacidad de interpretar y construir modelos dinámicos de procesos del mundo real.

Apropiación: La capacidad de tomar y remezclar contenido multimedia de manera significativa.

Multitarea: La capacidad de explorar y analizar el entorno y desplazar el foco a los detalles más sobresalientes.

Cognición distribuida: La capacidad de interactuar de manera significativa con herramientas que amplían las capacidades mentales.

Inteligencia colectiva: La capacidad de unir conocimiento y comparar observaciones con otras personas hacia un objetivo común.

Juicio: La capacidad de evaluar la confiabilidad y credibilidad de diferentes fuentes de información.

Navegación transmedia: La capacidad de seguir el flujo de historias e informaciones en múltiples modalidades.

Redes: La capacidad de buscar, sintetizar y diseminar información.

Negociación: La capacidad de transitar en diversas comunidades, discernir y respetar múltiples perspectivas y comprender y seguir modelos alternativos (Jenkins *et al.*, 2009, p. xiv).

En el libro *Cultura de la conexión*, escrito por Jenkins, Ford y Green (2014, p. 198), se plantea que la cultura participativa evoluciona, así como los ciudadanos, de tal suerte que empiezan a surgir nuevos comportamientos y acciones en la Red debido al *marketing*, las ciencias políticas, los estudios culturales, la educación y la antropología digitales. En tal sentido los autores contrastan los siguientes aspectos: observación frente a participación periférica; resistencia y participación; audiencia y público; participación y colaboración; escuchar y oír.

Jenkins *et al.* (2014) contrastan la observación frente a la participación periférica debido al hecho de que muchos consumidores interactúan observando lo que sucede en la Red sin crear su contenido. Este es un público adulto y su forma de contribuir consiste en compartir y disfrutar de los contenidos a su disposición. Son resistentes a la industria mediática convencional, que tiene miedo de las acciones participativas de los ciudadanos. Para explicar esta realidad, Jenkins *et al.* usan los términos fans y *fandoms*. Los fans son individuos aislados, que comparten y crean grupos de discusión sobre un determinado tema de su interés, y los *fandoms* son grupos de personas o aficionados a un determinado asunto, un colectivo.

En esa línea, destacamos la participación frente a la colaboración, aspecto importante para el objetivo de nuestra investigación. De acuerdo con Jenkins *et al.* (2014) la colaboración es una relación compleja, crea nuevas oportunidades y herramientas, rompe las reglas y está más cerca del sector corporativo debido a su forma de acción:

La participación en una comunidad de marca o de fans puede o no ser un modo de influir en la cultura y puede o no ser un modo de intensificar el compromiso del público con el producto o marca. Los colaboradores son cómplices de los regímenes dominantes de poder, aunque a menudo también usen su incorporación en ese sistema para redirigir las energías o reecaminar los recursos de éstos (p. 220).

Jenkins, *et al.* (2014) plantean que la cultura participativa, en cambio, no solo está involucrada con la comunidad, aun con el desafío que representa el crecimiento social y la cultura, sino que también le proporciona más fuerza a los compromisos activistas.

Estos investigadores indican que el ciudadano colaborador es connivente con los grandes medios, pero muchas veces se vale de esta situación para infiltrarse en el medio, tener acceso y poder colaborar con la creación

del contenido. En cuanto a la diferencia entre oír y escuchar, el primer aspecto está ligado a las estrategias de *marketing* en tanto que el segundo evidencia la razón por la cual el público quiere interactuar con una empresa y su contenido. Por lo tanto, las empresas necesitan escuchar, ya que oír es solo recibir un mensaje, mientras que escuchar es conversar con su público.

En contraste, Jane McGonigal (2012) afirma que la colaboración es una forma especial de trabajo conjunto que no significa únicamente unir fuerzas o alcanzar un objetivo, sino construir colectivamente algo que sería difícil crear por una sola persona (p. 268). A su vez, la colaboración requiere tres tipos de esfuerzo concentrado: *cooperación* (actuar en pro de un objetivo común), *coordinación* (armonizar y coordinar aptitudes) y *cocreación* (crear colectivamente nuevos productos). La cocreación es considerada por McGonigal el principal factor para la colaboración:

Casi todo puede ser creado a través de la colaboración: una experiencia de grupo, un recurso de conocimiento, una obra de arte. Cada vez más, los jugadores colaboran para crear todos estos resultados. De hecho, colaboran incluso cuando compiten entre sí para ganar. De manera creciente, los jugadores colaboran incluso cuando están jugando solos (McGonigal, 2012, p. 269).

Michael Tomasello (citado por McGonigal, 2012, p. 271) dice que la acción de compartir es definida por la habilidad de participar, junto a otras personas, de una actividad colaborativa con unos objetivos comunes. Y afirma que la práctica de seguir metas inusuales y trabajar en equipo está ligada al instinto natural de todo ser humano.

McGonigal lleva a cabo su investigación en el contexto de los videojuegos, y encuentra como evidencia el desarrollo creciente de plataformas digitales para juegos basados en un sistema de creación colaborativa en el que los jugadores necesitan crear contenido propio para ayudar a los demás jugadores. No obstante, aclara que:

Las habilidades colaborativas están en ascenso en todo el mundo, incluso entre los no jugadores. Desde la diseminación de la alfabetización básica en la Internet y los *smartphones* hasta la Web 2.0, en rápida expansión, y el *know how* del *crowdsourcing*, las personas, en todas partes, están cada vez más conectadas, mejorando de manera significativa sus habilidades de cooperar, coordinar y crear en grupo. En este sentido, los jugadores

son solo la expresión de una tendencia social y tecnológica más amplia, hacia una colaboración mayor (McGonigal, 2012, p. 277).

Como lo muestra esta autora, dicho sistema de colaboración hace crecer la industria, genera nuevos productos y conocimientos y fortalece la cooperación, la coordinación y la cocreación. A su vez, McGonigal acuña el concepto de “superpoderes colaborativos”, que consiste en una nueva habilidad con la cual se modifica el entendimiento de lo que es humanamente posible y que va más allá del modelo tradicional de enseñanza. Se trata de acciones sociables en ambientes *on-line* que buscan organizar ambientes caóticos, alejarse de viejas metas para crear otras nuevas, así como ampliar nuevas comunidades colaborativas (no solo en el juego) mediante la utilización de la inteligencia colectiva y la producción colaborativa.

Las consideraciones de Jane McGonigal sobre la cultura colaborativa están en sintonía con la definición del concepto de colaboración del *Diccionario Aurelio* (Ferreira, 2008), y presenta divergencias con la noción de cultura participativa de Jenkins, incluso cuando éste habla de la colaboración y describe los pasos para involucrar a la sociedad en la convergencia cultural.

La transmedia y la cultura colaborativa

La transmedia consiste en el desarrollo de una narrativa de forma simultánea en diferentes plataformas, cada una de las cuales ofrece un contenido exclusivo de la historia principal. Se trata del concepto de *transmedia storytelling*, una nueva estética que surge como respuesta a la convergencia de los medios de comunicación y sus recursos de interacción y que genera estrategias de propagación de contenido por medio de la cultura participativa. Según Jenkins:

La transmedia implica el procesamiento de nuevos tipos de historias y argumentos que emergen dentro de una cultura de convergencia, expresando ideas de maneras que explotan las oportunidades y los recursos representados por el nuevo paisaje de los medios. En otras palabras, implica la capacidad de leer y escribir en todos los modos de expresión disponibles (2009, p. 89).

Este modo de contar y propagar historias en múltiples plataformas que propicia la narrativa transmedia aumenta la capacidad de participación y

colaboración del espectador y consumidor de diversos contenidos. Hay un universo de contenidos susceptible de ser creado para cada género de producción, como por ejemplo la tv, el cine, los videojuegos y las obras seriadas de ficción y no ficción. La construcción de este universo se propaga gracias a la participación activa de las comunidades de los fans de dichas producciones.

En las plataformas digitales, como las redes sociales virtuales, es posible involucrar a diferentes comunidades denominadas *fanfictions* y *fandoms* en otros espacios de conexión y convergencia de contenido, como blogs, chats y páginas especializadas. Por lo tanto, el flujo de producción de la narrativa transmedia como un todo no sigue una lógica predefinida o determinada por el productor del contenido creado. La expansión de la narrativa de modo colaborativo se da por la audiencia y puede alcanzar impactos de grandes proporciones, lo que trae como resultado la longevidad de determinado universo.

Para Suzanne Scott (2013), la idea de una cultura colaborativa cobra relevancia en los procesos de autoría colaborativa de los proyectos de narrativa transmedia, a los que alude en el siguiente comentario de su ensayo sobre el papel del autor de *fanboy* en la narrativa transmedia:

A diferencia de lo que ocurre en una historia transmedia, la discusión de este ensayo sobre el autor de *fanboy* y su función debe considerarse solo como un punto de entrada a un tema mucho más amplio y rico que está en expansión y desarrollo. Primero, este ensayo no describe cómo el autor podría proceder de manera diferente en las franquicias transmedia creadas por compañías no comerciales, o cuando surgen en medios distintos a la televisión. Por ejemplo, una franquicia transmedia cultivada en torno a un cómic, un medio que se define en gran parte por la ‘visión’ de autoría unificada y colaborativa creada entre un escritor y un artista, ciertamente complicaría algunas de las afirmaciones de este ensayo. En segundo lugar, en ningún momento de este ensayo menciono las extensiones transmedia que requieren un alto grado de colaboración entre creadores y consumidores, como los juegos de realidad alterna (ARG), que solo pueden prosperar si los maestros/creadores y los jugadores/fans trabajan juntos (2013, pp. 50-51).

Ahora bien, si la cultura colaborativa ha existido siempre (en forma de comentarios y acciones entre amigos, o grupos de estudiantes), es con la internet que se ha expandido y ha tomado un cuerpo nunca antes

dimensionado. Pero lo que los sitios de *crowdsourcing* y *crowdfunding* posibilitan, por ejemplo, es algo que rebasa todo lo que se ha hecho en términos de cultura colaborativa. Y es una tendencia que debe aumentar, porque no siempre las instituciones dan cuenta de todas las demandas de la sociedad. No somos pequeñas aldeas interconectadas por estrechas carreteras; vivimos en un planeta con más de 7000 millones de personas que pueden comunicarse a través de la internet. Si la globalización convencional –basada en *best sellers* y *major*s productoras de entretenimiento– no puede dar cuenta de cada demanda particular, entonces les queda a los interesados en un asunto común reunirse y, vía web, materializar sus deseos.

Por ejemplo, el cine es una obra colectiva, pero está organizada por un concentrador de inversiones: el productor ejecutivo. Cuando un proyecto no tiene espacio en el campo de visión de los inversores, necesita esa red colaborativa, no solo para crear, producir, distribuir y exhibir, sino también para financiar. En ese sentido el proyecto *Life in a Day*³ de Ridley y Tony Scott fue realizado en 2011. Cualquier persona podía enviar por YouTube un video con imágenes de lo que ocurrió el 24 de julio de 2010 respondiendo a tres preguntas: “Lo que hay en tu bolsillo”, “¿Qué amas?” y “¿De qué sientes miedo?”. Se enviaron 80 000 videos de 192 países, de los cuales fueron seleccionados 33 cortos, editados en una película de 95 minutos.

También en 2011 surge *Bar Karma*,⁴ una serie web de ciencia ficción colaborativa dirigida por Will Wright. Fue un experimento de entretenimiento en *crowdsourced*, que transformó historias escritas por fans en episodios de 30 minutos producidos con equipo y elenco profesionales. Los miembros publicaban sus *loglines* en la comunidad del Bar Karma. Las historias seleccionadas se expandían a *storyboards*. Las más votadas por los miembros entraron en la línea de producción para la temporada de doce episodios.

También está el caso de *HitRECORD on TV*,⁵ una serie de televisión creada en 2014 por Joseph Gordon-Levitt. La serie desarrolla un tema único por episodio enfatizando los conceptos de celebridad web y de la

³ http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1687247/?ref_=nv_sr_1

⁴ http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1786211/?ref_=fn_tt_tt_1

⁵ http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3453566/?ref_=nv_sr_1

historia del arte. Cada episodio fue producido a partir de contribuciones de miembros de la comunidad HitRECORD en todo el mundo –cartas, performances en vivo, dibujos animados, etcétera–.

Es innegable que ese proceso cultural colectivo es refutado por los inversores, empresarios y consultores de la denominada industria cultural. Sin embargo, para la sociedad como un todo y para la evolución de la cultura es una iniciativa altamente beneficiosa.

Conclusiones

Actualmente, el alcance de las plataformas de medios y la interacción con la tecnología es cada vez más rápida y natural; a medida que el acceso a la información se amplía en las redes de todo el mundo, creamos cada vez más formas de propagar contenidos afines. El “compromiso digital” deja de tener un contexto social, para pasar a generar estrategias de negocio. Tanto la cultura de participación como la de colaboración están ligadas y son más visibles en la transmedialidad.

A partir de los aportes de Jenkins, se presupone que el término de cultura colaborativa está vinculado con la producción del contenido de una obra en conjunto con su realizador o poseedor de su propiedad intelectual, que tras su creación es propagada por la cultura participativa, la cual contribuye a compartirla en las distintas plataformas de medios en línea y fuera de línea. Por lo tanto, lo que se produce en conjunto con la audiencia es colaborativo y, después de compartido por la interacción de la audiencia, se convierte en participativo. Ambos procesos forman parte del flujo de producción transmediática y son de suma importancia para generar los desdoblamientos y el compromiso que se orienta a la narrativa transmedia como un todo; además, fomentan la transmisión de los contenidos generados de modo exclusivo para cada plataforma de medios, lo que posibilita un mayor alcance de acuerdo con las preferencias individuales de las personas.

En McGonigal, si bien su comprensión sobre la participación y la colaboración es relativamente cercana a la de Jenkins, las atribuciones de cada uno de los dos aspectos son más precisas y son expuestas de un modo más técnico, pues delimita las funciones de producción compartida y producción desarrollada en conjunto, la cocreación; por tanto, se trata de dos maneras diferentes de abordar el mismo asunto, con enfoques dirigidos a determinado tipo de público, pues McGonigal está familiarizada con el universo de los videojuegos y Jenkins con la sociedad en sí y sus formas de vivir la cultura de la convergencia y el compromiso de la audiencia en las producciones transmediáticas.

En suma, a partir de lo expuesto hasta aquí, las definiciones de cultura participativa y de cultura colaborativa son específicas y diferentes una de la otra, y poseen unos roles socioculturales claros y distintos, aunque ambas están presentes de modo relevante e indispensable en cualquier producción que se identifique como narrativa transmedia.

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The Transmedia News Coverage of the 2016 Rio Olympics*

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Introduction

This paper wishes to examine how transmedia features were structured and implemented by the official Brazilian broadcaster Globo Network (Rede Globo, in Portuguese), in the news coverage of the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics. Globo Network, the largest in Brazil, had the non-exclusive right to transmit the Games on television and the exclusive rights for cable television, Internet, and mobile phone broadcast (UOL, 2015). During the Games, Globo Network (in partnership with the Japanese broadcasting organization NHK) aired the live Opening and Closing ceremonies in ultra-high-definition 8K format (Lobo, 2016). Other innovations included sports commentators' use of augmented reality, and high-definition images on the network's Internet streaming service, Globo Play, as part of a strategic move to gain market share and boost Globo Network businesses domestically and internationally.

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The theoretical framework focuses on transmedia journalism (Gambarato & Alzamora, 2018; Moloney, 2011; Renó, 2014) of planned events (Dayan & Katz, 1992; Gambarato, Alzamora, & Tárchia, 2016; Gambarato & Tárchia, 2017; Getz, 2012; Hepp & Couldry, 2010). The methodology is based on the analytical and operational model for transmedia news coverage of planned events developed by Gambarato and Tárchia (2017). The research findings indicate that the content was expanded throughout various media platforms, but involved limited audience engagement mechanisms.

Transmedia journalism of planned events

Henry Jenkins' (2006) conceptualization of transmedia storytelling refers to robust franchises distributed across multiple media platforms, where this type of storytelling unfolds story-worlds throughout diverse media outlets and embraces audience engagement as a core element of transmedia experiences. On the other hand, transmedia journalism presents dynamics similar to those of transmedia storytelling but applied to entertainment, magnifying news narratives through diverse platforms that involve citizen participation. Audiences can participate by adding, editing, and sharing news via digital media. Gambarato and Tárchia (2017) argue:

In sum, we consider that transmedia journalism, as well as other applications of TS [transmedia storytelling] in fictional and nonfictional realms, is characterized by the involvement of (1) multiple media platforms, (2) content expansion, and (3) audience engagement. Transmedia journalism can take advantage of different media platforms such as television, radio, print media, and, above all, the internet and mobile media to tell deeper stories. Content expansion, as opposed to the repetition of the same message across multiple platforms, is the essence of TS [transmedia storytelling] and, therefore, should be the focal point of transmedia journalism as well. The enrichment of the narrative is facilitated by the extended content. Audience engagement involves mechanisms of interactivity, such as the selection of the elements to be explored, the option to read a text, watch a video, enlarge photographs, access maps, click on hyperlinks, and share information through social networks. Audience engagement deals with participation via, for instance, remixing content and creating original user-generated content (p. 1387).

Characteristic of transmedia storytelling is the direct inclusion of the *ad hoc*/contingent and the planned/strategic creations aspects related to transmedia journalism. To start with, Fast and Örnebring (2015) discuss the *ad hoc*/emergent nature of transmedia storytelling by highlighting the fact that transmedia worlds can evolve over time and can be co-created both by professionals and amateurs, while the planned/strategic essence of transmedia productions considers the companies' careful structuring and narrative portioning across multiple media platforms. Among these features, transmedia journalism combines the "carefully orchestrated company strategies" (Fast & Örnebring, 2015, p. 2) and the commodification of media texts (Bolin, 2007; Freeman, 2016b) with the *ad hoc* nature of audience engagement within transmedia experiences. Gambarato and Tárca (2017) emphasize on the planned aspect of transmedia journalism optimization, because it becomes a proactive process that is carried out by the journalists who assume the responsibility to design a storyworld in which the audience can be engaged. Although transmedia-breaking news journalism is possible, Moloney (2011) argues that "daily journalism, with its time-constrained brevity, is not a viable option. Transmedia must be designed carefully and developed with a lengthy lead time to be effective" (p. 12). In addition, Renó (2014) reinforces the need to design and plan not only the content to be produced but also the way in which the audience will experience it.

Planned events are well schematized temporal occurrences, publicized in advance. They are noteworthy occurrences within a special set of circumstances at a given place and time, with a detailed program and schedule known in advance (Getz, 2012). Getz proposes an experiential planned event typology that embraces mega-events, media events, participant events, and so forth, which are organized consistently with their functions and meanings: (1) cultural celebrations (festivals, carnivals, heritage commemorations, religious rites, etc.), (2) business and trade (meetings, conventions, fairs, exhibitions, etc.), (3) arts and entertainment (concerts, shows, installations, award ceremonies), (4) political and state (summits, political congresses, military events, etc.), (5) private functions (rites of passage, weddings, funerals, etc.), and (6) sport and recreation (championships, tours, fun events, etc.).

The term media event was introduced and gained visibility after Dayan and Katz's (1992) mass communication studies focused on live,

real-time broadcasting of extraordinary, pre-planned public events. Hepp and Couldry (2010) extended the conceptualization of media events, discussing the globalized and multifaceted power structure of communication processes reinforced by the role of the Internet and multiplatform production in media cultures from the Digital Age. Likewise, recent publications about media events (Fox, 2016; Mitu & Poulakidakos, 2016) draw on Dayan and Katz's (1992) concepts and challenge the live broadcasting and printed media assumptions, typical of mass communication, by incorporating the social media reality into the debate. Thus, planned events transmedia news coverage is comprehensive and encompasses much more than the sports sphere. The relevance of planned events transmedia journalism relies on the fact that these usually entail (1) *ad hoc*/emergent aspects, attracting large domestic and international audiences, potentially engaging and integrating them in the news-making process, and (2) planned/strategic aspects, involving a significant amount of human, technical, and financial resources, and providing numerous protagonists, primary and parallel stories (Gambarato & Tárcea, 2017).

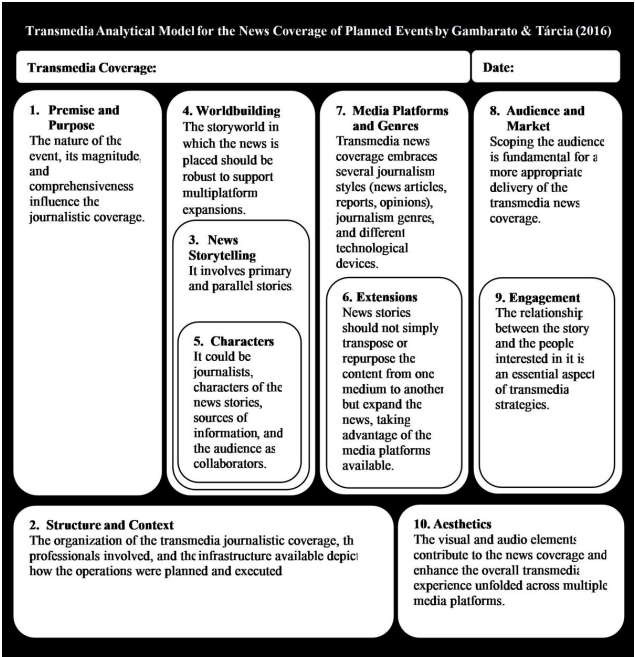
As discussed by Gambarato, Alzamora and Tárcea (2016), the multiplatform global news coverage of planned events where citizens also produce and distribute content is a practice that gained traction, especially during the 2012 London Summer Olympics. Due to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) coverage of the 2012 Games, London Olympics are considered the "first truly digital Olympics" (O'Riordan, 2012, § 3). The Olympics in London (with multiscreen production) and Sochi in 2014 (with the addition of discreet hints of transmedia features in the coverage) confirmed the emergence of a distinct scenario in journalism: a hybrid of the mass media transmission logic and the social media sharing logic, which blurs off the distinctions between professionals and amateurs, producers and users. This blend of information/content production and consumption, or *produsage* (Bruns, 2008), and its subsequent engagement of audiences, by creating communities around the storyworlds and user-generated content (UGC), is a core principle of transmedia experiences (Jenkins, 2006), in the fiction and nonfiction realms. UGC concerns media content freely created, circulated, and consumed by the public, including, for instance, "blogs, wikis, discussion forums, posts, chats, tweets, podcasts, and pins, delivered in text, image, video, or audio modes" (Smith, Stavros, & Westberg, 2017, p. 59).

Lewis (2012) suggests that “the struggle between the professional logic of control, embedded in journalism’s ideology, and the participatory logic of free engagement, embedded in the substance and culture of digital media” (2012, p. 850) is paving the way for the emergence of “a hybrid logic of adaptability and openness: a willingness to see audiences on a more peer level, to appreciate their contributions, and to find normative purpose in transparency and participation, *à la* open-source technology culture” (p. 851).

Methodology of analysis

The analysis of transmedia strategies for planned events news coverage aims at a clearer understanding of transmedia news production and to boost and improve transmedia journalistic practices. The method chosen for the transmedia analysis of Globo Network news coverage during the 2016 Summer Olympics is the analytical and operational model for planned events, proposed by Gambarato and Tárchia (2017). This model addresses the specificities of such multiplatform news productions by clarifying how transmedia features are structured and implemented. Identifying transmedia strategies of journalistic coverage backs the analytical and operational purposes of both scholars and journalists interested in the contemporary news media industry. As proposed by Freeman (2016a), “our role as media industry studies scholars is perhaps to be brainstormers and analysts to help theoretically advance cutting-edge media industry workings” (p. 205). The method draws the analytical model developed by Gambarato (2013) on transmedia project design and establishes 10 main topics and subsequent practicable questions, regarding, for instance, news storytelling, media platforms, and audience engagement. A schematic representation of the model is provided in Figure 1. Similarly, this model has been applied to analyze the transmedia dynamics during the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympic Games regarding the Russian news coverage (see Gambarato, Alzamora, & Tárchia, 2016) and the Brazilian news coverage of the 2014 FIFA World Cup (see Gambarato, Alzamora, Tárchia, & Jurno, 2017).

Figure 1 . Schematic representation of the transmedia analytical model for the news coverage of planned events by Gambarato & Tárchia (2017)



Source: Authors.

The Transmedia News Coverage of the 2016 Rio Olympics

Premise and Purpose

The 2016 Summer Olympics took place in Brazil on August 2016. More than 11,000 athletes represented 205 National Olympic Committees, including first-time entrants Kosovo, South Sudan, and the Refugee Olympic Team. Three hundred six events, spanning 42 sports disciplines, occurred across 32 competition venues over 16 days (Long, 2016).

Although the fundamental objects of the coverage were the competitions, the athletes, and their performances, the media also had to be aware of issues connected to the coverage. This scenario included the coverage of (1) social and political demonstrations and controversies, (2)

an ongoing outbreak of the mosquito-borne Zika virus in Brazil, (3) the pollution of Guanabara Bay, whose waters were used for sailing and wind-surfing competitions, (4) political instability and economic crises, and (5) the Russian doping scandal and participation restrictions, for instance.

Structure and Context

For the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio, Brazilian television channels Globo Network, Record Network, and Bandeirantes Network were responsible for generating the international radio and TV signals. More than 7.000 hours of video and audio coverage were produced and distributed to an audience of six billion people over 220 countries (Long, 2016). Globo Network planned a multiplatform coverage of the Games which included online streaming, social media networks, mobile applications, and websites. The websites still remain live and updated.

The broadcaster's public-facing operations took place inside the network's Olympic Studio facility, located in the heart of the Olympic Park. Globo Network allegedly invested around US\$250 million in this coverage (Feltrin, 2016). This structure and the large investment contributed to effectively execute the planned transmedia strategies for the news coverage.

News Storytelling

The news coverage of the 2016 Rio Games involved different kinds of stories. In general, the primary stories broadcasted, especially on television, were directly related to the sports events, such as the Olympic competitions, games' results, and stories about the athletes being portrayed as heroes. However, parallel stories, especially when shared via social media in conjunction with mass media, were also diffused widely. Some of the highlighted parallel stories included (1) American Olympic swimmer Ryan Lochte fabricating a story about being robbed at gunpoint during the Games, (2) two boxers arrested and accused of trying to rape housekeepers, (3) Patrick Hickey, a top Olympic official, arrested after illegally selling tickets to the Games, and (4) an Olympic media bus attacked on a highway. The secondary stories, in conjunction with the primary ones, enriched the coverage and functioned as crucial elements to expand the content during the transmedia coverage.

World-Building

The event was set throughout Rio de Janeiro, which provided an opportunity to construct worlds under different aspects. The broadcaster built the concept “we are all Olympians”, upon which the network based its actions to involve and engage the audience. The warm-up for the Games started in March 2016, and around 2.500 related news pieces were aired before the Opening Ceremony.

The Olympics were big enough to support expansions throughout multiplatform coverage. Globo Group, comprising Globo Network (television), Globosat (cable television), Infoglobo (printed media), and Globo Radio System (radio), involved several of the group’s content platforms in this coverage, although the same had not occurred over the 2014 FIFA World Cup (Gambarato *et al.*, 2017). On this occasion, Globo Group created different concepts for each media platform, a core characteristic of transmedia storytelling and consequently, of transmedia journalism. On one hand, cable television, with over a 1,000 professionals involved, provided a broad experience of the Games. On the other hand, printed media, under the premise of “digital first”, delivered material to websites, mobile applications, and e-books, in addition to special magazines. Furthermore, a free printed tabloid paper was distributed, as well as a guide to the Olympics.

A special digital environment followed the competitions in real time and focused on interactivity with users; infographics, photo galleries, videos, quizzes, mini-documentaries, etc. were also available. While some specific actions encouraged users’ involvement through posts and comments on social networks, the coverage also offered a competition-based game, divided into stages, in which the player scored points by answering Games related questions. Moreover, a mobile application was developed to provide updated information and news about competitions, as well as itineraries for the event’s day-to-day schedule. For example, the application even mentioned which bars would transmit the competitions, venues where fans from a certain country were getting together, as well as other services. The newspapers focused on stories about citizenship, optimism, overcoming difficulties, inclusion, and other Olympic values. By offering material and services to make the most while at the city, Infoglobo served as an alternative for brands wanting to play host

to tourists and communicate directly with them. The radio operations concentrated on information, thrills, and humor throughout bulletins and programs, always striving to present Olympic sports in an easier and practical manner to the audience.

Characters

In mega-events such as the Olympics, a complex storyworld with multiple highlighted characters as part of the coverage are proposed by both the journalists and/or by the event organizers. Several people, in addition to the array of international athletes, were the focus of the news coverage in 2016. Although the regulations imposed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) are considered strict, especially regarding social media, the visibility of the Globo Network studio in the Olympic Park created a different phenomenon in these Olympics. During the main televised broadcasts, many people congested the front of the building and ended up being incorporated into the show. Even with this initiative, the excessive control, regulations, and economic interests restricted the audience's overall capability to actively participate in the news coverage. Therefore, the audience cannot be considered a leading character in the media coverage of this event.

Daily data collected during the Olympics remarked numerous prominent athletes and non-athlete characters. For instance, despite Olympic officials' efforts to avoid an uncomfortable scenario, Brazilian residents loudly booed interim President Michel Temer as he opened the Games. He did not receive an introduction to the crowd, which is a standard for the leaders of the host countries; the event was one of the first official gatherings that Michel Temer had attended since becoming the country's president on August 31, 2016, after President Dilma Rousseff was impeached and removed from office. Olympics fans, in general, and social media users, in particular, were neither necessarily aware of nor worried about the IOC restrictions: during the Games, spectators were expelled from Olympic venues for wearing T-shirts criticizing Michel Temer. In addition, while spectators were ordered by members of the security forces to put away signs with political messages, a Brazilian federal judge ruled in favor of allowing peaceful political protests at the Olympic Games in Rio. Not surprisingly, it was the Globo Group who covered this controversy on all platforms. Gisele Bündchen, the world's highest-paid supermodel, also

featured the 2016 Olympics Opening Ceremony, when she walked the length of the Maracanã Stadium to the sound of “Girl from Ipanema”. As a result, Spotify reported that the song was streamed over 40,000 times the day after her appearance, representing an increase of 1.200% over usual streaming ratings (Bromwich, 2016).

Extensions

Despite the restrictions imposed by the IOC, Globo Network planned the “biggest coverage in the broadcaster’s history after the inauguration of its Olympic Studio” (Rede Globo, 2016c, § 1). Primarily, the extended coverage involved all the Globo Group media platforms: television, printed media, Internet, and radio. For instance, Globo Group’s cable sports channel SportTV directly broadcasted 100% of the competitions, using 56 signals across television and the Internet. Subscribers could choose among 56 broadcasting options available in computers, tablets, and smartphones applications. The video-on-demand SportTV Play platform offered special programs and an interactive video player that displayed pause and rewind options, allowing users to choose events according to the date and sport (Rede Globo, 2016a). Likewise, the SportTV Rio 2016 mobile application granted users exclusive access to the channel’s schedule and medals table. In this application, which operated with augmented reality technology, the user could activate alerts to receive notifications about the events schedule and information about their favorite athletes, as well as access to a services guide to Rio de Janeiro that showed tourist attractions, means of transportation, bike rentals, police stations, hospitals, and health centers in three languages: Portuguese, Spanish, and English (Rede Globo, 2016b).

Although it still prioritized a mass media logic of transmission, this distinctive coverage included several multiplatform extensions based on the Olympic Studio. The content aired on this multiscreen environment enabled various possibilities for exploring journalistic content and interaction via social media, mediated by the hashtag #SomosTodosOlímpicos [#WeAreAllOlympians], with posts exhibited live on a large screen at the Olympic Studio. The aim was to update the content on the different media platforms during the news coverage, while promoting audience engagement via social media interactions. In an unprecedented partnership (Rede Globo, 2016a), the profile “Snapredglobo” offered specific

content for the feature “Live Stories” on Snapchat, including behind the scenes photos and videos recorded by journalists, commentators, and fans. Thus, a news coverage strategy was established based on multiplatform broadcasting, where specific content was allotted to foster engagement under certain extensions.

Media Platforms and Genres

The multiplatform perspective that outlined the Olympic Games news coverage produced by Globo Network involved numerous journalistic styles, such as news stories, articles, interviews, and opinion pieces. Television broadcasts prevailed among the journalistic strategy, particularly in relation to national news and sports programs on its public access channel, such as Globo Esporte. On one side, public access broadcasts favored the most popular sports in the country, such as football, volleyball, and gymnastics, as well as competitions in which Brazilian athletes participated. On the other, broadcasts on cable channels favored specific sports. In both cases, there was a strong correlation with the Internet via websites, applications, and profiles on online social media networks.

For instance, the website globoesporte.com broadcasted 100% of the Olympic Games events on two live streaming channels, with scores on the website’s homepage being updated in real time. Also, the video-on-demand platform *Globo Play* offered free content that completed the public access channel on a 24-hour basis. Additionally, users could also access competitions that had already happened from an on-demand catalogue that listed athletes, sports, and participating nations. Although the multiplatform coverage of the event focused mainly on television and the Internet, radio and printed media were also included.

In sum, the content produced by Globo Network, in the scope of the broadcaster’s multiplatform coverage of the Olympic Games, was complementary and eventually redundant, favoring users’ choices depending on their mediatic consumption habits. In this sense, it was possible to identify the valorization of second screen applications and geolocation, as well as the interaction on online social media networks, stemming from journalistic content offered by the broadcaster.

Audience and Market

The multiplatform audience of Globo Network registered an unparalleled growth rate during the Games. The cable channel SportTV, Globo's main channel for this event, reached 38 million people during the 2,400 hours of broadcasting in 17 days. This number is 27% bigger than the three direct competitors (ESPN, Fox, and BandSports) sum of spectators and 29% bigger than the total number of spectators reached by SportTV during the 2012 London Olympics coverage. During the Rio Olympics, SportTV and SportTV2 took the lead in prime-time cable television (Stycer, 2016).

Regarding the impact of the event on the different media platforms used, televised broadcasting registered a 40% increase, in comparison to the 2012 London Olympics. Between August 3 and August 21, 2016, the free-to-air Globo Network channel reached 177 million people, which represents 53.5 million people more than during the 2012 London Games, corresponding to a 43% increase. The group's digital platforms recorded 6.5 million users in the audience peaks during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies transmissions. The broadcast of the Closing Ceremony drew a 27 audience rating, the highest since the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Furthermore, globoesporte.com reached a daily average of 15 million accesses during the Games, and a historical record was set during the women's football semi-final between Brazil and Sweden: 20.1 million views (Mermelstein, 2016). These numbers show that the multiplatform coverage strategy was successful: Globo Network beat audience records and became the leader of that segment, reaching a varied public with a robust and diversified editorial project. However, this does not mean that citizen participation widely permeated the editorial planning, even if participation was discernible in specific contexts, notably on the online social media networks.

Engagement

Globo Network attained the most engagement, in comparison to any brand, on online social media during the 2016 Rio Olympic Games (Sou-telo, 2016). Throughout the Games, Globo Network's profile on Twitter posted 1,800 tweets, generating around 180,000 shares. The hashtag [#SomosTodosOlimpicos](https://twitter.com/hashtag/SomosTodosOlimpicos), created by the broadcaster, was mentioned 234,000 times on Twitter between August 3 and August 21, 2016. This

was 10 times more than what was measured for the hashtag #NBCOlympics posted by the American television network NBC, which registered 22.000 mentions on Twitter during the same period. Globo Network's coverage became a trending topic on Brazilian Twitter 509 times and on the global Trending Topics list 165 times. Facebook registered around 830 posts with the hashtag #SomosTodosOlímpicos, which generated around 6 million accesses. On Instagram, this hashtag was deployed for around 630 posts, with nearly 5.8 million likes. On Snapchat, the broadcaster's profile registered about 730.000 daily visits (Soutelo, 2016).

The engagement generated on online social media networks, especially when mediated by the hashtag put forward by Globo Network, indicates that the hashtag acted as a symbolic articulation of the broadcaster's posts on social media. This mechanism of interaction stimulates social involvement in news dissemination, based on contemporary habits of information consumption, and this hashtag boosted Globo Network's presence on online social media connections. This element is extremely important for the editorial strategy adopted in its multiplatforms, because it emphasizes the relevance of online social media networks in the diffusion of journalistic content.

In this sense, the Olympic Games became the most talked-about event ever on Instagram, with 916 million interactions between 131 million Instagram users (G1, 2016). Overall, the broadcaster's audience engagement strategy privileged interaction in detriment of participation. Interaction presupposes that the audience can "act/react/interact but cannot interfere with the narrative" in the sense that the "audience can decide the path to experiencing it, can click here or there, can react to social media entries, but it is not able to collaborate and co-create" (Gambarato, 2012, p. 76). Participation implies co-creation to engage the audience "in a way that expresses their creativity in a unique, and surprising manner, allowing them to influence the final result" (Gambarato, 2012, p. 74). In this scenario, the IOC rules and regulations played a major role, decreasing the opportunities to foster participation during the Games.

Aesthetics

The aesthetic perspective of the Globo Network coverage of the Olympic Games excelled in journalistic accuracy, combined with technological

innovation. On one hand, for instance, no language innovations achieved an incorporation of virtual reality narratives or newsgames in content expansion. On the other, editorial planning produced sophisticated strategies of broadcasting and information access, made available by the broadcaster throughout multiple media platforms. As an example, the use of augmented reality in mobile applications, such as *Globo Rio 2016*, allowed the audience to point their smartphones at a competition venue and receive real time information about what was happening at that specific location. *Globolinha*, the coverage's mascot, could be visualized by users when accessing data about ongoing matches based on geolocation, in a similar aesthetics as *Pokémon Go*. Thus, augmented reality was added to the Games transmissions in real time and enriched the audience experience.

Technological advances such as the holographic projections resulted from the partnership between Globo Network and the Japanese broadcasting organization NHK for live transmissions in the ultra-high-definition (UHD) 8K format to cover the Opening and Closing Ceremonies. The 8K technology defines a cutting-edge standard in image quality, offering a resolution 16 times better than the current high-definition (HD) used in digital television (Lobo, 2016). This noteworthy broadcasting, however, did not bring a direct transmedia expansion in the journalistic narrative.

Research findings and final remarks

Transmedia journalism essentially implies (1) multiple media platforms, (2) content expansion, and (3) audience engagement. The Globo Network news coverage embraced, to a certain extent, all three core dimensions of transmedia phenomena. In relation to diversified media platforms, Globo Network took advantage of the consortium of subsidiary media outlets within the Globo Group, incorporating television, Internet, printed media, social media, and radio. The mothership of the coverage was television and the second-screen experience offered to the audience. Notwithstanding, social media networks, such as Instagram and Snapchat, played a major role in the expansion of content and audience engagement. The 2016 Summer Olympics, also called the Games of Snapchat stories and filters (Barkho, 2016) became the most “instagramed” event in history

(G1, 2016). Globo Network established an unprecedented partnership with Snapchat to offer live, behind-the-scenes, broadcasts from various perspectives. Social media, as a source of news, is a global trend that has been studied by multiple renowned institutions (see Gottfried & Shearer, 2016; Newman, Fletcher, Levy, & Nielsen, 2016), and the Olympics followed this trend. Although the Snapchat platform was not originally designed to be a news source, this is currently so prevalent that the firm adjusted its services to insert transmedia journalism. A highlight of the Globo Network Games coverage was the carefully orchestrated strategy and the proactive planned process carried out by the journalists, who structured an up-front transmedia approach.

Globo Network focused on interactivity with users to the detriment of effective citizen participation, where the opportunities for the public to interact involved infographics, quizzes, polls, posts, comments, and sharing. The mobile applications developed by Globo Network for the event contributed to audience interaction, for example, via the augmented reality tools and the geolocation systems incorporated into the applications. Few hints of participation were present in specific situations, especially connected to the direct broadcasts from the Olympic Studio in the middle of the Olympic Park, where people gathered in front of the studio and were incorporated into the transmission. Nonetheless, the strict set of regulations foisted by the IOC on the public and media organizations allegedly interfered with the hybrid logic of adaptability and openness (Lewis, 2012), inherent to audience participation in journalism.

In a nutshell, even though the Globo Network coverage was aligned with the essential features of transmedia storytelling by investing in content expansion using different media platforms technological advancements, the coverage presented limited mechanisms of audience participation. Several technological innovations, such as virtual holographic projections of athletes, augmented reality, and 8K ultra-high-definition transmissions, provided the audience with a kind of immersive experience, in which the public could feel absorbed in the coverage. The Brazilian treatment of the Rio Olympics represents an advance in the transmedia coverage of planned events, in comparison with Globo Network previous approach of news coverage during similar major events. Therefore,

transmedia planning and the integration of multiple media platforms to disseminate content via mobile applications, Internet live-streaming and on social media networks, and an immersive experience based on technological innovations were the transmedia highlights of the Globo Network coverage. However, improvements in audience engagement, especially in terms of citizen participation, still need to be achieved.

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The Self as Transmediated Story: Examining Performance and Identity On A Life Storytelling Social Media Site

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Introduction

We are the stories we tell ourselves and each other. That is a prominent theory in personality psychology (Bruner, 1983; McAdams, 1985; 2001), one that has found complementary frameworks in communication, linguistics, sociology, qualitative research methodology, among others (Fisher, 1985; Georgakopoulou, 2006; Bertaux & Kohli, 1984; Polkinghorne, 1991). In addition, it is commonly held that our stories do not live inside of us vacuum-packed from the influences of the world (Adler & McAdams, 2007). The way in which we negotiate those stories with both loved ones and strangers plays a critical role in how we integrate our identity across multiple social contexts. As a result, it has now widely accepted that personal stories “are not merely a way of telling someone (or oneself) about one’s life; they are the means by which identities may be fashioned” (Rosenwald & Ochenberg, 1992, p. 1).

However, the majority of research that has led to this understanding has occurred in the offline world, either through experiments, interviews, or observations of geography-based social systems (e.g. Pasupathi & Rich, 2005; McAdams, 2001; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). In the proposed study, the aim is to understand the social dynamics of people while sharing life stories on a social media site, especially an open site, so that anyone can see the posts at any time. Examples of open sites are Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and, to a lesser degree, Facebook.

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Communication context on such a site—who reads it, how they react, what they will assume from the story—is largely unknown to the storyteller.

In 2014, the number of people who used some form of social media around the world crossed the 2 billion mark (Kemp, 2014). While most of the content created by these users could be considered “lifelogging” (Bell & Gemmell, 2010) (small, quick, quotidian posts in multiple media formats), the affordance to tell a story, “complete with setting, scenes, character, plot and theme” (McAdams, 2001), is available on nearly all social media sites. At the same time, a significant portion of humanity is transforming into, according to Elwell (2014), “transmediated selves”, or people for whom online and offline identities are blurring to the point of indistinction. This change has naturally led some scholars (Page, 2010; Poletti & Rak, 2014) to consider how autobiography and digital media have affected and will affect each other. Some of the early studies (e.g. Page, 2010; Marcus, 2013) examined social media’s affordances for life stories and narrative, while others (e.g. Malin, Vine, Stanton, Cannava, Bodie, & Pennebaker, 2014) examined whether life narrative themes (developed through psychology studies) are common in public life storytelling sites.

With this study I intend to quantitatively examine the themes that emerge when users are prompted to tell stories (rather than to simply “update” their lives). I chose to use the Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) (Altheide, 1987) of life storytelling performance on a now-defunct public social media site, *cowbird.com*, which prompted users to “Tell a Story” and is branded “A Witness to Life” (Cowbird, 2015). To begin with, I start reviewing the literature around life story as identity, transmediated self and online performance; then, I offer a reflexive description of the data analyses using ECA, describe the findings, and finally give suggestions on new perspectives on life storytelling across social media.

The Transmediated Self

To understand the holistic concept of the self as transmediated story, we must first understand the parts. This study is based on three interconnected frameworks to examine storytelling in *Cowbird*: 1) life story as identity; 2) “transmediated self”, or the blurring of offline and online life; 3) performance of narrativity in digital spaces.

Life story as identity and autobiographical memory

Growing from the work of Erikson, Piaget, Bruner, Foucault and others, the concept of the human as a storied being found its footing in the 1980s with Bruner's (1983) narrative construction of reality, Fisher's (1985; 1987) narrative paradigm, and, most importantly for this research, McAdams' (1985) life story as an identity model. This study largely draws from Erikson's (1958) identity theory, which argues that we connect past memories to the present self through stages of development, and Murray's (1938) personological approach to psychology, which considers the whole person.

From his perspective, McAdams (1985) claims that "It is a story which has the power to tie together past, present and future in [one's] own life" (pp. 17-18). This "story", as McAdams conceives it, takes two forms: 1) An overarching narrative that is revised and updated as new experiences and perspectives arise and; 2) The significant life experiences that are formed into stories and recalled to impact the larger narrative. McAdams considers that we can better understand an individual's own sense of self by identifying themes his/her individual's stories, which represent psychological outlooks on life events. Those stories can be redemptive (bad to good) or contaminated (good to bad); authors can emphasize agency (self-empowerment) or communion (belonging). Different views play a key role in who we think we are and who we can become in the future.

At the same time, there are important detractors from this line of narrative identity theory. Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008), self-identified as "small story" theorists, maintain that identity does not derive from these overarching narratives (which they term "big stories"), but rather from small day-to-day interactions, conversations and quotidian moments that are socially negotiated into a constantly iterative self-identity. The authors write:

Narratives, in this kind of approach, are focused upon not as tools for reflecting on (chunks of) lives but as constructive means that are functional in the creation of characters in space and time, which in turn are instrumental for the creation of positions visàvis coconversationalists (2008, p. 2).

By the "creation of positions", these researchers mean we take on certain roles when we communicate which continuously iterate into a

consolidated identity: a unified sense of self is born through the roles we assume in multiple conversations. They claim this is a more authentic approach to identity formation, as it accrues into a sense of self, rather than being “shaped” by the acceptance and rejection of events as they pertain to identity. Both “big” and “small” story theorists agree that interaction with others plays a key role in integrating an identity. On one hand, through an offline experiment, Pasupathi and Rich (2005) found that both attentive agreement and disagreement with a personal story reinforced that story’s role in the teller’s identity. On the other hand, when the receiver was inattentive, the teller was less likely to integrate the story. So, the key question that arises from this research is: what, if anything, constitutes online “inattentiveness”? That question is better framed in the next section.

Transmediated self

Based on the transmedia scholars who theorize and study the dispersion and engagement of media across multiple platforms, Elwell (2014) reflects that:

In this ‘Internet of Life’, the question of digital/analog interface, ‘the place where you end and the technology begins’ (Praisner, 2011, p. 13) becomes increasingly meaningless as both are folded into the expanding ‘in-betweenness’ [and] identity itself becomes a porous membrane between the digital and the analog (2014, p. 244).

This membrane is not simply a matter of being online one minute and offline the next, according to Elwell: it fundamentally changes the way we construct the self, because others add to our persona through interaction. The question is whether such augmentation is desired, or even purposeful. In attempting to connect through those social media sites, a digital persona grows through both quotidian social activities (updates, selfies, check-ins) and larger reflections or stories, both of which are engaged by other users. One might adopt the concept of the “like economy” (Gerlitz & Helmond, 2013), which values content according to social button activity, based on algorithms that deem certain content as important from social activity, but also impacts people’s perceptions of the content itself. Whether and how it affects the creators of the content is a matter to consider, along with the online performance of the self.

Online performance of narrative

As adaptive creatures, it is logical that most human beings “act out” an engageable self during social interactions rather than mindlessly doing whatever they wish. Goffman (1959) explains that we perform the self to others in order to manage a desired impression: “I [use] the term ‘performance’ to refer to all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (p. 123).

People hide and filter personality types in order to present a desirable identity in any given interaction. At the same time, we are encumbered by culture with certain roles that are implied on us since our early stages (Butler, 1997), and later become known as “natural” aspects of the self. This identity is limited by the embodiment of the place and situation and by the roles forged and reinforced in social interactions, recalling the primary argument of the small story theorists, who recommend researching these types of interaction to illuminate how identity is constructed across multiple interactions.

Boyd’s (2008) concept on context collapse is evident when “the lack of spatial, social, and temporal boundaries makes it difficult to maintain distinct social contexts”, as an example of “networked publics” (p. 34). Every day, people must contend with contexts that keep colliding with each other, not just within a certain platform while engaging with certain people, but across platforms (easily searched and replicated), facing unintended potential audiences; thus, the transmediation of the stories’ self is underway. Whether networked publics must demonstrate great agency to tell their stories in easily accessible locations or not, it is worth considering how social network developers and content creators better position themselves across their social spaces.

Within this framework, I sought to examine the quality of “transmediation” of the self—from offline to online persona. To do so, one critical assumption is hopefully sufficient due to its open-endedness: an offline human being is behind the texts I examine on Cowbird. I say open-ended, because even if an examined post was generated by a bot (an increasingly important possibility in social media, but less likely for these types of posts), the bot developer coded it with certain assumptions of how to tell a story. With that caveat, I guided my research with the following questions:

- What traditional (and non-traditional) performance narrative forms can be noted when users of a public social media site are prompted to “Tell a Story” about their lives?
- Does social interaction on Cowbird affect future user storytelling decisions?

Methods

Setting

Cowbird.com is a site where an explicit prompt and a well-considered set of affordances specifically evoke personal narratives. In addition to the prompts mentioned above, it is notable for its consistent taxonomy, such as when collected stories are called “Sagas”. Equally explicit is the sense that this type of creation and consumption leads to community, observable when the term “user” is replaced by “People” on Cowbird, and recent joiners are called “Newcomers”. While the latter are prompted to choose “Roles” (e.g. Writer, Friend, Artist, Student) during and after registration, those who pay \$5 per month become “Citizens”.

In the *about* section, the developers confirm that premise: “We’ve designed Cowbird to reflect the basic truths that all human lives are interconnected, that great stories can come from anywhere, and that we can learn a lot from each other, once we make the time to listen” (Cowbird, 2015). By examining the language that Cowbird developers used to describe the site, it is possible to determine that they place as much emphasis on community as they do on storytelling, and that both concepts are often inter-related. Statements such as “A warm and welcoming environment for storytelling”; “A global community of storytellers”; “A public library of human experience”, conflate the act of life-sharing and community-building.

The social engagement cues also prime users to think in terms of intimacy and story-sharing: rather than the “Like” of Facebook, users “Love” a story; rather than “Retweet”, users can share another’s story by “Retelling”, and they can also comment. All of these interactions, including the number of views, are publicly shared right along the story’s all-screen photo, which then slides into the story. Authors can also tag their story with themes and locations, post data about the moment the

story occurred, or dedicate the story to a person (either a member or non-member).

In addition to the well-defined prompts, it is also clarified that all stories, once published, are public for anyone on the Internet. Founded in 2011 (Finn, 2011), Cowbird reported that it had registered 44,540 “authors” who had generated 80,157 stories, 784,340 loves (similar to Facebook likes) and 84,870 comments by April 20, 2015. These are relatively small numbers in social media site terms, but a large enough community to observe the emergence of culture and content around life storytelling. Cowbird’s most active year of adoption was 2012, after its first year of existence and when it received generous press coverage.

Data collection

The chosen unit of analysis was a complete story posted on the site ($N = 120$), published on 2012 and selected through simple random sampling, using the range number given by Cowbird to each story. After performing a non-scientific statistical content analysis of the data, it became clear there were a variety of content types, including forms (prose, poetry, combination), media (text and audio), gender representation (male, female, non-identified), narrative and non-narrative arc, stories about oneself, family members, friends and strangers. In one instance, a set of data from one author was added, so as to exhibit an example of content strategy (form used, topic choice) after producing a story that was highly engaged socially.

Analysis

As Altheide (1987) points out, Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) is substantively different from Quantitative Content Analysis (QCA) in several important ways. While QCA is employed to “verify or confirm hypothesized relationships” (1987, p. 68), ECA methods are used to “document and understand the communication of meaning” (p. 68), as well as to verify both quantitative and qualitative research findings. This is important since, as Kracauer (1952) mentions, QCA runs the risk of inaccuracy because “complex direction continuum into relatively elementary scales inevitably invites simplifications apt to blur the picture” (Altheide, 1987, p. 632). Looking for complexities beyond quantification seems to be a useful means for alleviating such concerns. Altheide describes ECA

as seeking “human beings engaged in meaningful behavior” (1987, p. 66), situated in a digital culture where a general sense of that behavior is supposed and expected.

By looking at the question of how human experience becomes content, the goal is more than a mere quantification: it is to consider the connection between offline life and online sharing. Is there any meaning implied in sharing offline stories? Is there a “writerly” nature to certain types of stories, or subtleties in subtext that only a qualitative approach could capture, as well as the reactions? Do certain community members, for instance, advocate for types of stories through engagement? These were the analytic questions that drove this research.

While Altheide considers eca as “reflexive movement” through concept development, data collection, coding and analysis, as well as interpretation, Sosnowy (2014) adds that while typical content analysis is linear and step-wise, ECA is reflexive and circular. To follow those guidelines, the following steps were taken:

- 1 Perform data analyses (through a priori statistical coding) of manifest data (Views, Comments, Retellings, Loves), normative conventions (Gender, First-person narrator, Main character, Writing Form), and theoretical descriptions (Narrative Structure, Contamination, Redemption).
- 2 Use statistics as a guide to re-examine stories that were coded in relevant ways. For example, depending on how rare the redemptive story was, I chose to observe whether there was something particularly self-revealing about it and whether it received more or less social engagement (loves, comments, retellings).
- 3 Develop inductive codes through the re-examination process. Another example of number 2 was the reflexive observation of narrative arc vs. non-narrative arc, which led to a set of codes regarding rhetorical strategies and forms: Informal, Formal, Narrative, Diary, Essay, Vignette, Photo reference, Quip and Letter. I also chose to follow one author from within to outside of my data set when I noticed that a story received a social engagement well above the norm, in order to observe whether the author attempted to replicate success.
- 4 Mark specific stories as highly representative examples. Rather than finding the extraordinary data for display, I noted when a certain piece efficiently represented a larger theme within the codes.

The codes employed in this study reflect the research areas: themes of redemption and contamination; genre forms; narrative construction, non-narrative construction, use of first-person pronoun of author, main character; informal language, formal language; social engagement and performativity after highly engaged content production.

Reflexivity

As a teacher of life story writing for more than a decade and after many years noting what forms the stories tend to adopt, I have a more than casual interest in how life storytelling transfers into digital space. Additionally, as a social constructivist, I believe that the interaction between author/reader is a critical juncture where a life story's meaning is made. This is also largely supported by life story theories and studies that show how reactions to our stories affect the way we integrate them into our lives. As a longtime Internet and social media user, I sustain that digital life is a real and powerful presence for a significant number of people. This, too, will inform my interpretations of the users.

Findings

As mentioned above, the outcomes begin with the coding results, after using simple presence or no presence quantification of a priori codes. I then look specifically at common characteristics of key findings, based on the research questions: life story as identity (redemptive and contaminated themes); forms of writing and rhetorical strategies; social engagement around the stories and one example of how such engagement might have impacted subsequent content strategies.

Descriptive statistics

A descriptive quantitative data content analysis was executed to understand some primary elements of the stories. I generated a list of descriptive statistics gathered about the writers, as well as what was quantitatively seen in their data. Using SPSS, the following descriptive statistics were generated (Table 1):

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of content and engagement

Attribute	Counts
Gender	Male = 75; Female = 49; Not Identified = 12
Writing Form	Prose = 98; Poetry = 36; Combination = 2
Narrative Structure	Narrative Arc = 72; Non-narrative arc = 64
Narration mentions “I”	Yes = 107; No = 28
Main Character/Focus	Self = 98; Family = 1; Friend = 1; Other/Stranger = 35
Coded for contamination theme (good to bad)	Yes = 19; No = 117
Coded for Redemption theme (bad to good)	Yes = 13; No = 123
Views	Mean = 243; Median = 36
Comments	Mean = .24; Median = 0
Retellings	Mean = 2.77; Median = 0
Loves	Mean = 14.78; Median = 6

Source: Author.

The choice of narrative arc as a form (72 stories, Table 1) *versus* not using a narrative arc (64 stories, Table 1) was almost split in half, which shows that the prompt “tell a story” did not lead to a clear alignment with a classical definition. It was also evident that many different writing forms were used, especially a good number of poetry, even though the writing form did not restrict the choices of narrativity (Table 2). Using poetry or prose did not determine whether a narrative arc was found (refer to the poem about the tree above) or whether the language was formal or informal. It becomes clear that the exigency for the authors is more an act of self-expression rather than a prescribed method of storytelling. The more dominant aspect of the performance, which appears in the descriptive statistics, is the insertion of the self by the author. Both the use of “I” by the narrator (107 times, Table 1) and the self as the main character (98 times, Table 1) show Cowbird users were enacting a persona’s presence through their writings and recordings.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of forms

	Prose	Poetry
Informal	X	X
Formal	X	X
Narrative	X	X
Diary	X	
Essay	X	
Vignette	X	X
Photo reference	X	X
Quip	X	X
Letter	X	X

Source: Author.

A common form found on the site is the direct speech, both in formalist “writerly” mode as well as more casual, conversational mode. Many of these stories might fall into the category of “wisdom literature”, or practical philosophy with attempts at life insight, often with implied meanings in the text. For example:

Those three words try to convey all the emotion and depth in the world, but they cannot. They cannot reach down in the depths of souls and heart of man to unleash all the care and concern one has for another. It cannot reach into my gut to move my mouth for me and say all the words that I didn’t even know existed. Believe me when I said I tried. Love can only be expressed through action, through guttural moans, sighs, and movements, the two becoming one. Even then it can only explain so much, just one face of love. But there are many faces and I expect to meet all of them (Cowbird, 2015).

Along these lines, the most identifiable distinction would be whether the author is trying to “write” or to “speak”, both which seem to be rhetorical strategies to connect with the unnamed audience that can only appear through engagement.

By “writing” I mean classical rhetorical moves, with scene-setting and both internal and external phenomena descriptions, as well as formal sentence structure. One example would be:

My mother kept cookies in her bedside table, store brand chocolate chips and M&M chips, chocolate grahams, and in the past few years,

Vienna Fingers for my husband, Bill, fourth drawer down in the little bedside dresser she got in college. First drawer- calendar book, emery board, scissors, little Calvert School flashlight key-ring with the key to the lock box, second drawer- tv paper and remote, third- socks now, in earlier years, stockings (Cowbird, 2015).

Where the story displays both the writerly style in the grammatical sense, and the writerly strategy of creating distinct images in the reader's mind to "transport" them to a particular time and place.

By speaking, I mean conversational tones, less descriptions and more direct speech towards an audience or a specific person. This could take the form of a letter, a reference to the posted photograph and sometimes by referring events from the news, very much like a Facebook post. It is also common that authors write about Cowbird itself, attempting to establish connections with a larger audience. This is equally significant, because it usually implies readership, which reduces the uncertainty of the author's motives for being on Cowbird –it is to commune, not just perform. One example:

I am unnerved again and again by the way Ray Neighbor anticipates my thoughts and story themes in Cowbird. Here's a perfect example; this isn't about the same topic, but I have the same perceptions of the writings of others, and of the possible ways in which Cowbird.com enables us to interact. Like Ray, I have found that "love", as the sole form of address open to me, short of accessing a writer's bio for their email address and using that, simple approval is somewhat misrepresented by the word "love" (Cowbird, 2015).

The writing addresses the audience as fellow readers and writers, and places any potential reader in the digital space itself, not transporting but instead engaging them. It is also important to notice the use of "I" and "my" in each of the examples. While both authors are referring their own experiences, the first story, slightly more formal, only mentions the self once, thus "moving" toward the backstage in favor of the scene. The second approach, more conversational, uses I numerous times, "moving" toward the front of the stage, emphasizing presence.

What is most consistent across these numerous techniques is the insertion of the self for the purpose of connection. This is largely the goal that Cowbird primes and, while the traditional model of "story"

is not always the means by which users achieve this, it is clear they are attempting connection via a movement from the offline self (past or present) to the online self by multiple means.

Social engagement

So how are these writers to know what resonates with their online community? The first notable metric is simply being “seen”, measured by their number of views. Here, we see that the large difference between the mean (243, Table 1) and the Median (36, Table 1) shows that attention is distributed unevenly. As a writer in a social space, to understand that there is an economy even here, one must decide to perform certain strategies to gain more attention or choose to look inward for a genuine rendering of the self, hoping to find smaller, but authentic connections.

Beyond views, a “Love” (Table 1) is by far the most common form of social engagement in the data set, likely because “Love” is a well-understood reference to the Facebook “Like”, which has transcended a simple affordance and carries a certain sociological meaning (Rogers, 2012). So, when people “Love” a story, they are sending a message of approval. At the same time, “Love” is the lowest barrier to onsite engagement. A comment, even the shortest and most cursory, takes a certain amount of thought before executing a meaningful response. “Love” can only be construed as positive, a low-commitment sign of agreement, approval, acceptance.

Despite this, even “Love” is used rather judiciously in the Cowbird space, with the media number of “Loves” representing just over 16 percent of the median views. The reasons are what we might call frugality, following Rogers’ like economy, and it is worth researching this on Cowbird and in other sites through interviews and, perhaps, experiments.

If we have established that much of the writing on Cowbird is performative, or the transmediated self in a public-private negotiation in a collapsed context, then the question of the meaning of social activity is a compelling one. To begin with, I tracked one writer who had a higher-than-normal social response (both the overall data set mean, as well as the authors’ mean loves, views, comments and retellings.) Below is a matrix describing the highly popular posts and subsequent publications (Table 3). The rhetorical approach is largely the same in the first two stories, since they both use informal sentence structure and prose, are

fairly brief, refer to pictures and contain backstories about found objects and a very similar ending sentence –a concise, otherworldly gesture of belief or knowledge about the subject.

Both are, perhaps only coincidentally, about siblings as well. However, in the first story, the author finds a profound note from a sister to a brother who has died. In the second story, the found object is less personal –a religious light owned by the author’s brother, which received distinctly less social interaction. While there are some similarities in the third post (essay style, reference to images, a similar ending), there is a distinct difference with a more formal sentence structure, a longer backstory, more description and a different relationship examined (lost and found loves rather than siblings).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of one user across three posts

Post date	Views	Loves	Narrative vs. Non-Narrative	Picture type	Relationship	Formal vs. Informal
Aug. 25	2657	394 (378 over average)	Non-narrative	Found object (refers to in story)	Siblings	Informal
Sept. 7	50	16 (On average)	Non-narrative	Found object (refers to in story)	Siblings	Informal
Sept. 8	58	26 (10 over average)	Non-narrative	Natural object (refers to in the story)	Lost loves	Formal

Source: Author.

Despite an author’s motivations being impossible to detect through ECA, the patterns of content, especially those that show few psychologically revealing stories, all point to the interpretation that Cowbird writers are largely seeking a connection with others via an offline rendering of self through a willingness to eschew formal narrative structures by performing self-rhetorical strategies and a frugality in cues. In addition, there is no distinct bifurcation between author and reader; most users act as both. Nevertheless, one possible interpretation of the findings is that many users take on the role of “author” even when they are reading, perhaps spending the “loves” more frugally, considering a combination of factors

that might not be found on another site. One small confirmation of this concept is the site's engagement by calling each user an "author", and the affordance for users to take on a "role" of their choosing, being "author", "artist", "storyteller" and "thinker" among the top 10.

It is evident that performing the self as transmediated story comes in many shapes and sizes, but with the overwhelming need for connection. Moreover, the permissions to create those connections –loves, comments, retellings– are frugally given in the space. Thus, the act of transmediating the self through their story could mean doing so without a great deal of attention or positive feedback. This leaves the user with a decision to engage mostly outwardly by finding strategies for drawing attention, or inwardly, by focusing on an authentic connection through genuine transmediation. There is a range within those two poles and it is also possible that the right kind of genuine self-depiction will more readily cross from offline to online acceptance.

Discussion and Limitations

While life storytelling has proven to be a useful insight window into the human condition, this study suggests that the understanding of a story and its transmediation into digital space should be expanded. When people are left to their own devices, "life story" appears to cue less a set of rules of what constitutes a narrative and more as an unrestricted reference to the self. On one hand, the forms in which the self could be expressed on the Cowbird site in 2012 were widely varied, and they seem to focus on making connections, expressing opinions and reflecting on one's life. This does not mean, though, that Cowbird users were willing to release the author or storyteller titles along with the form widely defined as "story". On the other hand, a large group did in fact use classical narrative forms, perhaps as a strategy to be understood and engaged on a site that privileges the story.

The limitations of this research are the data set, which should be expanded both with human coding and some computer-assisted analysis of tags, roles, social engagement and other manifest aspects of the content. My own preconceived notions about what constitutes a story, as well as McAdams' codes, could also confound my findings. While I attempted to be diligent in following definitions provided by theorists

of this field, my own biases and perspectives played a role in my coding. These limitations tempered my conclusions, but they do not negate the future research possibilities these findings imply, both for Cowbird and other social media sites.

What can be said most confidently is that life stories have different meanings under different contexts. What we tell ourselves, what we tell our closest confidantes and what we say in public spaces, especially without knowing who might be listening, are not always the same. How these transmediated stories emerge and submerge in those contexts, especially around digital sociality, is a rich field for ongoing research. With the emergence of communication affordances that allow us to publicly document our lives, a deep understanding of public life storytelling, and how it impacts our identities, is crucial.

The next major step for transmedia research is to examine how a life, or lives, moves across digital platforms. This study focused on what might be considered the initial step of transmedia, from offline to online, and represents Elwell (2014) theoretical move. Eventhough, we know that transmedia is also concerned with the transitional nature of media across platforms, as well as with how people's engagement shapes and reshapes the story. This could certainly be the case for the offline-online personae and their life narratives, as they move from platform to platform. Such a study could be possible by interacting with social media users who shape their digital presence under common usernames, which may or may not match their offline names, and displaying recognizable profile images (if not the exact same) across many platforms. Knowing that each social platform, much like Cowbird, offers idiosyncratic affordances, prompts and primes, as well as its own social ecosystems, and watching how individual personae life narratives hold and change, could tell us much about what it means to be a stories self in digital life.

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Modular Stories: An Examination of Multi-Modal Transtexts in Relation to *The Modular Body*

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Jenkins begins his essay “Transmedia Logics and Locations” (2017) by reminding us that Transmedia is an adjective, and not a noun. “Transmedia needs to modify something”, he writes (2017, p. 220). While there may be arguments to suggest that Transmedia isn’t necessarily *always* an adjective—at all times and in all ways—in principle, this paper will proceed from the underlying contention suggested by Jenkins that Transmedia is a process, a “relationship between multiple media platforms and practices” that can facilitate the modification of a text from one state to another. Based on this premise, the aim is to demonstrate that Transmedia has the capacity to offer new questions and perspectives on current conceptions, specially related to the manner in which contemporary media texts work as pieces of communication. This paper will argue that Transmedia texts are necessarily dissimilar to media “artefacts”, and as a consequence, require new concepts and approaches lexica, as existing theoretical principles may not effectively apply. As a possible outcome we may be able to use Transmedia texts as new lenses to view narrative concepts that may have been previously the preserve of theory alone.

In his recent paper regarding additive comprehension and Transmedia storytelling, Delwiche (2017) bemoans the fact that to date, in his view, there are only a few precious examples of the “origami unicorn” within Transmedia narratives, discussed by Jenkins (2006), among others, in relation to the concept of “additive comprehension”. This somewhat abstract term refers to an origami unicorn prop featured in the director’s cut version of the movie *Blade Runner* (Scott, 1982), where the inference that the main character, Deckard, is actually one of the Replicant humans that he is tasked to hunt-down (an aspect not present in the original cinematic release) adds a new layer to the overall understanding and

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development of the narrative. Such is the shift in audience comprehension of the *Blade Runner* story, provided by this single detail, that it produces an entirely alternative experience to the original cinematic release, and as a consequence, it may be appropriate to approach the various versions of the film (including ‘The Final Cut’ version) as texts fundamentally separate from each other. They are, in effect, entirely different narratives.

This notion is suggested by Flisfeder (2017, p. 97) when he observes that “*Blade Runner* is inherently a product of post-modernity, a constant simulacrum of itself. It is impossible to say that any one version is more authentic than the others; it is also difficult to say which one is truly the ‘original’”. It is important to note that the modification we are concerned with is not the one that involves what is called the fundamental structural changes to the text, in the sense of alternative endings or the introduction of key new narrative events (which could reasonably be expected to produce entirely separate experiences), but that of the subtext and inference, of implication and context. If we accept its capacity to create versions of a core text with separate identities, there may be significant implications for our discussion of multi-modality in Transtexts, as we shall see below.

Delwiche argues that as an excellent example of additive comprehension –where the introduction of a single new detail within a narrative can fundamentally alter its entire understanding by the audience– *Bladerunner*’s “origami unicorn” has yet to find its equal within Transmedia narratives. This arrives as a surprise and a disappointment, given that the nature of Transmedia storytelling ought to lend itself well to the introduction of potentially narrative-altering story elements. After positing several useful definitions of different Transmedia narrative types as *Soft Transmedia*, *Hard Transmedia*, *Decorative Transmedia* and *Alternate Reality Games* (2017, p. 37), he concludes that perhaps the reason for this perceived deficiency within Transmedia narratives is the lack of multimodal literacy within Transmedia audiences. Also, he considers there is an underlying and incorrect assumption among the Transmedia community that audiences are as engaged and desirous of seeking out trans-platform content as we might wish; a problem, he writes, of “technological determinism”.

This position is persuasive, and indeed it might be argued that even recent Transtexts, such as the excellent *Pax Vs. Stuff* (Regan, 2016) YouTube experience –which includes a number of story-altering elements intro-

duced in separate narrative spaces (although admittedly all contained on YouTube)–, may not have produced defining additive comprehension moments compared to the “origami unicorn” model. These moments arise when the whole narrative, and by extension the whole audience experience, is turned on its head by the introduction of a new subtextual story element. However, while Delwiche may be correct, he may also have established some potentially “narrow limits” to work within, and as such, it may be instructive to consider two particular premises when examining his conclusions: that of authorship, and Jenkins’ earlier reminder that Transmedia is an “adjective”.

Each of Delwiche’s four Transmedia examples appears to deal exclusively with “authored” Transmedia experiences, and consequently, with “canonical” content with little or no inclusion of User Generated Content (UGC), or “fanon” texts. If we accept the adjective definition of Transmedia suggested earlier, then we may need to extend Delwiche’s boundaries to include such content if we wish to fully explore the relationship between Transmedia and “additive comprehension”. In addition, we could argue that UGC is a fundamental part between this process and the relationship of “Transmediation”, and to exclude such content makes only part of the “whole” visible, that is Transmedia storytelling.

This, in itself, may appear as a somewhat limited investigation; the “origami unicorn” concept being a relatively obscure and perhaps unique circumstance of additive comprehension. However, what we are concerned with in this paper is to emphasise the unique nature of Transmedia narratives; we may visualize Transmedia’s offer, in relation to established narrative communication notions, by illustrating how principles such as additive comprehension and the “origami unicorn” concept function differently in a Transmedia environment. In the first instance, it is necessary to examine what appears to be one of the most fundamental aspects that distinguishes Transmedia from almost all others.

In an earlier work presented at the 2016 International Conference on Communication, Media, Technology & Design, on Immersion and Suspension-of-Disbelief in Transmedia, I attempted to prove that Transmedia stories were fundamentally different to traditional “artefact-defined” experiences –such as film, theatre and literature– by arguing that the immersion on a Transmedia text is an entirely different process and experience from that of a movie, play or novel. This is because

(Holland, 1967) when we psychologically “suspend disbelief” to achieve immersion within a “traditional” fictional text, we normally seek to retain some emotional connection to it whilst “disengaging” the “planning-to-act” function within our cognitive process. So that, for example, when the killer appears on-screen in the horror movie, we can experience fear without the overriding sense of personal threat that might cause us to flee the cinema! In order to do this, Holland argues, we must recognise the story as artificial by “framing” it away from reality, and accept it as such, in order to trust it.

My argument was that within a Transmedia narrative, the decision-making process normally involved in the Transmedia experience means that we cannot “disconnect” this “planning-to-act” process, partly because interaction requires action, and as a result, traditional suspension-of-disbelief immersion is not possible. The difficulty arises from the need to “frame” a text away from reality. Within a Transmedia experience we effectively include the frame as a part of it, which continually reinforces the “unreality” of the text, preventing traditional suspension of disbelief, and consequently, immersion.

At first glance, this may appear to be an ‘over-engineered’ addition to this discussion; after all, we can easily illustrate that a movie and a Transmedia text are fundamentally different experiences, even down to their technological and conceptual premises. Nevertheless, this distinction is important because it illustrates the inherent difficulty, and potential impossibility, of introducing narrative theory from a format such as film –including concepts such as additive comprehension, similar to the *Bladerunner* “origami unicorn”– into Transmedia narratives. It is not so much that audiences lack motivation, or multimodal literacy, but that our expectations of the audience reactions to Transmedia story elements are possibly influenced by the ways they react to a movie, novel or play. This, it seems, could sound more like “technological determinism” rather than Delwiche’s definition; the “origami unicorn” cannot work in the same way in a Transmedia narrative, because audiences are unable to “suspend disbelief” in the same way they would for a movie. Yet, despite of this, we still expect to see comparative results.

Maybe, instead of observing Transmedia texts with the same lens we might use for films, the key is to ascertain what makes Transmedia texts so very different by comparing the outcomes of a concept such as “additive

comprehension” between both. One important consideration is that film, television, radio and literature are all examples of story *artefacts*, inasmuch as they can be argued to exist independently of an audience. This is not meant in the sense Nietzsche proposed, as a monological conception of the artistry of a film or play, nor does it seek to suggest that narrative concepts conveyed by a text (courage, love, etc.) can exist without an audience to decode them. It is simply a recognition of the physical relationship that audiences have with the delivery method of the text: a movie playing in an empty cinema is *still*—arguably—“the movie”. When we refer to *Blade Runner*, for example, we refer to a self-contained media experience that has its own identity, hence the suggestion that the director’s cut version is an entirely separate film to the original studio release; each has its own identity defined within its own limits.

We may have to broaden our definition to include theatre, as a play probably does not *exist* until brought to life by performers, but we might still be able to describe a traditional theatre experience as an “artefact” of sorts. I do so here, in order to emphasise the contrast with an alternative, “non-artefact” form of storytelling; ludic frameworks and game-play narratives, which cannot be described as “artefacts” because they cannot exist without their participants. As Brown (2012, p. 8) observes, “games need players, and this is one of the ways they are differentiated from the majority of other media experiences, which require only audiences”.

In my earlier paper, I concluded that Transmedia narratives have far more in common with games than they do with movies, novels or plays, because Transmedia users are—by necessity—participants, rather than audiences, and as such, the way we immerse ourselves in Transmedia texts is the same as within gameplay; we immerse ourselves within the *participatory* space of the experience, and not the *representational* space as we do with films, theatre, etc. As an example, Salen & Zimmerman (2004) quote Gorfinkel:

Immersion is not a property of a game or media text but is an effect that a text produces. What I mean is that immersion is an experience that happens between a game and its player, and is not something intrinsic to the aesthetics of the game. The confusion in this conversation has emerged because representational strategies are conflated with the effect of immersion. Immersion itself is not tied to a replication or mimesis of reality. For example, one can get immersed in Tetris. Therefore, immersion into game play seems at least as important as immersion into

a game's representational space. It seems that these components need to be separated to do justice and better understand how immersion, as a category of experience and perception, works (as cited in Salen & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 452).

What we may hopefully be able to conclude is that Transmedia experiences are not simply separate from all others in terms of technology, platform, practice or delivery system, in the way that film is separate from literature for example, but by having more in common with ludic narratives. Despite not always involving game-play, Transmedia texts are unique, and must be regarded as such in any analysis. It is not enough to transpose concepts from artefact-based narrative experiences into the Transmedia sphere, and expect to find equivalency. Instead, the way we think about the production of both Transmedia experiences, and those in which we analyse their uses and effects, requires new lexica of principles, technique, and even language, potentially separate from anything which has come before. This is necessarily restrictive in one sense, but also opens entirely new avenues for exploration in another.

For example, while we may agree with Delwiche that the “origami unicorn” standard of additive comprehension has not been achieved or equalled within Transmedia experiences in its original “movie” sense, if we include UGC and “fanon” content in our discussions, and especially if we accept Transmedia as an adjective, we may be able to ask new questions about the medium. Perhaps, additive comprehension, instead of referring to a narrative device, could potentially refer to something more abstract, or more fundamental. If the “origami unicorn” which alters the whole narrative experience is not simply something analytic, self-contained and “authored”, but instead something synthetic, fluid, and externally-generated beyond the original authorship of the text –arguably something that artefact-based media cannot achieve– then the capacity for “additive comprehension” increases immeasurably. We may even begin to see that Transmedia storytelling offers opportunities to examine the relationship between text and audience in a manner that might previously have been confined to the realm of “thought experiments”. As a result, in the remainder of this paper I propose, via a specific case-study, that Transmedia storytelling can provide a circumstance where the “origami unicorn” in question is not a simple narrative device, but instead the actual *reality* of the text itself.

The Modular Body (Kaayk, 2016) is an online, non-linear science fiction narrative experience, available primarily at www.themodularbody.com and also through various social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube. Created by Dutch artist and filmmaker Floris Kaayk, the story covers the development of OSCAR, a bio-engineered organism developed from human cells, and composed of organic ‘modules’ which serve specific functions such as respiration and movement, and which can be rearranged and upgraded. With high-quality production values and convincing ‘pseudo-science’ based on existing and contemporary knowledge and technologies, the whole experience of *The Modular Body* has the feeling of something inherently plausible. The creators of the experience, though, openly acknowledge and confirm that *The Modular Body* is fictional, since they state that: “The Modular Body is an online science fiction story about the creation of OSCAR, a living organism built from human cells” as the opening sentence on the “About” section of the main website.

As a self-contained narrative experience within themodularbody.com, we may argue that *The Modular Body* is not, strictly speaking, a Transtext, inasmuch as the breadth of the experience exists in a single space online, and as such, takes the form of a deconstructed film rather than as a Transmedia experience *per-se*. The video artefacts that make up *The Modular Body* are hosted on YouTube, and the creators have also disseminated key videos via Facebook and other social media platforms. However, we might suggest that even this process may not produce a true Transmedia narrative, as we do not necessarily gain new experiences or a narrative understanding from story artefacts, specifically on separate platforms. It is highly possible that the dissemination of different “types” of videos found/viewed in separate online spaces, that contribute to the overall narrative experience –such as a “crowdfunding” video to raise money for the OSCAR project– could produce a transmediated relationship between texts, as suggested by Jenkins in his “adjective” statement mentioned before. Nonetheless, what is fascinating about *The Modular Body* in this discussion is not the text itself but the interaction and comments around the various video artefacts by the audiences, which, in turn, firmly position the experience as a Transtext. The extensive user interaction and comments tends to take two forms: content from those viewers who are aware that *The Modular Body* is a fictional narrative, and content from those who are unaware of that.

A significant number of the users who have interacted with *The Modular Body* content, especially starting 2016, seemingly genuinely believed that they were engaged in a process of comment, sharing and interaction with a “real life” story event. The introductory video of OSCAR, published to Facebook on April 14th, 2016, has currently over 26,000 comments; the majority of those dating from April and May 2016 (more than two thirds) appear to be interacting with the text as a real-world artefact. Comment takes many forms, and we immediately see several broadly positive themes emerging, spanning excitement and optimism, support and defence of the project and scientific curiosity:

I am vascilating (sic) between, fascination and horror within the context of pure wonderment. Extraordinary (Zia Wesley, 15th April, 2016).

For all you closed minded idiots making comments, Oscar is a collection of organs, limbs, and tissue which was created to prove that they can build replacement parts for humans. It's actually very amazing. People who need heart transplants won't have to wait for a donor to die in order to get a new heart. This is huge! (Rocco Oliverio, 16th April, 2016).

I have question. The meat is muscle. Muscle needs blood to stay moist and given its vitamins and nutrients. How will this “muscle” survive, not decay without blood circulation? Muscle without blood will die, decay (Alan Kenyon, 29th April, 2016).

You can clearly see the connections for each piece to get power from the “brain”. How is this fake. It's just sending a electrical charge to organism and its twitching. Similar thing to putting salt on severed frog legs or salt on a dead octopus. It will move. Welcome to science people too bad nobody paid attention in school (James Lethcoe, 15th April, 2016).

At the same time, the nature of the content of *The Modular Body* is at-once unsettling and controversial. The appearance of the organism OSCAR is somewhat challenging, as it moves in spasmodic twitches clearly designed to appear unpleasant, while the undeniably *Frankensteinian* storyline (clearly intended by the creators who reference Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* on the “About” section) explores some of the ethical boundaries that such technology would ostensibly face, were it real. As such, many of the comments are less positive and explore moral, religious and economic objections, including arguments relating to intensive farming, vivisection and healthcare, while others contribute cynicism and posit that the footage may actually be fake:

Something tells me we're screwing with things we should never even be trying... it's going to come back and bite us one of these days #nothanks (Michelle French, 15th April, 2016).

I feel like this is crossing into the realm of morality. Why are you trying to make a human prototype? Besides the fact that it's wrong, has anybody seen *Terminator 2* judgement day? Hello, stop trying to make artificial intelligence more advanced than it already is for the love of God (Ronnie Rhodes, 15th April, 2016).

What's the purpose of this... how will this benefit man kind? I can't think of anything... This is what happens when you throw god out the picture. Science is creating monsters (Kelvin Lyrikel Laurent, 15th April, 2016). Lol reading the comments and everyone is like "this is scary" "humanity's gone wrong", etc... and all I can think is that it's not nearly as terrifying as footage from factory farms, or what we do to humans and other animals on a daily basis on this planet. If we are worried about losing our humanity, I would say don't worry. That ship sailed a long long time ago (Deanne McKay, 15th April, 2016).

Am I the only person looking at this logically and realizing that this could very simply be all electronic moving parts with just a fleshy or at least fleshy looking material around the mechanical parts? Plugging them into each other making the thing functional and moving? It's not a cyborg lol, it's not an organic being ran by electricity, it's just a robot with poultry all bound to it (Colin Michael, 15th April, 2016).

The wealth of comment generated in response to the video mentioned above and others displayed on a variety of platforms, such as YouTube and BuzzFeed, forms a fascinating extension to the original narrative, and firmly 'Transmediates' *The Modular Body* experience. The creators were also able to capitalise on this by interacting with audiences through comment replies and links to other story artefacts. What is interesting here is that while the "tone-of-voice" of these replies is certainly "in character", comments from *The Modular Body* to users continue to openly refer to the experience as a "story" and provide direct links to themodularbody.com, where again the fictional nature of the experience is clearly acknowledged.

Thanks for the great Q&A! #projectoscar We're rounding up now. Don't forget to do the full experience the online science fiction story www.themodularbody.com (The Modular Body, 2016, April 17).

[In reply to Alan Kenyon, above]

Hi Alan, here you can see how the blood circulation is variable and how

it works: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psV1LLQ_boQ The needed blood is donated by Cornelis Vlasman. Beside the YouTube channel of Cornelis Vlasman you can also have a look at www.themodularbody.com for explanation and to get full experience (*the modular body*, 2016, April 29).

It should be noted that the majority of the UGC under discussion emanates from the social media sphere of *The Modular Body* experience; by contrast, the equivalent introductory video hosted on YouTube on April 14th 2016 has only a little over 1,000 comments to-date, and very few of these suggest that the author believes the video to be “genuine”. The likely explanation for this is that the creators have also uploaded behind-the-scenes and “making-of” videos to YouTube which directly link to the narrative content, illustrating –for example– how OSCAR was animated, adding yet another layer to the authors’ acknowledgement of the text’s fictional status.

This continued acknowledgement from the creators of *The Modular Body* that it is a fictional narrative is important to our discussion of additive comprehension within Transtexts. The notion of creating a plausible and convincing narrative, aimed at “misleading” an audience into believing that a story is “genuine”, is well known. Movies such as *The Blair Witch Project* (1999), UTR advertising such as the Hi-Tec brand’s *Liquid Mountaineering* (2010) campaign, and contemporary Transtexts such as *Pax Vs. Stuff* are just a small sample of texts that have effectively utilised and implemented this concept directly to great effect. The idea is not a modern one either; we might suggest that ‘hoaxes’ such as the *Cottingley Fairies* (1917) could be included in such a discussion, while Orson Welles’ famous radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds* in 1938 offers an arguably more indirect and “tertiary” approach. Although what was said about broadcast listeners as “deceived” and running to the streets in fear has been proven false, the number of subsequent articles published and commentaries describe how audiences were “taken-in” and did, in fact, flee their homes –despite nothing of the kind actually taking place– is an interesting case-in-point. Audiences being “mislead” by a fictional narrative, thus, is a common occurrence; even though, *The Modular Body* offers a different, and perhaps somewhat unique instance of the phenomenon for two clear reasons:

- At no point are the creators of the text seemingly intending to mislead their audience; *The Modular Body* openly acknowledges that it is a constructed narrative.
- As a result of the social media platforms involved, audiences can comment and interact with the text in a visible and accessible way, significantly contributing to the overall lexicon of *The Modular Body* experience, both by encouraging and influencing new users to read it as “real” through comments and shares, and also by providing extensive UGC to improve the reception and narrative of the overall experience.

Then, what we have is a self-contained and canonical fictional narrative intended as an entertainment experience with no ostensible attempt to “mislead” an audience into believing it is anything other than fictional. While at the same time, it is connected to an extended-narrative version of itself, which includes non-fictional content (real-world users commenting on what they perceive to be a real-world narrative) in an unusual dichotomy, where the “canon” is fictional, and the “fanon” (UGC) content is –arguably– “real-world” non-fiction.

The relationship between “canon” and “fanon” content is an ongoing and broadly-discussed concept, especially regarding the potential *authenticity* of fan-generated texts in relation to the authored source. In her work on “Fandom and Transtexts”, Stein (2017) makes a compelling case for the relevance and contribution of fan-texts, arguing that Transtexts that include fan-generated content “[are] an ongoing, dynamic, creative process of collective authorship that spans commercial, independent, and fan-production” (2017, p. 72). Later, she adds that: “we could imagine the ever-expanding transtext with a small portion that is the official, “original” work, a kernel of inspiration, a jumping off point, so to speak” (2017, p. 73).

Despite the experience of *The Modular Body* certainly seeming to correspond to this definition –as a “jumping-off point” for an extended narrative–, again it is unusual because these are not “fans” connecting with, and extending, a constructed narrative in the traditional “fanon”/UGC sense. If *The Modular Body* actually *was* “real” the comments from these users would, of course, be unchanged and, consequently, the lines of “authorship” and “authenticity” would potentially become blurred.

Indeed, if by “authenticity” we allow ourselves to consider related concepts such as “genuineness”, “validity”, “originality”, and “legitimacy”, then the verisimilitude of the UGC might even lead to a suggestion that that body of content is perhaps *more authentic* than the original *Modular Body* text. It does, after all, provide an interesting real-world glimpse of what reactions to such technology would likely be, if it were to “exist” at some future time. Whether we take this view or not, the overall effect is that *The Modular Body* participant is provided with a fascinating series of narrative extensions to the original text, venturing into morality, politics, religion, human and animal rights, among others. At this point, it could be argued that the overall connected experience becomes an entirely separate story to the original narrative, in the manner of the various versions of *Bladerunner* discussed by Delwiche. *The Modular Body* experience now seemingly exists in three separate modes:

- 1 The original, self-contained, authored narrative; the “canonical” content;
- 2 The “real-world” comments and other UGC (including GIFs and artworks) separate to the original content; the unintended ‘fanon’ content;
- 3 The extended narrative experience combining modes 1 and 2, for those participants who are aware of the fictional nature of the canonical content, with the addition of content from real-world users.

While much of the content from audience members runs along the lines of what we might expect from users confronted with *The Modular Body* if it were real, nevertheless, in Mode 3, the direction of the narrative is not controlled by the authors of the text, and may therefore deviate somewhat from the aims and intentions of the original experience. Even leaving this aside, we may still be able to argue that the various modes point to an unusual and interesting example of additive comprehension –perhaps not commensurate with the original “origami unicorn”, but still unique in its own right– which is the way in which it relates to our earlier discussion of immersion in Transmedia experiences. Traditional concepts such as additive comprehension cannot easily be transposed from “artefact” media into “participatory” media, because the way we immerse ourselves in each is so fundamentally different. Immersion in Transtexts must by necessity take the form of immersion into a *participatory* space, as

it occurs with ludic narratives, which rely on players/participants, rather than the *representational* space required for immersion in ‘artefact’ media such as film and literature. The extended version of *The Modular Body* therefore provides an excellent example of this *participatory* immersion;

- In Mode 1, the text exists as a self-contained and authored narrative; traditional immersion is arguably not possible for this text as we cannot achieve suspension-of-disbelief, due to our inability to disconnect the “planning-to-act” aspect of the cognitive process, because of the participation required.
- In Mode 2, participants arguably do not ‘suspend disbelief’ as they believe the experience to be real.
- In Mode 3, the original authored text is enhanced by the addition of “real world” content; again audiences are not required to “suspend disbelief” because the enhanced content is effectively “real”. Immersion is *participatory*; it takes place in the act of participation with other audience members of *The Modular Body* texts, and the knowing synthesis of the canonical and UGC content.

The outcome of this work is to suggest that the “origami unicorn” of additive comprehension is in this case twofold: on one hand, it relates to the authorship, reality, and potential authenticity of the narrative, and on the other, it is the capacity for immersion in a media experience that –arguably– cannot be immersive by itself. The enrichment of the original narrative by the extended UGC opens up a participatory immersion lacking from the authored source content.

There is also, of course, participant content that is *knowingly* commenting on a fictional narrative, much of it stating repeatedly that *The Modular Body* is fictional. As a result, the whole UGC experience for *The Modular Body*, across various platforms and comments-threads, provides an interesting and nuanced “organic” narrative. This narrative exists as an ongoing and detailed addition to the experience of *The Modular Body*, as well as a real-world glimpse of the likely reactions if such technology were to exist one day. In the particular case of the introductory Facebook video previously mentioned, comment has continued well into May 2017, with entirely new users discovering it and providing their own contribution to the UGC narrative, and with some users still perceiving the text as “genuine”.

However, it is worth noting that this paper has not intended to provide, or to function as a textual analysis of *The Modular Body*; such an undertaking would necessarily need to be extensive, as the artefacts posted on YouTube and Facebook containing comments threads are numerous (over 26,000 comments just for the introductory Facebook video mentioned above). Instead, the aim of this work has been to emphasise the unique nature of Transtexts as pieces of communication and as participant experiences, and to comment on the opportunities that Transmedia storytelling offers to investigate narrative and communicative processes in circumstances that were previously preserved for imaginary and thought-experiments.

There are numerous threads of enquiry, not examined on this paper, that are potentially offered by *The Modular Body* experience and other current similar texts, or ones that will come after. These might potentially include epistemological associations of participants interacting with the same core text and the narrative, that actually experience utterly separate sense-data based on their interpretation of the text as “genuine” or fictional. These could bring broader connotations of –and potential for– plurality in storytelling, allowing flexible narrative interpretations that offer a multiplicity of readings, interpretations and meanings. It is, of course, instructive to note that *The Modular Body* is in itself a *modular* narrative, and the story that is generated through the assemblage of its components is as *Frankensteinian* as OSCAR itself.

The advantage of any modular design is the flexibility that stems from the capacity of modular components to be upgraded and re-tasked, and the experience of *The Modular Body* demonstrates that this concept works as well with storytelling as anything else. As a consequence, *The Modular Body* provides us with a glimpse of the opportunities presented by Transmedia experiences –which, by definition above (Transmedia as an adjective) are necessarily of a form of *modular* construction– maybe for the ongoing development of narrative communication.

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Multiplicación audiovisual entre plataformas: el proyecto @julietacapuleto*

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Introducción

El proyecto *@julietacapuleto* es una libre adaptación transmediática de la pieza *Romeo y Julieta*, de William Shakespeare. El texto clásico fue el vehículo utilizado para la discusión de prejuicios sobre identidades de género minoritarias, encarnadas en los personajes de Julieta Capuleto, una mujer transgénero, y Romeo Montecchio, un hombre cis-género. Es un experimento híbrido que rompe los límites –genéricos y/o mediáticos– del teatro, el cine, las redes sociales digitales y las series web, y cuenta con una interacción entre actores-personajes y el público-coro en los medios sociales virtuales, utilizando la narrativa transmedia en múltiples plataformas.

La metodología utilizada consiste en la transformación de escenas en fotos, *posts*, videos grabados y transmisiones en vivo durante seis días, mezclando ficción y no ficción. A partir de la consolidación de las redes sociales digitales como importantes plataformas de comunicación en las primeras décadas del siglo XXI, vemos este proyecto como intrínsecamente ligado al campo del audiovisual y de los nuevos medios. También percibimos el proyecto *@julietacapuleto* como un vasto campo para experimentar y evaluar sobre cómo invitar al público a buscar una nueva narrativa y/o un nuevo medio de comunicación y el cómo una plataforma o una narrativa pueden alternar y elucidar mejor lo que acaba de suceder y anunciar lo que aún está por suceder. Así, en un contexto en el que el alcance masivo de contenidos en las redes sociales digitales es algo trivial, entendemos que este proyecto, a su modo, viabiliza la divulgación y fomenta el debate constructivo sobre los desdoblamientos audiovisuales y las tecnologías de comunicación, sobre Shakespeare y sobre las relaciones inter-géneros.

La expansión narrativa por la transmediación

En las obras de ficción que recurren a la *transmedia storytelling* la expansión narrativa se entiende como una forma de contar historias que extrapola un único medio o canal de comunicación. Consideramos que la ficción en narrativa transmedia demanda y se hace aún más consistente a través de esta extrapolación y conexión entre historias y plataformas. Esto porque cada parte de la historia narrada por la transmedia invita al público a buscar más contenido en una nueva narrativa y una nueva plataforma de comunicación

para conocer más detalladamente la historia. En este sentido, aspiramos aquí a una reflexión teórica sobre el desdoblamiento audiovisual en la producción de ficción dentro de la estrategia de comunicación transmedia. Con esto en mente, nuestro propósito es reconstruir la experiencia que representó producir y transmitir una ficción en una estructura narrativa transmedia por medio de múltiples pantallas o plataformas.

El proyecto nació en abril de 2016, en el desarrollo de la asignatura de Tecnologías de la Comunicación y Prácticas Socioculturales para los estudiantes de doctorado y maestría del Programa de Posgrado en Comunicación de la Universidad Anhembi Morumbi. Prácticamente comenzamos una producción colectiva, integrando comunicación, arte, tecnología *online* y narrativas audiovisuales convencionales con la herramienta de la telefonía móvil de los *smartphones*. La intención era entender si sería posible armonizar dichos recursos para una obra ficcional. A continuación, vino la pregunta por cuál sería el público de una historia transmitida en vivo en telefonía móvil y la temática más apropiada para esa audiencia. Estimamos que este público contaría con un rango de edad entre los quince y los veinticinco años pues este es el segmento de usuarios más frecuentes y afines a las funcionalidades de los teléfonos móviles. En suma, el público que se conecta con el mundo por medio de la internet de banda ancha inalámbrica. Seguidamente, asumimos que uno de los temas de debate preferidos por ese público son los asuntos relacionados con la identidad de género. También, partimos de la base de que la comunicación entre los miembros de este grupo es multilínea, integrada y complementaria, omnipresente, colaborativa y transmediada.

Con sus teléfonos inteligentes, estas personas experimentan la mediatización de sus propios acontecimientos diarios, gracias a la cámara y a la red inalámbrica. Comparten las más diversas épocas y lugares, a partir de un evento trivial para un contenido altamente avanzado. La grabación de video seguida del compartir entre las personas y las comunidades en red, renueva todas las fases de comunicación. Dado el modo como la noticia de un evento puede ser transmitida en tiempo real, el público figura como testigo ocular de todo lo que se ve en la web. La mediatización de la vida, en el contexto de la comunicación masiva, transforma la cámara móvil en un poderoso diseminador de videos, tanto para el público que solo busca entretenimiento como para el que se dedica a reforzar sus redes sociales, ya sea para encontrar algo en común con alguien, crear

conexiones o simplemente recibir evaluaciones positivas. O aún más, como afirma Manuel Castells, un público “dispuesto y listo a satisfacer una de las más importantes demandas latentes: la demanda por la libre expresión interactiva y la creación autónoma –hoy en gran parte frustrada por la visión esclerosada de los medios tradicionales” (Castells, 2003, p. 165).¹

Con todo esto en mente, pensamos en una historia conocida para facilitar su interacción con el público y, como estábamos en 2016, año del probable cuatricentenario de la muerte de William Shakespeare, inmediatamente recordamos a *Romeo y Julieta*, tal vez por ser una de sus obras más famosas. El siguiente paso fue discutir cómo podríamos traer este texto al presente, porque un primer amor adolescente para unir dos familias rivales resulta ingenuo hoy. Nos concentramos en identificar lo que hoy podría emular una relación con la misma fuerza. La prensa informaba sobre la violencia contra personas transexuales y localizaba a Brasil como el país con más asesinatos a travestis y transexuales. Decidimos entonces trabajar una relación *cis-trans* y promover un discurso local, y al mismo tiempo universal, para contribuir a la sensibilización social contra la transfobia y contra la intimidación de las identidades de las minorías.

El proyecto se sumerge en el contexto específico de la transmedialidad entre las más recientes plataformas narrativas. En particular, estamos en el universo de plataformas de comunicación por video –Instagram, Facebook Live, Snapchat, YouTube, WhatsApp–, y a través de fotos y textos. Todas las escenas fueron transmitidas en vivo, y ahora están disponibles al público en las redes sociales virtuales. Una de las puertas de entrada es Facebook.² Hemos podido constatar el movimiento del público entre los diversos medios de comunicación y su participación con comentarios, permitiéndole expandir el conocimiento de la historia como un espectador y agente de sensibilización contra la transfobia. La concepción del proyecto fue seguida por la creación, adaptación, guion, planificación, producción y transporte. El proyecto fue acompañado por la reflexión, tanto de los realizadores como del público, sobre el ejercicio de la transmisión, el desdoblamiento audiovisual y la relación entre personajes cis-trans. Pensamos que ha sido un campo fértil para experimentar y evaluar maneras de invitar al público a buscar una nueva narrativa y un nuevo medio de comunicación, culminando en la reflexión sobre cómo el desdoblamiento

¹ Todas las traducciones de los textos citados en portugués e inglés son nuestras.

² <https://www.facebook.com/projetojulietacapuleto/>

narrativo audiovisual sigue por las plataformas para aclarar lo que sucede en una historia.

Por las redes sociales virtuales, estimamos que este proyecto se ha constituido en una nueva posibilidad de reconfigurar el equilibrio del lugar narrativo entre una pantalla y una multiplicidad de pantallas, a través de una visión casi antropológica de las redes sociales virtuales. Para Marc Augé, un lugar antropológico “[...] es, al mismo tiempo, principio de sentido para aquellos que lo viven y principio de inteligibilidad para quien lo observa” (1994, p. 51). Con la aplicación de estos principios, tratamos de rescatar la dimensión visceral de los individuos que habitan la historia y proponer una comunicación contemporánea de la pieza clásica, en una transmisión digital urbana de *Romeo y Julieta*. Este sería, tal vez, “un movimiento hacia un modelo más participativo de la cultura” (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2015, p. 24).

Ciertamente nuestras preguntas sobre las transmediaciones pasaron por el análisis de distintas teorías sobre cuestiones de género, especialmente en relación con los encuentros inter-género. James Dawson afirma que la diferenciación y la sociabilidad inter-géneros (2015, p. 215) merece ser vista en diferentes situaciones en las redes sociales, desde las formas de organización humana hasta la articulación entre grupos e instituciones. Sin embargo, es importante resaltar que estas redes sociales están íntimamente ligadas al desarrollo de recursos de comunicación que facilitan tal articulación. El adelanto de las nuevas tecnologías y la posibilidad de establecer redes de comunicación con intereses específicos son esenciales para aproximar esas relaciones en redes sociales, a lo que cabe el aforismo de Jesús Martín-Barbero según el cual la “distancia digital es realmente una distancia social” (Martín-Barbero, 2014, p. 29). Consideramos que este proyecto es una oportunidad para promover y fomentar un debate constructivo sobre las tecnologías de comunicación para romper y cerrar esas brechas, digitales y sociales. Así, mezclamos a Shakespeare y las relaciones de género en diferentes plataformas sociales y/o pantallas de video, sobre la base de informaciones también investigadas en las redes digitales, como una forma de reducir la distancia social indicada por Martín-Barbero.

La difusión ha contribuido con este enfoque al público, que puede ser explicado como una historia contada en múltiples plataformas y que puede ser dividida en partes o expandida en muchas otras historias complementarias; para cada parte o expansión se le asigna la plataforma,

tecnología o diseño que mejor pueda promover la expresión y recepción de tal parte o expansión de la historia. Henry Jenkins es asertivo al defender, en su libro *Convergence Culture* (2006), que el papel del público también es determinante al cooperar con la narración entre varias plataformas. No es simplemente repetir la misma historia en diferentes plataformas (Jenkins, 2007, pp. 123-124), como en el denominado *cross-media* –un concepto del medio publicitario que designa diferentes plataformas para enunciar una sola historia o mensaje, adaptado a las condiciones de cada medio–. Por lo tanto, la narrativa transmedia no consiste en presentar el mismo contenido en varias plataformas, productos o servicios de una franquicia (Jenkins, 2009). Así las cosas, en el caso de nuestro proyecto nada parecía más apropiado que hacer la adaptación de la narrativa de la obra shakespeariana en una estrategia transmedia.

El desdoblamiento audiovisual de Romeo y Julieta

Al elegir las distintas redes virtuales sociales que componen el proyecto, consideramos la presencia de grupos interesados disponibles en diferentes plataformas mediáticas –pese a su comportamiento migratorio entre estas– como condición fundamental para el flujo de contenido inherente a la convergencia de medios (Jenkins, 2009, p. 29). Desde su origen, los medios digitales desempeñan un papel importante en el acceso a la información en nuestra sociedad, y ejercen una gran influencia sobre las personas, sea en la construcción de patrones de comportamiento o estética, o incluso en la manipulación política e ideológica. Con los avances tecnológicos y el surgimiento de nuevos medios, como YouTube, se produjo una descentralización de la producción y distribución de contenido –que hasta entonces estaba en manos de grandes conglomerados de medios–, así como un cambio radical en el comportamiento del público, que no encontró solo nuevas formas de acceso, sino también la capacidad de producir y distribuir su propio contenido.

De hecho, mientras la televisión migra a las plataformas digitales, la audiencia de YouTube continúa creciendo. Esta plataforma ha ayudado a construir una comunidad de creadores que a lo largo de su corta vida, en comparación con otros medios de comunicación, consiguen desarrollar un tipo específico de contenido para su respectiva plataforma, con características muy diferentes de lo que estamos acostumbrados a ver en

la televisión tradicional. Inherente a la programación original de YouTube es la noción de participación pública y un tipo de comunicación directa y constante entre el productor y el consumidor. Para el investigador sobre el internet y el surgimiento de la sociedad de la economía en red, Yochai Benkler (2006), se puede prever que:

La batalla de la ecología institucional en el entorno de red digital se define por el número de cuántos usuarios individuales seguirán participando en la creación del ambiente de información en red y de cuántos de la población de consumidores continuarán sentándose en el sofá a recibir pasivamente los bienes producidos por los productores de información industrial (p. 385).

En este sentido, de acuerdo con Jenkins (2009), la sociedad contemporánea se distancia cada vez más de la condición de recepción pasiva y utiliza la “internet como un vehículo para acciones colectivas –soluciones de problemas, deliberación pública y creatividad alternativa” (2009, p. 235). Este es un ejemplo claro de lo que es, actualmente, la cultura de participación. Así, los más diversos tipos de creadores de contenido y las distintas comunidades de fans, comunidades de marca y subculturas se reúnen en este portal común para aprender juntos nuevas técnicas y prácticas de experimentar lo nuevo, la innovación creciente dentro de –y entre– las diferentes comunidades y diferentes prácticas:

En primer lugar, YouTube es el encuentro entre un número de comunidades alternativas diferentes, cada una produciendo medios independientes desde hace algún tiempo, pero ahora reunidas por este portal compartido [...] Al hablar sobre el contenido de YouTube, es válido también hablar sobre la importancia de la distribución y creación de valor y sobre la reformulación del significado dentro de la cultura de YouTube (Jenkins, 2009, pp. 348-349).

El proyecto *@julietacapuleto* hizo no solo uso de YouTube, sino que también se extendió a otras plataformas, especialmente de video. Todo el acto de producción fue una transmediación porque las partes o extensiones de historias y sus respectivas plataformas y la relación del público con estos medios y sus historias fueron integradas, complementadas e, incluso, se desarrollaron como una acción a reiterar en el proyecto. A este respecto cabe mencionar que las posibilidades de integración o de convergencia entre narrativas y plataformas ya estaban presentes en los primeros usos

del concepto de transmedia. Cuando en el año 2006 Jenkins recoge sus artículos en su libro *Convergence Culture*, se refiere a la transmediación como un nuevo significado en la creación de mundos narrativos, lo que corresponde a la convergencia de medios, y que exige nuevas formas de consumo y participación activa por parte de las comunidades de conocimiento (Jenkins, 2006, p. 21).

En su primer texto sobre el tema, Jenkins entiende el movimiento de sinergia entre las varias ramas de la producción cultural como una forma de *transmedia storytelling* (2001, p. 93). Esto ocurrió diez años después de que Marsha Kinder publicara *Playing with Power in Movies, Television, and Video Games*, donde explica la lógica del sistema de superentretenimiento resultante de la asociación entre diversos medios de comunicación y narrativas que hace de los consumidores actores más poderosos, en oposición a la manipulación comercial (Kinder, 1991, pp. 119-120). No obstante, los primeros usos del concepto ya integraban e involucraban una narrativa de la comunicación; en 1975, el compositor Stuart Saunders Smith había creado el concepto de *trans-media system*, una composición de melodías-armonías-ritmos diferentes para cada instrumento en la que cada compositor complementa la obra a su propia manera (Welsh, 1995, pp. 63-143).

El proyecto @julietacapuleto se desarrolló con todas estas características, coordinado con esa estrategia transmedial de comunicación del siglo XXI, pero muy próximo al origen del concepto del sistema de transmedia de Saunders Smith; a partir de las guías de la pieza original y el guion adaptado, cada actriz y actor reorganizó y recreó los textos en sus actuaciones grabadas en video, las cuales fueron transmitidas en vivo con los teléfonos móviles que les fueron suministrados a cada uno de ellos para las colaboraciones diarias del proyecto, ligándolas de una forma coherente con el concepto de la pieza como un todo armónico.

El desdoblamiento audiovisual se fundamenta en planteamientos como los de Kamilla Elliott (2004), quien propone que la adaptación de las obras a otro lenguaje, pese a las usuales críticas desfavorables, puede actualizar el trabajo original sin perder sus valores originales (2004, pp. 237-239). Además, vale recordar que *Romeo y Julieta* –escrita entre 1591 y 1595 por William Shakespeare– es el resultado de una sucesión de adaptaciones de una historia anterior, que se remonta a un libro publicado en 1476, intitulado *Mariotto e Gianozza*, escrito por Masuccio Salernitano, que fue adaptado como *Giulietta e Romeo* (1524) por Luigi de Porto y

vertido luego con el mismo nombre por Matteo Bandello (1531 y 1545), para aparecer posteriormente en el poema narrativo *The Tragical History of Romeus e Juliet* (1562) de Arthur Brooke, reescrito en prosa como *The goodly History of the true and constant love of Romeo and Julieta* (1567) por William Painter (Boyce & White, 1996, p. 563).

Corroborar y ampliar este debate Linda Hutcheon (2013), en su libro *Una teoría de la adaptación*, al mencionar los modos de participación promovidos por la adaptación como caminos apropiados a cada medio y experiencia específicos que “permite[n] pensar en cómo hacer adaptaciones, o digamos, exhibir o interactuar con las historias” (2013, p. 47). Se puede decir que dichos caminos son en cierta forma “inmersiones”, pero cada uno con diferentes niveles e intensidad. Hutcheon afirma que en el modo de contar historias, ejemplificado por la literatura, la imaginación es el principio rector que guía las palabras del texto y, en tal sentido, no responde a una imposición sonora o visual (2013, p. 48). A su vez, como lo muestran las adaptaciones para el cine y el teatro, los otros modos de participación son la visión y el sonido:

Pasamos de la imaginación al campo de la percepción directa, con su mezcla de detalles y enfoque más amplio. El modo performático nos enseña que el lenguaje no es la única manera de expresar el significado ni de contar historias. Las representaciones visuales y gestuales son ricas en asociaciones complejas; la música ofrece “equivalentes” para escuchar las emociones de los personajes y, por lo tanto, provoca reacciones emocionales en el público; el sonido, en general, puede acentuar, mejorar, o incluso contradecir los aspectos visuales y verbales (Hutcheon, 2013, p. 48).

Desplegar audiovisualmente *Romeo y Julieta* fue una decisión unánime para el grupo. Al ser una historia muy conocida, la capacidad de recrear elementos de esta narrativa con una estrategia de comunicación contemporánea se expandió sin que sus usuarios la desvincularan de la pieza de Shakespeare. Ya que las redes sociales virtuales son medios interactivos, adaptar los modos de interacción presentados por el autor nos ayudó a construir cada personaje con su propio perfil personal en cada una de las redes para lograr las interacciones que, de este modo, podían ser vistas, discutidas y ampliadas por otros usuarios que no hacían parte de nuestra narrativa.

Mediante la adaptación, el proyecto llevó la tragedia de Romeo y Julieta a la discusión sobre interacciones entre identidades de género y su impacto en la sociedad. La pieza clásica se trasladó a la vida diaria de una universidad donde una estudiante transexual (Julieta Capuleto) y una profesora transexual (Ama) polarizaron las opiniones de los otros estudiantes, incluyendo aquellos que manifestaron su prejuicio e intolerancia y aquellos que las respetaban y admiraban.

La representación de un amor cis-trans y de una profesora trans reclama una identidad por fuera de una matriz heterosexual que separa a la sociedad en femeninos y masculinos, cuerpos-mujeres y cuerpos-hombres, pues la “diferenciación sexual es un cuerpo hétero-división donde la simetría no es posible” (Preciado, 2014, p. 26). Al mismo tiempo, este amor y posición social de la alumna trans y de la profesora trans rompen los órdenes convencionales de un “sistema de representación que atribuye un significado (identidad, valor, prestigio, parentesco y posición dentro de una jerarquía social) a los individuos en la sociedad” (Lauretis, 1994, p. 212). Así, el proyecto @julietacapuleto aparece como una respuesta al proponer una historia de amor posible, con la transgresión que implica la novedad (en términos sociales) de la orientación sexual de los protagonistas. La producción y transmisión de las escenas en vivo permanecen disponibles al público, distribuidas en el desdoblamiento audiovisual que se presenta a continuación.

Resumen del primer día:

Amanda sufre transfobia por parte de los alumnos en la universidad donde trabaja como profesora (Stories - Instagram - Perfil Mercutio).

19:30 Amanda publica un video comentando la situación (Facebook Live - Perfil Amanda).

El video de Amanda repercute en la internet (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo y Julieta).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del primer día:

Facebook; Romeo, 14:00.

Instagram; Mercutio y Romeo, 19:30.

Facebook Live; Amanda, 19:30.

Facebook; Julieta, Teobaldo, 20:00 - 23:00.

Resumen del segundo día:

Amanda es despedida de la universidad (Facebook Live - Perfil de Amanda).

Julieta se manifiesta sobre la dimisión de Amanda (Facebook Live - Perfil de Julieta).

18:00 - 22:00 Llamada cumpleaños de Amanda (Facebook - Página del proyecto).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del segundo día:

Facebook Live; Amanda, 14:00.

Facebook; Julieta, 18:00.

Facebook; Julieta, Teobaldo, 18:00 - 22:00.

Resumen del tercer día:

13:00 - 18:00 Julieta y Teobaldo felicitan a Amanda (Instagram - Perfil Julieta y Teobaldo).

Amanda llama a unos amigos para festejar su cumpleaños (Facebook - Evento - Perfil de Amanda).

Comienzo de la fiesta (Instagram - Facebook - Página del proyecto).

00:00 Entrada de Romeo y amigos a la fiesta de Amanda (Instagram - Mercutio).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del tercer día:

Facebook; Amanda, 22:00.

Facebook - Instagram; Página del proyecto, 22:00.

Facebook - Instagram; Amanda, 11:00.

Página del evento - Facebook; Mercutio, Benvolio y Romeo, 14:00.

Facebook Live; Página del proyecto, 22:00.

Instagram; Mercutio, 00:00.

Resumen del cuarto día (continuación de la fiesta):

01:00 Julieta y Romeo se ven (Facebook Live - Perfil de Romeo y Julieta).

El primer beso de Julieta y Romeo (Facebook Live - Perfil de Teobaldo, Instagram - Perfil Amanda).

Mercutio y Benvolio discuten con Romeo por haber besado a una trans.

Abandonan la fiesta; Romeo regresa a la fiesta (Facebook Live - Perfil de Benvolio).

Teobaldo reconoce a Romeo (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo).

Julieta y Romeo se enamoran perdidamente (Instagram - Facebook - Perfil Julieta y Romeo).

Julieta y Romeo se conocen entre sí (Facebook Live - Perfil Julieta y Romeo).

Julieta y Romeo conversan sobre su relación (Facebook Live - Perfil de Julieta).

Romeo busca ayuda con Lorelay Fox (Facebook - Romeo).

Teobaldo comparte y comenta el video del beso de Julieta y Romeo (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo).

18:00 - 22:00 Mercutio - comentarios posteriores (Facebook - Perfil Mercutio).

Teobaldo bloquea a Mercutio (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del cuarto día:

Facebook Live; Julieta / Romeo, 01:00.

Facebook Live; Julieta / Romeo, 01:00.

Facebook Live; Teobaldo, 01:05.

Facebook Live; Perfil del Proyecto, 01:05.

Instagram; Amanda, 01:10.

Facebook; Teobaldo, 01:15.

Facebook Live; Mercutio, 01:30.

Facebook Live; Mercutio, 01:35.

Facebook Live; Julieta, 01:45.

Instagram; Romeo, 02:30.

Facebook; Julieta / Romeo, 03:00.

Facebook Live; Julieta / Romeo, 11:00.

Facebook Live; Julieta / Romeo, 12:00

Facebook; Romeo, 14:00

Facebook; Teobaldo, 18:00

Facebook; Mercutio, Fake, Teobaldo, 18:00 - 22:00.

Facebook; Teobaldo, 22:00.

Resumen del quinto día:

Lorelay Fox responde un mensaje de Romeo (YouTube / Facebook - Perfil de Lorelay Fox).

Amanda y Teobaldo apoyan matrimonio (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo y Amanda).

19:00 - 22:00 Julieta y Romeo sugieren una posible fuga (Facebook / Instagram - Perfil Julieta y Romeo).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del quinto día:

YouTube / Facebook; Lorelay Fox, 01/11; 12:00

Facebook; Julieta, Romeo, Amanda y Teobaldo, 01/11, 12:00 - 15:00.

Facebook; Amanda, 01/11, 16:00.

Instagram; Amanda, 01/11, 17:00.

Facebook; Julieta / Romeo, 01/11, 19:00 - 22:00.

Resumen del sexto día:

Teobaldo comparte transfobia contra Mercutio y Romeo (Facebook - Perfil de Teobaldo).

Romeo cuestiona el video compartido por Teobaldo (Facebook - Perfil de Romeo).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del sexto día:

Facebook; Teobaldo, 11:00.

Facebook; Romeo, 16:00.

Resumen del séptimo día:

Julieta se desahoga y se despide (Facebook Live - Perfil de Julieta).

11:00 - 13:00 Los amigos buscan a Julieta (Facebook / Instagram - Perfil Amanda, Teobaldo, Benvolio).

Romeo se despide (Facebook - Perfil de Romeo).

Plataforma de lanzamiento del contenido del séptimo día:

Facebook Live; Julieta, 11:00.

Facebook / Instagram; Teobaldo, Amanda y Benvolio, 11:00 - 13:00.

Facebook Live; Romeo, 14:00.

Facebook; Página del proyecto, 14:00 - 00:00.

Consideraciones finales en perspectiva

Al final de las transmisiones en vivo, la página del proyecto en Facebook contaba con 867 *likes*. El *Video Prólogo* fue el más visto, hasta ahora con 2526 visitas. Durante el proceso, también oímos historias reales de hombres trans y, al final, invitamos a la gente a publicar declaraciones en #sofro-porquesou, como un *spin-off* del proyecto.

Estamos proporcionando nuevos materiales para promover el proyecto. Vamos a organizar varias obras audiovisuales, con actores y producción grabados y transmitidos en 96 minutos de video. Esto nos permite desarrollar el trabajo en varios formatos, series de web-documental, *shows* e instalaciones ficcionales. Entendemos que cada fase en un proyecto tan laborioso como este solo puede presentar un equilibrio entre la conducción narrativa y el desdoblamiento audiovisual en un proceso paso a paso, es decir, en cada fase revisábamos las posibilidades que cada nuevo contenido permitiría. Fue todo un descubrimiento poder vislumbrar las nuevas cualidades narrativas por el desdoblamiento audiovisual del guion, sorprendentemente sin distanciarse nunca del original de la tragedia shakespeariana.

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Alfabetismos transmedia: cultura *maker* y aprendizajes colaborativos en el mundo hiperconectado

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Introducción

El empoderamiento de las comunidades *makers* ha cobrado cada vez más visibilidad, importancia y seguidores a lo largo del mundo, popularizándose con el desarrollo de la impresión 3D, los drones, el desarrollo de *software* y *hardware*, la robótica, y en general el DIY (*Do it Yourself*). En este trabajo hago una reflexión sobre el contexto comunicativo de las estrategias que adoptan y ejecutan los miembros de la comunidad *MakersGDL*, y cómo estas se relacionan con el desarrollo de aptitudes y habilidades para la implementación de un currículo de alfabetismos transmedia desde una perspectiva constructivista de la educación, basado en la participación activa de sus miembros en un entorno transmediático.

De este modo, partimos del potencial creativo y productivo con el que cuentan los individuos contemporáneos para participar en la generación de contenidos mediáticos y objetos físicos tangibles a partir de la reconfiguración de los medios de producción, las transformaciones en las lógicas tradicionales de distribución (y validación) y el constante acceso a más información, lo que desencadena la producción de nuevo conocimiento. En este contexto cobra cada vez más relevancia el concepto propuesto por Castells (2010) de la *autocomunicación de masas*, con el cual se describe la capacidad de los medios interactivos para facilitar la creación de contenidos que llegan a grandes audiencias.

A su vez, la cultura de la participación resulta muy útil a partir de la intersección de tres perspectivas. Primero, las nuevas tecnologías de la comunicación, que permiten a los consumidores apropiarse y recircular el contenido mediático a su disposición. Segundo, el amplio grupo de comunidades que promueve el *Do It Yourself* (DIY o *Hágalo usted mismo*)

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para la producción mediática, informativa, de *software* y de objetos de muchos tipos. Tercero, las tendencias económicas que soportan el conglomerado de medios propicia el flujo de imágenes, ideas y narrativas a través de múltiples medios, lo cual demanda una mayor participación de las personas (Jenkins, 2008). Así, abordaremos aquí las prácticas DIY como un conjunto de valores y actitudes que alientan la creación individual y colectiva de contenidos mediáticos y de productos tangibles con base tecnológica, lo cual se traduce en un desarrollo constante de los alfabetismos transmediales.

Indagar en los procesos de participación significa hacer hincapié en las prácticas comunicativas colectivas, lo cual supone una exploración que se preocupe por las *formas*, los *niveles* y los *tipos de participación*. Tal como lo plantean Ferrés y Piscitelli (2012, p. 13) la participación no debe limitarse a la mera posibilidad de la expresión, ya que “los procesos de análisis de mensajes han de ser afrontados también desde un planteamiento activo, dialógico, tomando en consideración la participación del interlocutor mediante los procesos de selección, interpretación, aceptación o rechazo, crítica, difusión, etcétera”. Esto implica una reformulación de los principios con los cuales se entiende y se reflexiona sobre la agencia de los individuos.

En este escenario se destaca la dimensión creativa e innovadora de la participación a partir de espacios y contenidos de afinidad que pueden considerarse espacios de aprendizaje informal colectivos y colaborativos alrededor de un interés compartido, una temática, una narrativa o una ética (como la ética *hacker*) (Roig, 2011). La cultura de la participación tiene una base sustancial en la dinámica de la sociedad informacional caracterizada por un incremento de la capacidad (y acaso también voluntad) de los usuarios en relación con los procesos de producción y consumo cultural. Esta dinámica se manifiesta en la producción personal y colectiva de contenidos y productos, que según Jenkins (2010) ha adquirido una dimensión sin precedentes a través de la internet y otras tecnologías asociadas.

Acceder a la cultura de la participación supone nuevas formas de currículo oculto, que se está configurando a partir de los vínculos con los medios y sus contenidos y en particular con los contenidos que logren crear *engagement* (compromiso) basado en la dimensión emotiva y afectiva (de ahí la importancia de los discursos que promueven el DIY). En este contexto se han desarrollado un conjunto de nuevas habilidades mediáti-

cas que los sujetos necesitan para participar activamente en el escenario convergente de la cultura. Según Livingstone (2008), la cultura de la participación mueve el foco de la educación-alfabetización individual a la expresión y ejecución de habilidades a través del involucramiento en comunidades de práctica.

En este contexto, investigar la transmedialidad implica revisar el modelo teórico que sustenta la idea de la convergencia cultural, desde el cual se propone que los actores sociales se relacionan e interactúan con los textos y contenidos mediáticos de formas más inmersivas y significativas (Ibrus & Ojamaa, 2014). Hablar de transmedialidad obliga a reconocer una tensión entre la participación creativa y la reactiva, que según Orozco (2011) es la más usual (la reactiva), y que se describe como parte de una condición comunicacional contemporánea en la cual la creciente ubicuidad de las audiencias y la hiperconectividad han reforzado la impresión de que el consumo mediático se ha vuelto productivo al quedar al control de las audiencias.

Las reflexiones de Orozco (2011) son pertinentes ya que por un lado invitan a reconocer los cambios en las formas de *ser audiencias*, pero sin dejar de ser críticos sobre las formas de participación real (o efectivas) que se están propiciando y generando en los entornos comunicativos. La condición comunicacional a la que se refiere este autor implica permitir a las audiencias asumirse activas más allá de la mera reinterpretación o la deconstrucción simbólica. El tránsito de ser receptor a ser productor supone uno de los cambios sociales más significativos, al propiciar una cultura real de la participación. Asumir estos cambios en las maneras en que ocurre la comunicación implica apoderarse de la premisa epistemológica que supone investigar a los actores de la comunicación como agentes activos.

Scolari (2008) relaciona los cambios en los roles de los actores comunicativos en términos de una creciente transmedialidad que desdibuja las fronteras entre los medios de comunicación y sus formas de operación. En este sentido la transmedialidad implica un cruce transversal y una combinación de los lenguajes y formas de operación entre los viejos medios y los nuevos. En este sentido la investigación alrededor de este concepto se ha caracterizado por analizar las maneras en que los contenidos fluyen en una red articulada de textualidades, medios y plataformas.

De la alfabetización a los alfabetismos transmediales

La exploración de los usos educativos de las lógicas transmedia se ha convertido en un tema frecuente en las discusiones académicas en años recientes. Con el objetivo primordial de potenciar el efecto de producir una experiencia de inmersión y *engagement* que multiplique el número de oportunidades de aprendizaje a partir de la generación de experiencias basadas en la interactividad y la participación, o con la idea de potenciar la participación y creación de contenidos por parte de los estudiantes.

Durante la última década, en el contexto de un mundo altamente mediatizado, el concepto de transmedia se ha posicionado con fuerza para reflexionar sobre las relaciones entre las audiencias, los productores y los contenidos. Acuñado inicialmente por Marsha Kinder (1980), el concepto de transmedia se refiere a un conjunto de elementos narrativos y no narrativos que se extienden a través de múltiples plataformas tecnológicas y de medios. Según Dena (2009), lo transmedia toma diferentes formas dependiendo del contexto, las audiencias y los propósitos, las cuales al emplearse y combinarse dan como resultado una *transmedia practice*.

Por su parte, la propuesta de Alper y Herr-Stephenson (2013) consiste en desarrollar una *transmedia play* que radica en la experimentación y la participación de experiencias transmedia por parte de los estudiantes. Usualmente, las lógicas transmedia operan en relación con estructuras contemporáneas del entretenimiento y el *marketing*, y las aplicaciones posibles a la educación son cada vez más investigadas y puestas en práctica.

En este sentido, se hace evidente que las lógicas transmedia se basan en las habilidades de las audiencias para decodificar, remezclar, crear y distribuir diferentes tipos de contenidos y narrativas de los medios. El valor de la agencia de los individuos para el aprendizaje es algo que cada vez más se apunta como necesario para investigar desde numerosas perspectivas. Para Alper y Herr-Stephenson (2013) la idea de una *transmedia play* centrada en la alfabetización responde por lo menos a dos de los principios fundamentales promovidos por la *National Education Association for Media Literacy*; el primero sugiere que se debe promover un consumo crítico y activo de los medios, situación que ocurriría con mayor frecuencia en un enfoque transmedia al motivar a las audiencias no solo a desarrollar un sentido crítico sobre los mensajes sino además al involucrarse activamente en la construcción de significados y contenidos. El segundo se refiere a

que la alfabetización mediática expande en su sentido el concepto mismo de alfabetización, razón por la cual un enfoque transmedial de los alfabetismos expandiría aún más este concepto al facilitar nuevas o diferentes formas de lectura, escritura, autoría, participación y creación.

Hay múltiples investigaciones que tienen como objetivo contribuir al desarrollo y aplicación de las narrativas transmedia a entornos educativos a través de marcos y modelos educativos basados en aprendizajes centrados en experiencias inmersivas (Rodríguez y Bidarra, 2014). En última instancia, la mayoría de las investigaciones de este enfoque se proponen demostrar cómo la creación de un ambiente transmedia de aprendizaje permitiría al alumno desarrollar y prosperar en los ambientes digitales. Esta visión advierte claramente una vinculación entre la alfabetización tradicional y una alfabetización pensada en la lógica transmedia.

En investigaciones como la realizada por Raybourn (2014) se sugiere la necesidad de crear experiencias de aprendizaje transmedia a partir del diseño de métodos basados en la simulación e interactividad propia de los videojuegos. Su propuesta está centrada en identificar y abordar la interacción, la narrativa, la cultura emergente y los lugares virtuales en los que ocurren las experiencias. Esta estrategia con finalidades de alfabetización consiste en el diseño de una campaña o sistema de juegos que integre personajes, roles, tareas, interfaces y redes sociales virtuales.

En este sentido, si bien la transmedialidad y sus lógicas de operación pueden ser extrapoladas a ciertas prácticas educativas a partir de diseños instruccionales, los procesos para que esto ocurra no pueden ser pensados en el vacío, y es necesario establecer suficientes matices sobre los sujetos participantes, tanto aprendices como maestros (si es que acaso esas entidades siguen siendo válidas).

Son tres las principales debilidades y deficiencias sobre los proyectos centrados en implementar o incorporar las lógicas transmedia a las prácticas educativas: primero, que suelen estar exageradamente centrados en la tecnología y los medios, otorgándole a esta poderes y facultades que no necesariamente posee; segundo, desnaturalizan (en el sentido de que se derivan de una estrategia) el consumo y la participación; y tercero, ignoran y pasan por alto que los contenidos transmediales tienen una condición centrada en el compromiso (*engagement*) de los sujetos a partir de lo emotivo y lúdico más que por una tarea impuesta.

A pesar de lo anterior, es necesario reconocer que estos esfuerzos denotan un propósito para desarrollar en los estudiantes algunos de los mismos objetivos, habilidades y competencias que la alfabetización mediática ha perseguido históricamente. La diferencia consistiría en los métodos empleados –y en la comprensión de lo que en realidad significa la transmediación, no solo en términos de los medios de comunicación, sino principalmente en la agencia de los sujetos– para realizar esta alfabetización transmedia. Si se acepta que el escenario de la comunicación es (más que nunca) convergente, no puede entonces pensarse en términos únicamente de los medios masivos de comunicación. En virtud de que, por ejemplo, ver televisión en nuestros días significa poner en juego diferentes vínculos con los contenidos y las maneras en cómo nos relacionamos con otros sujetos similares a nosotros y con los relatos, históricamente pensados para las audiencias (Orozco, 2014).

Se observa aquí una paradoja que resulta muy problemática: por un lado la investigación sobre las alfabetizaciones (mediáticas, informacionales, digitales, de internet, etc.) es la principal puerta de entrada para investigar desde una mirada educativa los entornos comunicativos en los que se desenvuelven los sujetos, pero, por otro lado, en el afán de incorporar los mismos modelos que se han desarrollado a lo largo de las investigaciones sobre la alfabetización mediática, se corre el riesgo de invisibilizar y simplificar las prácticas de los sujetos.

Con esta misma lógica, Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder (2002) señalan que el aprendizaje en sí mismo no se puede diseñar, lo que se diseña son infraestructuras sociales que pueden fomentar ciertos procesos de aprendizaje; esto supone que siempre existe “una incertidumbre intrínseca entre el diseño y su realización en la práctica, porque la práctica no es el resultado del diseño, sino de los sujetos inmersos en ellas y sus disposiciones, limitaciones, capacidades, deseos, voluntades y un largo etcétera que escapa a las previsiones de los diseñadores o hacedores de estrategias de aprendizaje” (2002, p. 12).¹ Por esta razón no se trata simplemente de adaptar o diseñar los escenarios transmediales para fomentar el aprendizaje, más bien son las prácticas sociales y culturales las que lo hacen posible.

¹ Las traducciones de los textos citados son mías.

Como lo hemos planteado hasta aquí, las prácticas que resultan de la convergencia cultural –centradas en las culturas de la participación y la colaboración– presentan complejos desafíos y retos para los investigadores y educadores al momento de desarrollar estrategias capaces de superar las dualidades y limitaciones de modelos anteriores. La idea de los alfabetismos transmediales que propongo aquí busca superar una postura centrada en la crítica a los medios y la reproducción de tareas escolares basadas en los modelos tradicionales de la comunicación y la educación (como lo ha hecho la alfabetización mediática tradicional). La propuesta de investigación más cercana y que dialoga de una forma directa con los planteamientos y preguntas que me he formulado en esta propuesta es la que realiza Scolari (2016), al proponer un alfabetismo transmedia que sea capaz de desplazarse de la enseñanza formal hacia el aprendizaje informal.

Alfabetizar implica un proceso que se define por la planificación y la voluntad explícita de enseñar (a leer y escribir primero y luego a producir contenidos mediáticos). Como se sabe, el concepto de alfabetización proviene de la palabra *literacy* en inglés; no obstante, en las investigaciones más recientes se percibe una transformación que va de la alfabetización a los alfabetismos, o *new literacies* (Gee, 2015; Pérez, 2014). Esta transformación implica superar la idea de la alfabetización como un proceso escolarizado, planificado e institucional para darle cabida a un proceso donde las prácticas sociales y culturales definen el tipo de alfabetismos que se están dando en los ambientes extraescolares.

Lankshear & Knobel (2006) proponen pasar de la alfabetización a los alfabetismos porque afirman que a través de estos es posible abarcar la complejidad de las prácticas culturales que propician los aprendizajes, más allá de si son planificados o no. En este sentido el alfabetismo es visto como una práctica social que no depende de condicionamientos formales o planificados. Por esta razón propongo el uso de alfabetismos y no la mera alfabetización.

Para Dussel (2010) es preferible usar alfabetismos en lugar de alfabetización porque el concepto de alfabetización implica una connotación directa a las prácticas de lectura y escritura que no abordan completamente los contextos y prácticas en las que leer y escribir ocurren. Como se ha visto, con la creación de una amplia variedad de conceptos que tratan de abordar las nuevas alfabetizaciones lo que se hace es expandir la metáfora de la lectura y la escritura a otros contextos sin lograr atender a

la complejidad de las prácticas sociales y culturales que ocurren más allá de la voluntad por enseñar o aprender.

Colaboración *Do it Yourself* de *hackers* y *makers*

El movimiento Hazlo tú mismo, o *Do it Yourself* (DIY), ha significado un renovado interés por la creación y fabricación propia y ha posibilitado una reivindicación de las posibilidades expresivas de los individuos en función de los contenidos mediáticos, como resultado de una alternativa a la desintermediación en la producción de contenidos, materiales, ideas o tecnología, antes solo en posesión de corporaciones o empresas. En términos de las comunidades, Jenkins (2010) sugiere que el hazlo tú mismo no significa “hazlo tú solo”, sino que, por el contrario, el componente social y colaborativo es fundamental para suscitar experiencias significativas de aprendizaje y de transferencia de conocimiento. La importancia del DIY para la investigación de las culturas de la participación implica mirar con detenimiento prácticas de producción mediática (pero no solo mediática sino también de *hardware* y *software*) que suponen una reformulación de las maneras en que se aprende colectiva y colaborativamente, en función de intereses de ocio, emprendimiento, innovación y/o cívicos.

El *Do it Yourself* se puede entender como las prácticas de participación de las personas para producir contenido propio, en función de discursos mediáticos o a partir de información disponible en los medios. Este producir contenido propio significa la creación de una amplia variedad de composiciones textuales, sonoras, visuales, etcétera, pero también significa la intervención, modificación o creación de *software*, *hardware*, objetos, procesos o tecnología especializada.

La investigación del DIY está asociada usualmente a la ética y cultura *hacker*, que centra su actividad en la innovación por medio de la apropiación, intervención y creación de sistemas, productos, y procesos culturales y tecnológicos (Libow & Stager, 2013). La figura del *hacker* tiene una doble connotación; una negativa, asociada a la capacidad de las personas para utilizar conocimiento especializado informático destinado a vulnerar la seguridad de los sistemas computacionales, de servicios digitales y empresas o corporaciones virtuales. Y una connotación positiva asociada a la puesta en práctica de conocimiento especializado para reconfigurar sistemas y prácticas en beneficio de la sociedad a partir de la apertura

de la información y el conocimiento para la gente a través de estructuras abiertas y horizontales, todo en beneficio de lo comunitario (Himanen, 2011).

La cultura y la ética *hacker*, en relación con la educación, se ha conectado sobre todo a partir del estudio del *software* libre. Estos trabajos se han concentrado especialmente en la realización de etnografías que muestran una descripción detallada de las prácticas fundamentales que se centran en la programación y la creación de código abierto. La figura del *hacker* se ha presentado como una alternativa de transformación política, económica y tecnológica que gana cada vez más presencia en la cultura y en los discursos mediáticos (Estalella, s. f.).

El trabajo etnográfico que se ha realizado sobre la cultura *hacker* y el movimiento *DIY* se ha propuesto la descripción de las prácticas a partir de la identidad de los sujetos en relación con las comunidades a las que se integran según los intereses particulares y sus prácticas comunicativas. Estas perspectivas de investigación ayudan a pensar no solo los rasgos de la identidad de los sujetos sino además a poner en la agenda la reflexión sobre la colaboración, la participación, lo colectivo, la transmedialidad y principalmente sobre las nuevas maneras en que el aprendizaje está ocurriendo en comunidades de práctica basadas en la cultura *hacker* y de emprendimiento.

El movimiento *maker* se puede entender en ese sentido como heredero de la tradición de la cultura *hacker* en cuanto comparte los ideales cívicos y es capaz de participar de una forma intensa sobre las manifestaciones culturales y problemas sociales que tiene a disposición. El movimiento *maker* tiene como antecedente directo el *DIY* que capitaliza múltiples maneras de creación colaborativa, y que responde (entre otros problemas) a la obsolescencia programada mediante la participación basada en la intervención de los procesos de producción y circulación de productos.

La investigación social sobre los *makers* (en las ciencias sociales) tiene una fuerte vinculación antropológica en cuanto busca comprender las prácticas de los sujetos en función de su acción colectiva y con base en una desterritorialización constante que va de lo *online* a lo *offline* y viceversa. El movimiento *maker* (o de los hacedores) opera con una lógica y ética establecidas en un texto fundamental y fundacional para todos los miembros de estas comunidades. Se trata del libro de Cris Anderson (2012) *Makers. La nueva revolución industrial* en el que se auguró que *las fábricas*

volverán a los hogares, anticipando el continuo proceso de desintermediación que ha surgido en los últimos años en la elaboración de productos. El argumento central de este texto es que, así como la internet modificó el flujo de la información, los contenidos y la comunicación, el *software* de última generación, las impresoras 3D y otras máquinas para fabricar objetos cambiarán los procesos de participación y creación, basándose en dinámicas de colaboración y creatividad al interior de comunidades de afinidad.

La comunidad de *makers* tiene presencia internacional a través de redes sociales digitales y se caracteriza también por la concreción de sus prácticas en los *makerspaces*, que son en realidad espacios dedicados para la creación colectiva y la socialización de los miembros (Hatch, 2014). El *maker* trasciende al aficionado en cuanto logra establecer vínculos comunitarios, empresariales, educativos, económicos y políticos con otras comunidades y agentes relevantes. Y especialmente se puede distinguir al *maker* de otros grupos similares, no solo por lo anterior sino además por su disposición técnica para aprender a usar maquinarias y dispositivos para la consecución de sus objetivos.

Es indispensable entender que la investigación sobre los *makers* implica un vínculo indisoluble con el movimiento DIY que a su vez se conecta con la cultura de la participación entendida esta como la capacidad de los usuarios y las audiencias para reformular los procesos de producción y consumo cultural. En materia educativa el estado del conocimiento sobre este tipo de comunidades se ha concentrado más bien (de una forma muy limitada aún) en el análisis de comunidades de aprendizaje informal.

Actualmente existe una red mundial de comunidades que apuestan por aplicar la lógica del movimiento *maker* a las prácticas educativas y a las instituciones escolares de todos los niveles. En ese sentido, la investigación sobre los efectos e implicaciones de estas lógicas y éticas basadas en el DIY está aún por verse. En México, el trabajo que están realizando algunas comunidades de *makers* se ha llevado ya al terreno educativo sin conocer aún sus efectos y alcances reales.

La comunidad *maker* se encarga de empoderar a las personas por medio de la innovación y el conocimiento abierto, de tal manera que los afiliados tengan la posibilidad de recrear productos, y hacer realidad sus ideas sin recurrir a grandes inversiones. Todos son innovadores y todos comparten qué, cómo y por qué crean. En este sentido este movimiento

da cuenta de una de las tendencias que está redefiniendo la relación de la sociedad con la tecnología: las innovaciones tecnológicas ya no son resultado exclusivamente del trabajo de grandes fabricantes y compañías multinacionales.

En el marco de la Estrategia Digital Nacional del gobierno de la República mexicana se lanzó en 2013 un programa de alcance nacional que buscó impulsar el desarrollo de proyectos de innovación y emprendimiento mediante el fomento de espacios de mejoramiento comunitario. En este esfuerzo por impulsar el desarrollo del emprendimiento se ofrecieron becas a proyectos de innovación con base tecnológica y mediática. En este contexto, han surgido voces que se ven tentadas a comparar el escenario incipiente de cultura digital, creativa y de la participación que está ocurriendo en Guadalajara para equipararla con la de Silicon Valley; esto se debe en buena medida al proyecto nacional para desarrollar en Guadalajara la Ciudad Creativa Digital (aún en construcción). En este marco, se han desarrollado en todo el país proyectos independientes para la creación de espacios físicos (*makerspaces*) y comunidades centradas en la creación y en el DIY.

Repensar las implicaciones que tienen estas comunidades en los alfabetismos a partir de la agencia de las personas no es algo totalmente nuevo, pero sí lo es la construcción de este objeto de estudio en función de un análisis comparativo que se preocupa por las prácticas de participación de los *makers* a partir de una reconfiguración de las maneras en que se consume, produce y circula información y conocimientos. O, dicho de otro modo, investigar las culturas de la participación de comunidades de afinidad implica indagar sobre los “contratos participativos” que se están reconfigurando en un escenario de la comunicación y el aprendizaje donde predomina la interactividad, la autocomunicación de masas, la transmedialidad, la inteligencia colectiva y otras múltiples convergencias culturales y tecnológicas.

Ethos DIY y cultura *maker*

Considerar al DIY como un movimiento internacional solo es posible a partir de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, cuando, si bien el concepto no existía, la práctica generalizada de realizar mejoras y fabricar objetos fue algo necesario en muchas partes del mundo (Hallaq, 2010). Para la

economía de los países protagonistas del conflicto fue indispensable que sus ciudadanos tomaran en sus manos la responsabilidad de reconstruir las ciudades y los hogares (principalmente en el caso de las naciones del Eje) y que impulsaran el desarrollo de la manufactura y las fábricas (sobre todo en el caso de los Aliados).

La evolución de la noción *Hágalo usted mismo* ha obedecido especialmente a que los referentes empíricos sobre los que se aplica (y a través de los cuales se puede observar y conocer) se han ido modificando con el paso del tiempo. La tecnología (en su sentido más amplio) relacionada con la técnica y la habilidad de las personas para el dominio y empleo de herramientas, ha sido determinante en las cosas que se pueden hacer una vez que se tiene acceso a ella, es decir, a las maneras del hacer y a los conocimientos necesarios para operar, reconvertir, administrar y combinar los recursos y la materia prima. En este sentido, quien se proponga hacer una historia detallada del concepto DIY tendría que revisar también cómo es que la tecnología ha permitido que la gente no especializada utilice el conocimiento disponible para su propio beneficio, para satisfacer sus necesidades y preferencias o para el beneficio compartido y social.

Luego de la etapa en que el concepto DIY se relacionó casi exclusivamente con el mejoramiento de los hogares y los espacios familiares (de la primera década del siglo xx hasta la década de 1950), el siguiente paso significativo fue el impulso que cobró en las décadas posteriores con los movimientos contraculturales impulsados por los *hippies* y los *punks* (Moran, 2010). Uno de los ideales que reflejan la influencia del DIY en el movimiento punk (y acaso también viceversa) fue la intención de cambiar la industria musical del momento por medio de la producción de música original (a través de sellos independientes) que no replicara las formulas establecidas del momento y que asumiera una crítica activa basada en la construcción de una identidad que se reflejaba en acciones como la utilización de formatos de baja resolución en la grabación (DIY Lo-Fi) y la producción de la vestimenta (Spencer, 2005). Se llegó a afirmar incluso que para ser realmente un buen representante del movimiento punk habría que ser capaz de elaborar las prendas de vestir propias (Spencer, 2005).

En este sentido, el significado del concepto DIY se ha relacionado directamente con movimientos contraculturales que han representado algún tipo de resistencia al sistema dominante y que veían en su agencia un motor de cambio real y posible (Giddens, 1984). En esta lógica se han

distinguido tres sentidos del DIY que es preciso recuperar para la construcción de un significado unificado que conviva tanto con las primeras significaciones como con las más recientes. El *Hágalo usted mismo* se entiende a partir de: a) la construcción de espacios propios, b) la creación de medios de comunicación (o expresión) alternativos, y c) el *performance* (entendido como acción directa y concreta sobre objetos, procesos o significados).

A partir de esta clasificación, entiendo el *ethos* DIY a partir de las “estructuras del sentir” de Williams (1983) en virtud de que las prácticas y la producción autogestionada de los prosumidores es visible en términos de actitudes, sentimientos, valores y lógicas compartidas por los miembros de comunidades creativas, y que dan forma no solo a su hacer colectivo sino también a una variedad de significados sobre su posición frente a los medios de comunicación masiva, las fuerzas de la economía capitalista, la educación institucionalizada, las formas de gobierno y otros elementos cruciales para entender el momento actual de la sociedad.

El *ethos* DIY tiene que ver más con las prácticas realizadas por las comunidades que con las características de los sujetos que integran esas comunidades. Este conjunto de actitudes y valores es visible en las prácticas que las comunidades realizan con la tecnología disponible y en el modo en que estas prácticas inciden en las determinaciones sociales a las que influyen, como la educación, la organización política, la construcción identitaria, el arte o la creación cultural.

Una de las cuestiones más interesantes en lo que se refiere a las actitudes y valores del *ethos* DIY es aquella que se refiere a la voluntad para encontrar y proponer nuevos usos a la tecnología y a los contenidos disponibles en los medios. Lo que implicaría un tipo de participación activa centrada en la creación que toma como inspiración el trabajo de otros y los productos de la cultura mediatizada y tecnológica.

El *ethos* DIY como un conjunto de valores, sentimientos y actitudes presentes en la actualidad ha tomado como referencia fundamental el impulso tecnológico y cultural de la ética *hacker* (Himanen, 2011) y la producción de *software* libre (Stallman, 2004), dado que estas lógicas (basadas en la *libertad del hacer*, en un sentido crítico y en la apertura para intercambiar conocimiento) son en buena medida responsables de la obtención de conocimientos y herramientas con las cuales participar activamente en la creación de contenidos y productos que resultan más accesibles a diferencia de otras épocas.

El *ethos* DIY hace visible que estamos en presencia de una reconfiguración de la relación trabajo-ocio en la que las fronteras son cada vez más difusas y las lógicas de producción apuntan a un *pensar con las manos*, donde el disfrute de una práctica conduciría a la constante repetición de la misma y en consecuencia al dominio de dicha actividad. En este sentido los procesos de aprendizaje se ven necesariamente influidos y, en algunos casos, las prácticas del *hágalo usted mismo* tienen el objetivo de no solo influir sino también de reconvertir las relaciones de poder entre el conocimiento, el maestro y el educando. En este escenario, los procesos de comunicación y las lógicas transmediales tienen mucha injerencia.

Conclusiones

Hablar de educación implica un tránsito constante entre las aspiraciones y deseos y las prácticas y experiencias. La educación entendida desde la escolarización implica un conjunto de procesos organizados cuya finalidad consiste en que los sujetos compartan y adquieran habilidades y conocimientos que han sido cultural y socialmente definidos y aceptados (Pérez, 2014). Bajo esta lógica, educación y escolaridad son dos aspectos fundamentales de una misma dimensión que tienen como fundamento la intencionalidad de enseñar. Pero la enseñanza es apenas una de las dimensiones que se ponen en juego en el proceso educativo, porque sin aprendizaje la enseñanza pierde su sentido y objetivos.

Los aprendizajes y alfabetismos más significativos no siempre se originan a partir de dinámicas institucionalizadas formales, sino que también ocurren como resultado de procesos autónomos, informales e invisibles casi siempre en el seno de comunidades y colectivos de la más diversa índole. En este sentido, no se trata de condenar la educación formal ni a la escuela, sino más bien de comprender sus lógicas tradicionales de operación y todo lo que pasa por fuera de ella. En medio de estas condiciones, la capacidad de agencia de los sujetos mediatizados se presenta como una situación que reconfigura el entorno comunicativo interactivo por medio de la participación activa, lo cual exacerba lo que podría pensarse como una crisis de los sistemas de educación escolarizados en función de un desfase con: a) los nuevos sistemas productivos y sociocognitivos, y b) la aparición de entidades colectivas que producen y circulan información y conocimiento sin necesidad de estar insertos en una institución educativa (Brunner, 2001). Es importante reconocer que esta crisis no es económica, sino que más bien está centrada en las discrepancias visibles entre la legitimidad institucional y la capacidad y posibilidad de los sujetos de acceder y construir conocimientos sin necesidad de grados o formación académica.

Transitar de las alfabetizaciones a los alfabetismos implica reconocer que una buena cantidad de información se transforma en conocimiento en

el seno de las más diversas prácticas comunicativas y sociales. Es en este sentido que los alfabetismos transmediales cobran relevancia en cuanto dan cuenta de un tipo de aprendizaje que se caracteriza principalmente por los entornos de comunicación transmediáticos en los que el flujo de mensajes va de muchos a muchos y donde la participación de las personas es indispensable para la resignificación y la creación.

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Reflections on the TV reception instance in the ambience of transmediality and interactivity

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Introduction

On November 17th, 2016, the analogical television signal was turned off in Brasília (capital of Brazil) and in nine of its suburbs. This process is not new for the countries of the northern hemisphere; however, in a country with continental dimensions such as Brazil, it presents many structural, technical and social challenges. Therefore, this transition was closely followed by the Government and by the broadcasters. The major concern is the families that did not yet have televisions or converters capable of picking up the new signal.

It was from the necessity of empirical observation to understand this transition that our research group *Studies of Transmedia and Interactive Digital Content* created the project *Migration to Digital TV*. Its objective was to interview and observe families that went through this process of transition (from analogical to digital) on their televisions. We focused our field visits on households whose residents had received the antenna and the digital image converter from social programs and had recently installed them.

In this field of research, the immediate observation within the visited families was the perception and identification of at least three

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generational categories with quite different reception skills: adults older than 50, adults between the ages of 20 and 50, young people and children. In younger generations, we observed a relationship between the TV. and its integration with other media (especially with the internet), present in both the content chosen and in the way of watching it. In the older ones, we perceived interest in knowing and learning how to use the interactivity features integrated into the digital signal TV.

We believe that the perspective of mediations proposed by Martín-Barbero (1997) remains fundamental for thinking about a communication scenario in which the technological transformations have intensified even more with their digitization process. Therefore, in this article we propose to analyze the displacements and new configurations of the television receiver figure from the places of mediation highlighted by Martín-Barbero: family daily life, social temporality and cultural competence.

Thus, we return to familiar everyday life –in spite of all new forms of consumption of television content –understanding that the family is still characterized as the basic unit of audience–, and a privileged space for the direct interaction of the spectators, a place of “reading and codification of television” (Martín-Barbero, 1997, p. 295). Simultaneously, we note and recognize a parallel process of everyday life virtualization by networks: the space in which television content is discussed and whereby it expands from the family unit *in loco* to the living spaces on-line, as the social networks.

As a consequence of this process, it is necessary to answer how much does the social temporality of viewers become manifest by their relationship with the programming grid, and in what ways this organizes the time of the viewer in the 21st century, as it did in the analog phase of TV. The construction of social temporality in television passes through its genres, its exhibition times and the aesthetics of content repetition. Currently, we realize that social temporality seems to contemplate two times: the time of the present action and the time of network action. Concomitantly, this temporal organization is fragmented by the dispersion of content into other forms of distribution (such as streaming services: either video on demand or other internet distribution and access services). In these forms, the grid tends to cease to be the only way of temporal organization. We are faced, then, with the challenge of identifying these other types of social temporality that can be –or already are– created by the permanent supply of ideas and continuous content flow.

It becomes inevitable to observe the dynamics of cultural competence. Supported by Martin-Barbero, it seems that this competence is linked to formal education, as well to habits, local and regional cultures, social and ethnic groups and their respective uses and customs. In the current context, this cultural competence incorporates practices and knowledge regarding the use of mobile devices and applications, suggesting consumption of hybrid and *mestizo* content. Such dynamics may result in the reconfiguration of the mediation space in the face of these cultural, social and technological dislocations.

In this analysis, we start with these initial observations to put in discussion, as a theoretical provocation, what the field has incited on us. Thus, we will investigate the reception skills which are at stake in the contemporary world, from the strengthening of a media convergence culture and the establishment of television as multiple media. We can set our initial concern from the following questions: When we think about television audience, to whom are we actually referring to? What distinguishes the various reception current instances: the viewer, the user, the audience, the consumer, the fan? And how can each of these instances be considered, from the television perspective? These are some of the issues that we will address in our communication.

Background

While the television technology was born as a unidirectional medium for audiovisual transmission, its functionalities and uses have been redefined over recent years, following the signal transition from analog to digital and the arrival of the Internet to TV. screens. At the end of the 20th century, theorists debated the passage from *paleotelevision* to *neotelevision* (Eco, 1986; Casseti & Odin, 1990). Now, both terms have been superseded by a new television era, which combines digital technology, synchronism with other media and new formats and uses: the *hypertelelevision* (Scolari, 2008).

Scolari proposed that this transformation is not only technological but also social, as spectators transfer their fruition experiences from other media to this new type of television. This hypertextual fruition experience engages spectators to interactivity and networking through fragmented textuality, and they become highly capable of adapting to new interaction media. This is the context digital television needs to adapt to.

According to Orozco, this phenomenon created a new relationship between the audience and multiple screens, given new interactivity, media convergence and individualization capabilities (Orozco, 2010). Instead of spectators, there are users who dissolve classical styles of consumption and interaction with information and images. They are also viewers/internauts who insert themselves in the regular processes of production, circulation and reception, due to the profusion of digital devices (Kieling, 2009). The processes of recognition and circulation, according to Verón's social semiosis (Verón, 2004), are under intense and multidirectional flows. The television in the living room is not alone anymore, while the viewers sit down on armchairs and sofas to immerse themselves in audiovisual content.

Audiovisual mass consumption is currently under a paradigm dispute between fixed-grid and on-demand models. Furthermore, in Latin-American countries such as Brazil, the definitive migration from the analog to the digital signal is still under course. Viewers, users, producers and programmers are still discovering and building new possibilities, functionalities and uses for this hypertelevision.

Results

The reflections developed in this article depart from the field research carried out in 2016 in 56 family households that experienced the migration from analogue to digital television signals. In the homes visited, residents had received and installed reception kits from Digital TV. (a capture antenna, a signal converter and cables) after their registration in government social programs (Kieling, Rodrigues, & Freitas, 2017, p. 158). Next, we present some of the answers about digital TV. obtained through surveys applied in these houses. In the following section, we explain how these results are backed by the theoretical approach on the reception reconfiguration of the hypertelevision audience.

After summarizing the interviewees socioeconomic and educational characteristics, it was possible to determine that they have received a very basic education (where 50% had not finished elementary school), perceived a minimum wage income (or less) and were employed in service providing occupations, which do not require specific training. They, thus, belong to the most numerically significant population range in Brazil.

In the country, this is the public who consume the most free of charge television programs.

As we explained in the beginning of this text, we identified three age / generational categories among our interviewees: elderly (adults over 60), adults (between 30 and 59 years old) and young (up to 29). The differences in communication habits among the three groups were evident. For example, we note that among the young, more than 90% have smartphones; and among the elderly, this number does not reach 42%. We can argue, from the data found, that among the youngest, the relationship with television was more integrated with other media (cellular, internet), both in the content watched and in the devices used.

In relation to the transit to digital television, 100% of the respondents indicated that they had perceived its effects. Although everyone noticed the image improvements, it was only 57.1% of the interviewees who pointed out an alteration in the audio, and only the lowest 7.1% indicated interactivity as a differential factor; these last resource was in general unknown by the public. The numbers proved this perception: only 25% reported knowing what digital interactivity meant, and only 7.3% had already used some television interactivity features. Due to this absence, we decided to devote time for practical and theoretical demonstrations of the interactivity resources available in the Brazilian digital TV. system during the interviews.

It is important to add that the Brazilian terrestrial transmission system results from a combination of the Japanese audiovisual transmission system, IDB-T, and a Brazilian data transmission system called Ginga, developed by local researchers led by Rio de Janeiro's Catholic University. The Ginga middleware is adopted in Brazil and other 13 Latin-American countries.

Even though the demonstrations were made for the whole family, we soon we noticed that the children and adolescents ended up taking over the remote controls in place of their parents or older family members. Once again, the different layers of cultural competences present within the same family unit were evident while observing the interviewees interactions.

After these demonstrations, we inquired about their perception on possible uses of interactivity: 86.1% believe that interactive services can help families gain access to more information; 77.8% consider that they

can help families with their rights, and 63.9% think that the interactivity tool can help families benefit more. The options “does nothing” or “it makes no difference on TV. were not marked. This indicates the interest that arose in the very act of our research, due to the demonstrations to access several resources.

If the interactivity resources in the newly acquired digital television were little known by the interviewees, we also investigated their use and knowledge of other devices connected to the digital communicative environment. Among the devices available at these homes, we found that 69.1% had smartphones; 43.6% cell phones without internet access; 29.1% desktop computers; 27.3% home telephones; 20% laptop computers and 3.6% had tablets. Regarding their use, the smartphone is at the top of the list, being used by 62.7% of the respondents on a daily basis, and the cell phone with no internet access follows second (used by 41.2%). The order continues with computer desktops (21.6%), home telephones (19.6%) and, finally, laptops (5.9%). Strangely, the tablet was not mentioned in the surveys.

Other numbers show that 83.9% of respondents reported having a cell phone. From this group, more than 85% are prepaid handsets and only 15% are postpaid. Additionally, 92.9% answered that they did not watch any TV. shows on the cell phone, but 77.8% stated that they would be interested in a cell phone model that would allow them to watch TV. for free. Moreover, 71.4% answered that they use or have already used the internet. However, only 41.1% have internet at home, while the other 41.1% were not connected to the internet. From the first group, 23.2% said they were always connected, and 17.9%, are connected only one or two hours a day. Thanks to these responses we realize that the uses of the network and mobile devices are still very limited for this population.

This explains why, among our interviewees, television continues to be the preferred medium for obtaining information. 92.7% of respondents indicated television news as their main source of information, followed by social networks, with 34.5%. Also, printed newspapers (16.4%), online newspapers (12.7%) and print magazines (3.6%) were pointed as their sources. A small group (7.3%) indicated other forms, such as conversations with friends and neighbors.

When questioned about their interaction with other devices while watching TV. half of the respondents said they never do it. However, the

frequency of those who always or almost always interact while watching TV. reaches more than 30%.

About 2/3 of respondents feel like active participants rather than as passive viewers while they watch TV. To a great extent, the justifications mentioned emotional engagement with the programming content as a form of active participation. As for internet participation, the majority (75%) consider themselves to be more active than passive –a slightly higher percentage than TV. (65%), since they pointed out that they used the internet very often and that they were “talking” to others over the network. When asked if they felt any transformations as spectators after the transition from analog to digital, 78.8% answered affirmatively, by adding that the image improvement resulted in a greater programming engagement.

Discussion

What do these data show? On one hand, that this public does not possess a complete dominion of new technologies and media mixtures dimension; on the other, that there is the desire for inclusion in these virtual spaces. Social networking and messaging (especially WhatsApp and Facebook) are the most frequent gateways to accomplishing this. There is an evident access barrier and not exactly a spontaneous block to the process of digital alphabetization. The social dynamics of inclusion reveal the natural desire to be inserted and the material evidence of being excluded.

Therefore, we realized that the television content remains central to the mediation of social temporality of the respondents. Although there is an approximation, with virtualized environments on the internet and their own temporalities, the economic and cultural access barriers to the network media universe cannot be disregarded. Nevertheless, when these other temporalities are accessed, especially by the younger generations, we find uses that reinforce the processes of socialization, by the interpersonal connections of social networks. We realize that the resources offered by the Brazilian digital TV. system (such as interactivity and multiprogramming) have a great potential to connect the public with the techno-communicative environment, provided that these resources are made accessible, both in a financial way and in the dissemination of forms of use.

Martín-Barbero seems to be precise once more, when he points out that television helps to mediate the time of life and the time “of denied, economically devalued and politically unknown sociability” (Martín-Barbero 1997, p. 307). More than a desire or dream of inclusion in the techno-communicative environment, we perceive a strong necessity of such inclusion. In this context, it seems relevant to think of the reconfiguration of the mediation of cultural competence spaces based on the idea of dilution of devices, hybridization of genres and media confluence, in a scenario in which the television contents undergo processes of dissipation and incorporation between the multiple devices and media (Kieling, Freitas, & Freitas, 2016).

We live in the age of convergence, an ever-present perspective in the course of the narratives and that has gained greater diffusion with the digitalization of the means of content distribution. Jenkins (2008) contributed to this process, as it explored the new forms of media consumption seeking to understand how these changes affected the way communication was done, especially by large producers. More than the prediction of a replacement of the old media by the new media, to which the theorists of the digital revolution of the 1990s subscribed, Jenkins argues that in the context of convergence, these old and new paradigms intersect and interact in increasingly complex ways. Thus, convergence occurs not only on multiple consumer platforms, but especially on the cognition of individual consumers and their social interactions (Jenkins, 2008, p. 30). For the author: “Convergence is, in this sense, an old concept assuming new meanings” (2008, p. 33). We realize, then, that in Jenkins, the key figure in reception is the *consumer*, the *fan*.

While Jenkins directs its analysis to the culture of convergence in a more marketing perspective, and how this new configuration interferes with the economic production of media conglomerates, Carlos Alberto Scolari points to the importance of shaping these new contents, and how the transmedia narratives adapt to passage through other means. According to Scolari (2008), the television transformation is provided by the new interactive media, and he questions how television narratives would fit the proposed interactivity. For the author, the approach changes because the reception instances change. In this sense, there is a need

to adapt the traditional media to the new profile of viewers, who have new cognitive and perceptive skills. Thus, the proposal of interactive television distances itself from the television linearity, and makes the content available to the other platforms, fomenting hypertextual experiences. For Scolari, this new consumer profile / viewer anchors in other media experiences over television, and to attract this group, the TV. must pretend to be something it is not: an interactive medium. For Scolari, then, more than a matter of consumption or fan culture, what needs to be reconfigured is the TV. viewer's experience, which is changed by their experiences as users on other platforms.

Arlindo Machado brings the figure of the interactor to the discussion, as part of the change of status in the devices, in the audiovisual text and in the spectator on the new media (Machado, 2007, p. 133). Regarding the reception, what begins to change is the "viewer's agency". Thus, for Machado "everything that is going to unfold on the screen now depends on the decisions, actions and initiatives taken by the subject that relates to it, the computer user" (2007, p. 142). In this changing scenario, Machado uses the term interactor, since the expressions user, spectator, and receiver cannot account for the new participatory situations.

When we reflect about the results and observations of the field research, we realize that all these denominations are pertinent to analyze our group of respondents. In a general way, we perceive in interviewees the desire for accessibility and use of the new resources available through the digital TV. system and for integration with other connected communicative media. However, access to the media and its uses runs into barriers of economic and social exclusion: the use of the Internet is limited due to low incomes, and the use of resources is affected by a lack of technical knowledge.

The Jenkins consumer figure is determinant precisely because it includes the financial issues that cross reception and television production in the culture of convergence –although the author's approach is to think from the perspective of the big producers. In the field, as we have described, the barriers encountered by our interviewees were precisely to be able to assert themselves as active consumers.

In relation to Scolari, we observe the new generations migration and adaptation movements as reconfigurations of the television reception by the contact with other communicational devices. On our field visits, the younger participants were more familiar with the interactivity features available on digital television, the ones who mostly used the internet and had other devices, such as smartphones. In relation to this new generation, they can be addressed as interactors, using the reconfiguration of reception, in terms of Machado.

Conclusion

From the perspective of cultural competence, there was a latent digital exclusion in the case of recognition of television and technology texts, the audience perceptions of what they want and what they can do, what they need and what they know. These directly inhibit the convergence with the medio-sphere, connecting the production and reception instances with a negotiation of symbolic production and the generation of meaning.

From the data analysis obtained from the interviews and field observations, we identified five key points that emerge from this research (Kieling *et al.*, 2017): i) The centrality and permanence of television; ii) The extensive transition process from open analogue to digital TV. signals in the Federal District and surroundings; iii) The significant access and knowledge barrier to digital media and technologies; iv) Although slow, there is a migration process into digital devices; and v) Interactivity is still a potentiality.

Martin-Barbero's reflection still fits well with the challenges of understanding these reconfigurations of techno-communication in the environment of media mixing, verifiable in the TV. digitalization and its convergence with mobile devices. His rich contribution supports on analysis and an approximation with the dynamics and the configurations of this mediatic ambience.

Nevertheless, it was possible to find clues to which aspects of everyday family life remain a mediation space and how this space can be updated or reconfigured, which highly rely on the universe of reception. They dissipate to other spaces and means that virtualize sociability. Even when viewers take on content-producing actions that circulate through social networks and experience the logic of that environment, they carry the links they see on television and add elements of their own day-to-day life. The sociability of the room expands into a virtual space.

The same movement is observed in social temporality. The rituality of TV. time, which is organized by programming and the hierarchy of genres (soap operas, news programs and auditorium programs) and by the

viewer's social time, is now interspersed with the virtual time, the time to update the present. There is almost a complementary idea of presence and direct effects of TV. Convergence does generate new temporalities, but for the TV audience they are associated with the divisions of working time, service time, and interaction time.

In a natural sequence of the phenomenon of digital immersion, the cultural skills accumulated with the years of consumption and television content literacy now serve as a practical basis for the assimilation and understanding of narratives and contents that are articulated with the digital environment. Television and mobile devices add new skills to understand technicity to the television audience, in a gradual and cumulative process to use and understand the language of digital machines. Even without having a fine mastery on computer grammars and their derivative devices, this audience is already embedded in digital confluence and the literacy process that understands the speech of chips.

In this research, we observed at least two trends: 1) Free broadcast television, far from being a disposable content distribution system, is a mean that has not been exhausted in its technological and economic possibilities; 2) The renewal of the conditions of production, circulation, and consumption –with TV digitalization– ensures access to populations who still lack diverse connectivity options. Therefore, there is a possible social and cultural use.

It is a fact that there are indicators of a future trend centered on the distribution of content via fixed network infrastructures, and especially via mobile networks. Also, that the investments will be concentrated in areas of economic sustainability, as it can be seen nowadays in the distribution of global capital. It is hard to imagine that the content distribution will bypass the neoliberal rationality that assembles individual and planetary priorities. Therefore, it is in this complex scenario that is being established the logic of the viewer, the internaut and the user. There is a space where there is a belief on the existence of an interoperable platform and on the evolution of data distribution and terrestrial broadcast TV interactivity. All this process seems to give us hints and indications not to turn the page in the studies and experiments with the Digital Terrestrial Interactive TV.

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Transmedia in Brazilian telenovelas: A study of three cases in Rede Globo Television Network

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Introduction

Telenovela is, according to Ortiz, Borelli and Ramos (1991, p. 54) “the product par excellence of the Brazilian television system”.¹ Ever since the arrival of television in Brazil by the broadcaster Tupi, in the 1950s, this genre of long serial narratives has established itself as fundamental within the national culture.

As television in Brazil formed as a fusion with other media languages, so did the telenovela when following the structure of long narratives that came before, such as the *radionovela*. Ever since the radio era, serial narratives have won the national public over, a phenomenon that has only increased with the advent of television. According to Alencar (2004), in the early years of television in Brazil, the networks made versions of telenovelas from Latin-American countries. Only after the success of the genre, did tv. broadcasters begin to invest in completely national products.

Considered a show that represents national identity, the telenovela was consolidated with high ratings as the central television product in Brazil in the 1970's. In that decade, these products began to be exported to many countries, for they gained notoriety through international prizes (Hamburger, 2005). Also, it marked a turning point for the plots, as Brazilian audiences started to claim for stories related to their daily lives (Filho, 2003).

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¹ All the quote translations below are ours.

Telenovela is, to this day, a profitable and popular product. Being one of the most important items in the context of Brazilian television, it “reflects moments in history, launches fashion, interferes with society’s behavior, influences other arts, provides social services, anyway, it is connected to the Brazilian citizen’s life of all ages and social classes” (Aronchi de Souza, 2004, p. 123).

In this scenario, Rede Globo is the most prominent organization in the telenovelas production and audience engagement from Brazil. It has developed, since the 1960s, a pattern of quality that distinguishes its products from other television networks in the country. Currently, there are other TV. networks such as Record, SBT and Bandeirantes producing teledramaturgy in Brazil, but Globo is still the leader.

The establishment of Globo as a top broadcaster happened for many reasons, amongst which are its technical abilities, which permitted the making of products with high quality standards. Also, Globo offered its audience a consistent programming grid during the week. It had telenovelas and news programs as its main products, each with stable time slots, that helped to increase customers’ loyalty (Filho, 2003), allowing this network to stand out by capturing their attention (Ortiz *et al.*, 1991).

Rede Globo’s programming grid is already part of the habits of the Brazilian audience, at a point where appointments are made before or after the telenovela (Filho, 2003). That is not the case in the other networks because, even today, they lack specific time slots for airing telenovelas, making it easier for the audience to choose Globo when searching for this specific type of entertainment.

Today, the programming grid of Globo’s telenovelas comprises time slots from afternoon to evening. In the early afternoon is shown *Vale a Pena Ver de Novo* (*Worth Seeing Again*), a program that reprises past successful telenovelas. Afterwards, *Malhação* is aired at around 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, a show that blends the telenovela and series formats and that has been broadcasted since 1995. The top telenovelas appear on different time slots –at 6:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.– from Mondays to Saturdays, eventually having an 11:00 p.m. slot for productions that approach inappropriate themes for younger audiences. With an average of 200 chapters, each with a length of around 50 minutes, telenovelas have different thematic approaches that depend on the time they are on (Campedelli, 1987; Hamburger, 2005). The 6:00 p.m. telenovela is

generally a historic production; the 7:00 p.m. telenovela is lighter, with comedy and romance; and the 9:00 p.m. telenovela, aired at Globo's prime time, has the biggest financial investment and approaches more "serious" questions within daily life.

The notion of transmedia storytelling and the telenovela product

Transmedia storytelling is a contemporary way of telling stories; rather than a single cultural product in a single media, the consumer has access to a tangle of pieces in various media platforms (Lessa, 2017). Yvana Fechine *et al.* (2013) explains the phenomenon:

We understand transmediation as a production model oriented by the distribution of contents in different media and technological platforms associated with each other and whose articulation is anchored in interactional strategies and practices promoted by the participatory culture stimulated by the convergence environment (p. 26).

According to Rodrigo Lessa (2017), transmedia is an adjective, a quality or characteristic to be attributed to products and languages. It is a recent phenomenon: in the late 1990s the first transmedia experiences gained some popularity, but it was only after the turn of the century that cultural critics and academic researchers began to make them their object of research. Transmedia is a work in process: to date, nearly two decades later, entertainment industry producers are still experimenting with new ways and tools to expand narratives toward diverse media platforms.

Transmedia narrative is reconfigured after each new experience, with each re-creation, and it depends on the producing company, the type of product and the consumer public. As it has been already mentioned, Rede Globo is the largest producer of Brazilian telenovelas, which now aims at developing transmedia content for its fictional productions. According to Fechine (2014), since 2010, the broadcaster has systematically and admittedly invested in transmedia actions in telenovelas, and during the last seven years it has been possible to observe the most varied and increasingly complex experiences.

A specificity of telenovelas is that they are long duration serial narratives that are exhibited every day except for Sunday, with a central plot

intertwined with several secondary ones. In such a complex narrative, it is difficult to find expansion possibilities that favor the creation of other stories. According to Souza, Lessa, & Araújo (2013), there are two predominant uses of transmedia in Brazilian telenovelas:

the first is the use of a variety of applications and games that promote immersion at the telenovelas fictional universe, allowing the public to explore details of the characters, plots, setting, costumes and fictional cities [...] The second strategy is the use of fictional websites (of institutions that only exist within the telenovelas) and blogs and characters profiles in social media websites (2013, p. 325).

Recently, the broadcaster has made more complex attempts, such as webseries and other modes that not only expand the fictional universe but also configure storytelling, as it occurs in the following case studies.

Results: transmedia experiences within Brazilian telenovelas

As Lima and Moreira (2012) indicate, networks in Brazil have actively tried to promote a dialogue between the telenovela's narratives and content in other medias, to increase the interaction between the audience and the plot. Thanks to Globo's prominence, this broadcaster was also able to start experiencing with transmedia strategies before other networks in the country. To this day, only two other networks have made transmedia actions within their telenovelas: Record and SBT. As pointed out by Souza *et al.* (2013), it is also important to highlight that Bandeirantes has experienced with transmedia, but within its series, not its telenovelas.

Balacobaco (2012-2013), the only telenovela from Record that contained transmedia actions, had a fictional radio station in its plot, called *Ampola*, that was available online, enabling the audience to immerse themselves in the telenovela's fictional universe. In addition, the public could request songs and make playlists (Souza *et al.*, 2013).

SBT has developed several relevant telenovelas and series for younger audiences within their trajectory, where many of them are Mexican or Argentinian productions reprises or versions. It is within this type of products that this network has been including transmedia extensions. *Carrossel* (2012-2013) was the Brazilian version of a Mexican telenovela that did not include transmedia actions in its first exhibition. However,

as it ended, SBT developed some enterprises that expanded *Carrossel's* fictional universe by creating a type of transmedia franchise with diverse autonomous products.

This transmedia universe was composed by: the telenovela, aired between 2012 and 2013; the two movies that premiered in 2015 (*Carrossel: the movie*) and 2016 (*Carrossel 2: the disappearance of Maria Joaquina*); the series *Patrulha Salvadora*, a spin-off aired between 2014 and 2015, that brought some of *Carrossel's* characters into a different environment; an animated cartoon aired in the time slot previous to the reprise of the telenovela in 2016, which was also available online; and, in 2017, a musical theater production that is currently active. Although this network is not fully experienced with transmedia, the development of a franchise was a relevant initiative.

Globo began its experience with transmedia with small actions, such as characters' blogs and fictional websites. In *Viver a Vida* (2009-2010), the character Luciana, who became quadriplegic after an accident, had a blog called *Sonhos de Luciana* (*Luciana's Dreams*) where she shared stories about her life changes and recovery process. Globo also had a website called *Portal da Superação* (*Overrun Portal*) with testimonials of real people who lived with this condition but managed to overcome their limitations.

In 2011, this broadcaster created an Internet team which has participated in almost all telenovelas ever since, and whose field of action does not necessarily rely on the transmedia strategy: depending on the product, this team can manage aspects such as online advertising and the telenovela's website.² Its relevance, though, was due to the expansion of Globo's presence in other media. The beginning of this team's action was with the telenovela *Morde e Assopra* (2011), aired at 7:00 p.m., that contained the blog *Caçadora de Dinossauros* (*Dinosaur Hunter*) and the game *O segredo de Naomi* (*Naomi's secret*). The first was Júlia's blog, a paleontologist who shared stories about the process of finding fossils. The latter was a game that brought the audience some facts about Naomi, a character that would be central towards the end of the plot (Lessa, 2017).

² The information about the Internet team was gathered at *Memória Globo* (www.memoriaglobo.com.br), a memory website for this broadcaster that brings information about its products. As the network lacks specificities about each team's action within every telenovela, the group's role may vary.

During the same year, there were also two other telenovelas that explored transmedia strategies: *O astro*, aired at 11:00 p.m., had a webseries called *Sob o signo de Ferragus* that told the story of the protagonist's past in seven episodes online, while *Cordel Encantado*, at 6:00 p.m., made an online fictional documentary directed by a character in the plot.

In 2012, the broadcaster aired *Amor Eterno Amor* (2012), a 6:00 p.m. telenovela centered on the story of Rodrigo, a main character who had disappeared when he was a child. Globo created, then, the first documentary webseries as a transmedia extension to a telenovela called *Repórter Investigativo: caso Rodrigo Barros* (*Investigative Reporter: The Rodrigo Barros case*), which had three episodes and provided evidences to solve the case. This initiative, and also *TV Orelha*, a transmedia action within *Malhação*, were nominated for being designed for digital platforms at the 2013 International Digital Emmy Awards.³

More recently, *Haja Coração* (2016), a 7:00 p.m. telenovela, had an animated cartoon of Tito, the dog that was the telenovela's mascot, available on YouTube and Globo Play.⁴ *Êta Mundo Bom* (2016), a 6:00 p.m. telenovela, was created in parallel with a *radionovela* and a web documentary that commented the Brazilian cinema from the 1940's as transmedia content, decade in which the telenovela took place.

Although this communication strategy had already been used in Brazilian television shows for more than a decade, it was with *Cheias de Charme* (*Sparkling Girls*, 2012) that Rede Globo did a strategic and systematized use of the transmedia phenomenon, by organizing a specialized team to act within many fronts of transmedia actions, such as music videos, websites and book releases. This strategy has become popular in Brazil, since it promotes better reception and quality. *Avenida Brasil* (2012), besides the official transmedia content, offered a massive production created by fans and the press, due to the immense repercussion of the show (Cerqueira & Lessa, 2015). *Totalmente Demais* (*Totally Awesome*, 2015-2016) had a webseries, the first case of an online spin-off in a Brazilian telenovela.

³ Informations gathered at: <https://glo.bo/2LH3F3d> (Accessed in September 5th, 2017).

⁴ Globo Play is Rede Globo's streaming website.

Avenida Brasil: a transmedia built with social media

Avenida Brasil was a 9:00 p.m. telenovela, written by João Emanuel Carneiro and directed by Amora Mautner and José Luiz Villamarim since 2012, was composed by 179 chapters. Its central plot was the revenge of Nina against her former stepmother Carminha, who had scammed her father in the past, and while in charge of Nina when still a child, had made them live in a dumping ground.

It was a telenovela of multiple successes. It had a massive audience, it was widely commented by the press and it was exported to more than 150 countries abroad, being the highest rate achieved by Rede Globo. It also mobilized academic research that approached the telenovela in many ways, from being a popular product that focused on the rise of the working class, to a phenomenon of the second screen, where *Avenida Brasil* represented the peak of this type of resonance in Brazilian telenovelas, and also for its stylistic and plot innovations (Cerqueira & Lessa, 2015; Pucci, 2013; Rosas, 2015).

According to Borelli (2011), the approximation of fiction content to the reality of the spectator seems to be one of the great changes in the traditional way of making telenovelas. In the case of *Avenida Brasil*, there was a thematic approach (the recent rise of a lower social class) which followed a cultural and economic logic and a media reception approach, considering the new tools of communication and technology –by presenting television fiction using the Internet, and specially the social media as an ally (Lopes & Mungioli, 2011).

In the plot, Monalisa owns a beauty parlor, which is frequented by some other characters. The more standard transmedia extension used in *Avenida Brasil* was the blog *Dicas da Monalisa* (*Monalisa's tips*), with beauty tips related to the parlor written by the hairdresser Monalisa and her friend Olenka, a manicure/pedicure professional. In a very colloquial language, using slang they both say in the telenovela, the blog posts had tips of the character's visuals and the readers could learn how to make Olenka's decorated nails, for example. It also had content for special dates, such as Olenka's red lipstick for Valentine's Day, and, when Monalisa got married in the plot, there was a post about her wedding along with makeup tips for brides.

However, most of the transmedia content created for this novela aimed at the public engagement with the product itself and not at expanding its narrative. This research offers two hypotheses about the transmedia phenomenon in *Avenida Brasil*. The first one is that the time slot of the telenovela, 9:00 p.m., demands more elaborate plots and longer chapters, not having much space for narrative extensions, since the telenovela explores its plots deeply. The second is related to the present moment of media convergence and participative culture, in which the broadcaster intends to conquer its audience by getting it involved with the telenovela through the use of popular language in social media and the Internet, such as gifs and memes.

This content production was almost entirely concentrated on the telenovela's website, but also using the official Rede Globo Fanpage on Facebook to share these extensions. The telenovela inspired a true phenomenon of social network interaction on Facebook and Twitter. Throughout its period on the screen, between March and October 2012, the novela became Internet's favorite subject. On Twitter, the hashtag #OiOiOi, which refers to the opening song credits, reached the trending topics in almost all chapters of the plot. In its final chapter, seven out of the ten most commented subjects of Brazil on Twitter referred to *Avenida Brasil* (Ortiz, 2013).

Avenida Brasil transmedia privileged content that could get the fastest repercussion online, including gifs, photomontages with characters' sayings, and everything that could easily become a meme. In the official telenovela's website there was an application that allowed its users to have the effect of "freezing" their personal photos, trademarked at the end of each chapter. The application was launched the same day as chapter 100, along with the campaign "Who should be 'frozen' at the end of the novela?", where users could vote for some characters. Although the vote took place on the official telenovela's website, much of the publicity of this campaign took place on Facebook.

There was also interactive media, such as games and quizzes. A seven errors game about the setting, and the games *Quem manda melhor* (*Who is the best?*), where the user watched videos of fights between Carminha and Nina to later vote for the winner, produced a score to share on social media. There was also *Maltrate os Vilões* (*Mistreat the Villains*), where the users hit balls on the telenovela villains with a mouse command. This kind of content is more often called transmedia reception (Fechine *et al.*, 2013).

This transmedia reception engaged the fans to create their own content. Although this practice was not approved by the broadcaster, it impacted as much as the official content. There were many Tumblr's making gifs, photomontages, bringing new situations to the plot; on Facebook, there was the fanpage *Conselhos de Carminha* (*Carminha's advices*) with sentences that Carminha could possibly say about different situations; on Twitter, there were also fake profiles of characters.

Cheias de Charme: a distinctive mark within Globo's experience with transmedia

Also released on 2012, *Cheias de Charme* (*Sparkling Girls*) was a telenovela written by Izabel de Oliveira and Filipe Miguez, and directed by Carlos Araújo. This product is a distinctive mark within Globo's trajectory with transmedia narratives. The network had already experienced with transmedia before, but in this telenovela Globo created an enterprise with unprecedented actions, such as the launch of online materials prior than on television, a book release and campaigns on social media.

The "sparkling girls", protagonists of the telenovela, were Maria do Rosário, Maria da Penha and Maria Aparecida. Three housemaids of different ages and trajectories, they met at a police station due to different problems, became good friends, and later formed a musical group called "Empreguetes".⁵

The show's main characters were singers –the group Empreguetes, the "prince of housemaids" Fabian and the villain Chayene– and music was an important part of the narrative, which is why the authors chose to elect video clips as key to the transmedia strategy of this telenovela.

Vida de Empreguete (*Life as a Housemaid*) was a song⁶ composed by Rosário at her job, on a day where her employer Chayene travelled and Penha and Cida came to visit her. The three women enjoyed the moment and explored the singer's house. As Rosário composed the song, she suggested her friends to record it there, since there was a recording studio inside the house. Later on, they decided to also make a video to keep a

⁵ The name of the group, "Empreguetes", is a play on words with the term housemaid in portuguese, "*empregada doméstica*".

⁶ Many songs from this telenovela were originally composed to serve the plot, such as *Vida de Empreguete* and *Nosso Brilho*, two of the Empreguetes work songs that were turned into video clips.

souvenir of the moment, and called their producer friend Kleiton to help with these activities.

This video clip was kept a secret because of the possible legal consequences that could arise with its revelation, mainly since it was filmed without consent, also bringing a parody portrayal of the housemaid's bosses, that exploited them on the job. Unfortunately, for them, a character found this material and took it to Chayene, who was furious and decided to take legal action. In this process, the video was accidentally put online, and it was the cause of the protagonist's transformation from simple housemaids into popstars.

As the video was disclosed within the plot, Globo also "leaked" it to the spectators, through the telenovela's official website. Narratively, at the end of the chapter, there was a take of a few seconds focused on Chayene's computer, that introduced the link www.globo.com/empreguetes. At the chapter's final credits, the information was reinforced, and when the spectators got into this website, they had access to the secret video clip. This material was only exhibited at the telenovela the next Monday, enabling the audience to access it online during the whole weekend before it aired on television. It was a transmedia resource that had not been used in Brazilian telenovelas and that was successful: there were over 12 million accesses to the video on that weekend, according to *Memória Globo*. They repeated this strategy with the other telenovela video clip, *Nosso Brilho* (Our Sparkle), with the infiltration occurring similarly, revealing suspense and also the strategies to show the link to the website.

Other transmedia actions within this telenovela included character's websites, such as Tom Bastos *Estrelas do Tom* (*Tom's Stars*), in which the manager of the main singers shared information about his clients and also promoted contests for public interaction. There were two contests that happened online, with the results being shown to the *Empreguetes* within the chapter of the telenovela, on television. Globo promoted these actions in order to try to control where the fan made products were distributed, for this broadcaster "acts judicially to restrain at social media the circulation of content arising from its programs, that is protected by copyright and intellectual property laws" (Castro, 2012, p. 7).

Also, there were campaigns that allied the telenovela with the Internet, mainly through social media. At the time of the *Empreguetes* arrest because of the illegally made video clip, the campaign *Empreguetes Livres*

(*Free Empreguetes*) was launched, and the hashtag #empregueteslivres became a trending topic on Twitter (Castro, 2012). The other campaign, *Empreguetes Para Sempre* (*Empreguetes Forever*) boosted the audience interaction, including that with real Brazilian singers that sent testimonial videos to the website –some also shown at the telenovela–, asking for the return of the group. The treatment of fictional music artists as colleagues by the real singers contributed to the spectator's immersion in the telenovela's fictional universe.

Lastly, there was also a book release, Maria Aparecida's diary, called *Cida: a empregue - um diário íntimo* (*Cida: the Empregue - an intimate diary*). Within the plot, the young character wrote her life experiences in a diary, in a make-believe conversation with her deceased mother. This diary was published within the telenovela, and when the novela ended there was an actual book release, and this product can still be bought at local main bookstores.

These transmedia actions contributed to the success of *Sparkling Girls*, that was the telenovela with highest ratings when compared to others displayed within the same time slot over the previous four years.⁷ These strategies helped to disguise the borders between fiction and reality (Lima & Moreira, 2012), enabling the audience to be immersed at the fictional universe, like when they played and made parodies of the character's songs and video clips just as if they were real artists.

Totalmente Demais: Rede Globo engages in a more complex transmedia strategy

Totalmente Demais (*Totally Awesome*) was a 7:00 p.m. telenovela aired between November 2015 and May 2016, written by Rosane Svartman and Paulo Halm and directed by Luis Henrique Rios. The plot was inspired by the play *Pygmalion* by Bernard Shaw and the movie *My Fair Lady* (1964). In the following paragraphs the novela will be referred as TD.

The plot is centered on Eliza, an impoverished young woman from the countryside who pursues a career in modeling after being discovered by Arthur, owner of the modeling agency Excalibur, and wins the contest Totalmente Demais Girl promoted by a fashion magazine homonym to

⁷ According to ratings present at UOL website. Available at <https://bit.ly/2BLOxwR> (Accessed in september 4th, 2017).

the telenovela's title. It established a love triangle between Eliza, Arthur and Jonatas, a boy who does informal commerce on the streets and the person who helped her when she moved to Rio de Janeiro while escaping from her stepfather, after being harassed by him.

In parallel, there is the fashion ensemble, composed around *Totalmente Demais* magazine, whose director is Carolina, an ambitious businesswoman. She maintains an unorthodox love relationship with Arthur, changed when Eliza gets in the picture. Carolina and Arthur both head the contest won by the protagonist. There is also the humor ensemble, formed by residents of Fátima, a humble neighborhood where Carolina was raised, where her older sister Dorinha lives with her husband Zé Pedro and their two kids, and where her first boyfriend Hugo also lives, with his two daughters, Cassandra and Débora, and with whom Carolina denies any relationship.

As already mentioned, the 7:00 p.m. telenovelas bring lighter plots, focused on romance and humor. TD captivated the public, with ratings not attained since *Cheias de Charme* (2012) in that time slot. The expressive audience made the broadcaster extend the telenovela's chapters, and the final chapter was aired on a Monday, which had only happened twice before in Rede Globo.⁸

After a systematized and successful experience from *Sparkling Girls*, *Totalmente Demais* defined a new phase of multiplatform content produced by Rede Globo. There were many strategies, concerning crossmedia and transmedia. The production dialogued with other areas from Globo's conglomerate in crossmedia actions, such as when Mônica Salgado, editorial director of Glamour Magazine participated in a telenovela chapter. In the last TD chapter, there was a crossover with its successor *Haja Coração* (2016), when the character Fedora, a famous fashion blogger, visited the head office of *Totalmente Demais* magazine.

Among the transmedia content of TD, there was the website of *Totalmente Demais* magazine, with news and reports from this fictional universe, such as fashion editorials, travel and behavior tips, stories and backstage videos about the *Totalmente Demais* Girl contest. Between

⁸ Novelas usually end on Fridays and have their last chapters reprised on Saturdays. Like TD, the telenovela *Estúpido Cupido* (1977) also ended on a Monday and *Anjo Mau* (1976) on a Tuesday. Information contained in <https://goo.gl/q9r7Ha> (Accessed in September 6th, 2017).

the contest launch and the final result there were two and a half months of telenovela's chapters, with several events reflecting Eliza's coming of age. There was also another website made: the fashion blog *Visu da Lu*, owned by Carolina's personal assistant.

In TD Globo developed new formats that had never been done before, to expand the narrative of the main product. There was a chapter zero with a 6-minute duration, a prologue where it was possible to know a little about the story and its characters, previously shown on the streaming Globo Play and on Gshow, the broadcaster's website dedicated to paratextual content from Globo's shows.

The most complex transmedia content created by Rede Globo so far is *Totalmente Sem Noção Demais*, a 10-episode webseries that centered on the neighborhood of Fátima: Carolina's sister's and Hugo's families. The series debut happened in Globo Play and in Gshow the day after the end of TD. During the following month, the series was aired in a shorter version in *Video Show*, a variety program that approaches Globo's shows backstage. This TV series, besides a transmedia extension, was Globo's first online spin-off.

Another online transmedia storytelling originated from a partnership between Globo's Digital Media Marketing area and the publicity agency Lew'Lara\TBWA, in which a branded content of Risqué, a nail polish brand, was made on the website of *Totalmente Sem Noção Demais*, and also had activation actions within the spin-off episodes.⁹

With these strategies, *Totalmente Demais*, as well as the previous case studies, had a strong presence in social media. On Twitter, for example, almost every chapter reached the trending topics, especially because of fans disputing between the couples Eliza and Jonatan (#Joliza) *vs.* Eliza and Arthur (#Arliza).

⁹ Information obtained from <https://goo.gl/MKaZrH> (Accessed in September 6th 2017).

Conclusion

Within the current context of fiction consumption related to media convergence, transmedia has gained more enthusiasm with time. Therefore, entertainment industries have focused on building more elaborate products that surpass public's expectations.

In telenovelas –with Brazil being a reference in the production of these items–, the broadcasters were also engaged with this type of content production, aimed at enriching their narratives and matching international productions. In less than a decade the transmedia experiences in telenovelas not only increased their quantity, but also became even more elaborate, including the participation of specialized consulting teams.

Through the analysis of this article's *corpus*, it was observed that each telenovela has particularities that are evoked by format and genre specificities, such as time slot, length, and thematic. Therefore, there are different possibilities of transmedia extensions depending on the type of telenovela. Additionally, most of Globo's transmedia projects, including the more elaborate ones, occurred at 7:00 p.m. telenovelas. This article sustains that this time slot contains narratives with shorter chapters and lighter plots that enable the creation and offer of associated products. An example is the humor ensemble of *Totalmente Demais*, that turned into a sitcom webseries.

Moreover, it is noted that the 6:00 p.m. productions also include similar projects, although historical narratives limit the extension of transmedia actions. Regarding 9:00 p.m. telenovelas, the transmedia proposals are generally simpler, due to the high complexity of the plots. At the same time, a wide public engagement was observed, by virtue of easily shareable contents, as it happened with *Avenida Brasil*.

As for *Sparkling Girls*, its high ratings and active public participation (Biegging, 2013) left a mark within Brazilian telenovelas, also inspiring this network to move forward with its experimentation with transmedia content. That led to the transmedia enterprise of *Totalmente Demais*,

with unprecedented actions. Beyond becoming a milestone in elaborate narrative content, its crossmedia actions may possibly inaugurate a new stylistic mark of the 7:00 p.m. telenovelas: the final chapter of TD introduced the plot of *Haja Coração*, and its successor *Rock Story*'s ending also introduced the plot of *Pega-Pega*, telenovela aired at the time this article was written.

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Audiencias, ciudadanos y prosumidores en los medios digitales: el caso de Alexei Navalny y la *Snow Revolution*

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Introducción

“Es difícil decir cuántas personas hubo hoy en la Plaza Bolotnaya de Moscú”; con esta frase, Julia Loffe comienza su reporte sobre la protesta realizada allí el 10 de diciembre de 2011. Esta sería la primera de varias manifestaciones de protesta que se extenderían hasta 2013 en el territorio ruso. Designado por la prensa internacional como *Snow revolution*, este movimiento tuvo una característica muy particular: la multitud, que asombraba a Loffe en su reporte, fue convocada en su gran mayoría por medio del uso de las redes sociales en la web. Adicionalmente, el movimiento de oposición al gobierno de Vladimir Putin se caracterizó por un alto nivel de uso y apropiación de las Tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) en sus estrategias de denuncia, convocatoria y acción.

Imagen 1. Plaza Bolotnaya desde el puente
Luzhkov de Moscú, 10 de diciembre de 2011



Fotografía de Bogomolov.PL. Obtenido de Wikimedia
Commons (<http://bit.ly/2nII0la>).

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Por ello es pertinente analizar el comportamiento de las personas en situaciones en las que su posibilidad de expresarse tiene limitaciones, pero los individuos conservan aún su capacidad de estar conectados *on-line* y esto les permite, de una u otra manera, ejercer su ciudadanía. En relación con estos actores, Pilgun y Gradoselskaya sostienen que, en el caso ruso, los comportamientos de estos ciudadanos que se comunican políticamente se caracteriza por:

[...] su alta actividad en la red porque participan en un amplio número de grupos y dejan una gran cantidad de comentarios. Actores de este tipo están muy bien preparados para la interacción comunicativa digital, usan y dominan a la perfección diferentes registros de medios lingüísticos, comunicativos e integrados (medios de comunicación de canales variables, televisión, internet, plataformas, etc.) [...] Saben evaluar con precisión una situación comunicativa concreta y elegir medios adecuados para influir en el destinatario (Pilgun y Gradoselskaya, 2015, p. 734).¹

Este sujeto consciente, capacitado y activo, está en condición de generar nuevos instrumentos que posibiliten el ejercicio de la ciudadanía de otros:

En el contexto de una crisis especialmente grave de la representación política en la Rusia contemporánea, los ciudadanos –los programadores individuales o movimientos sociales– desarrollan estas nuevas herramientas utilizando las posibilidades técnicas de las TIC y las comunicaciones móviles con el fin de posibilitar la vigilancia, el juicio y el control de las administraciones locales (Ermoshina, 2014, p. 25).

Contrario a lo que se pensaba sobre la audiencia en el siglo xx, entendida como una masa o como un destinatario a persuadir, codificando, decodificando, mirando, leyendo o escuchando, pero sin participar nunca activamente del proceso comunicacional, hoy en día el concepto gira en torno a las ideas de una ciudadanía vigilante, activa y consciente. Este ciudadano es capaz no solo de procesar los mensajes, sino de ir en busca de ellos, intervenirlos o producirlos; es por ello que se habla ahora de un usuario empoderado que realimenta el proceso comunicacional al ser, además de audiencia, productor de contenido o *prosumidor*.²

¹ Las traducciones de las citas son de mi autoría.

² Concepto descrito por Alvin Toffler en *La tercera ola* (1981), cuya definición más simple es la de una persona que consume contenidos a la vez que los produce. Se hace pertinente en el momento de analizar las formas de interacción de las audiencias contemporáneas y las dinámicas con las que se construye la idea de transmedialidad.

Ahora bien, Maria Pilgun y Galina Gradoselskaya (2015) y Ksenia Ermoshina (2014) centran sus estudios en el uso y apropiación de las TIC como herramientas de ciudadanía y comunicación política; las primeras hacen un análisis del comportamiento en Facebook del usuario ruso y la segunda se focaliza en el desarrollo de aplicaciones web para el empoderamiento de las ciudadanías en Rusia. Sin embargo, a la luz del interés de este texto es necesario hacer una reflexión sobre cómo se apropian los ciudadanos de las TIC para comunicarse y cómo estas apropiaciones pueden componer un relato comunicacional transmedia (Jenkins, 2003; Kinder, 1991).

En relación con lo anterior, este trabajo tiene como objetivo hacer un análisis de las acciones realizadas por la oposición al gobierno de Vladimir Putin que fueron mediadas por las TIC y que, por su naturaleza, podrían configurar una estrategia de comunicación transmedia para la movilización social. Siendo los blogueros de la oposición ampliamente reseñados por haber sido actores clave en el movimiento y por basar su activismo en la internet y demás medios digitales (Osborn, 2011; Shuster, 2012; Weir, 2011), se hace hincapié en la serie de contenidos realizados y movilizadas por Alexei Navalny, líder de la oposición al gobierno de Vladimir Putin y opinador altamente activo en el ciberespacio.

Este trabajo parte de la premisa de que el conjunto de los contenidos producidos por Navalny conforma una estrategia de comunicación transmedia que promueve el prosumo, la visibilidad y la ciudadanía digital. Para el análisis se tienen en cuenta los sitios web relacionados con su fundación *Fondo para la lucha contra la corrupción*³ (creada en 2011 en respuesta a la situación de corrupción en su país), sus redes sociales y las reseñas que fueron escritas por agentes externos al equipo de trabajo del líder político.

En el análisis se destacan las formas de participación del ciudadano como mecanismos para la transmedialización, partiendo de la idea de que una estrategia transmedia está compuesta por tres elementos básicos: diversas formas de relación textual, múltiples plataformas y apropiación por parte del usuario de la producción de contenido (Jenkins, 2008).

³ www.fb.k.info

¿Una revolución? La manifestación como muestra del descontento

El proceso de reestructuración económica que se dio en la década de 1990 en Rusia, conocido como la Perestroika (Brics, 2103; Espada, 2016), no solo implicó el fin de la Unión Soviética sino el comienzo de una línea de gobiernos que iniciaron con el de Boris Yeltsin, quien renunciaría el 1º de enero de 2000, dejando el Kremlin a cargo de su primer ministro Vladimir Putin, quien ha estado en el poder desde entonces, como presidente o como primer ministro del país.

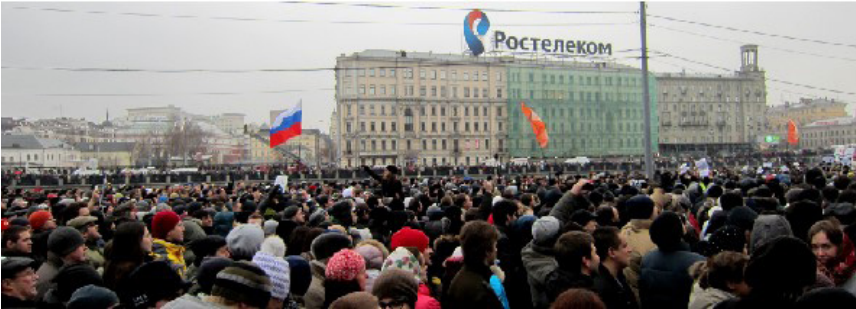
Según Denis Volkov (2012), algunos factores como la recesión económica, el estado de corrupción y la tensión acumulada entre el gobierno y algunos sectores de la esfera política rusa ocasionaron el descontento de una parte de la población hacia el Kremlin. Lo que trajo como resultado una multitud de aproximadamente 50 000 personas que salió a protestar el 10 de diciembre de 2011 en contra del gobierno de Putin, cuyo partido político había ganado las recientes elecciones al Parlamento:

El 4 de diciembre de 2001, se llevaron a cabo las elecciones para el cuerpo legislativo, y Rusia Unida obtuvo 52,88% de las curules. Esa noche, se difundieron rápidamente varios informes sobre distintos tipos de fraude electoral. Los empleados del Estado declararon que fueron presionados por sus superiores para votar por Rusia Unida, los testigos electorales alegaron que los funcionarios electorales rellenaron las urnas y contaron mal los votos a propósito (Global Nonviolent Action Database, s. f).

Las denuncias sobre la corrupción y el fraude fueron ampliamente documentadas y publicadas de inmediato en la web por activistas, periodistas y ciudadanos comunes que en poco tiempo viralizaron estos contenidos en redes como YouTube, Vkontakte,⁴ Twitter y Facebook (Vanden Heuvel, 2015). Rápidamente se convocó por redes una protesta para el 10 del mismo mes en la plaza de Bolotnaya en Moscú con el propósito de exigir la anulación del resultado de las elecciones, la renuncia de Vladimir Churov (líder de la Comisión electoral) y la libertad de los presos políticos (Gabowitsch, 2012; Gessen, 2014; Loffe, 2011).

⁴ Red social equivalente a Facebook en Rusia; por la cantidad de usuarios es una de las más populares en Europa. A pesar de sus comienzos como una red exclusiva para estudiantes rusos, actualmente puede ser utilizada por todo el mundo; tiene versión en español (www.vk.com).

Imagen 2 . Plaza Bolotnaya de Moscú,
10 de diciembre de 2011



Fotografía de Bogomolov.PL. Obtenido de Wikimedia
Commons (<http://bit.ly/2omaWZB>).

Esta serie de manifestaciones, nombradas por la prensa internacional como *Snow revolution*, duraron alrededor de dos años⁵ y se extendieron a lo largo del país, caracterizándose por la diversidad en las acciones que se dieron durante dicho período de tiempo y por los mecanismos de convocatoria y participación basados en internet y las redes sociales virtuales.

Dadas las condiciones de censura y las dificultades para las movilizaciones en espacios públicos, los opositores se vieron en la necesidad de evidenciar su descontento valiéndose de diferentes posibilidades para expresarse. Así, se encuentran múltiples estrategias como el uso de blogs y mecanismos alternativos para ocupar los espacios públicos.

La transmedialidad y las estrategias de movilización

En plena transición del nuevo siglo, Henry Jenkins, a propósito de las dinámicas de narración derivadas de la convergencia de medios y de industrias del entretenimiento, escribía que asistimos a nuevas formas de contar que se basan en la multiplataforma como estrategia para abordar al público contemporáneo. Denominó a estos nuevos contenidos *narrativas transmedia*, caracterizadas por hacer presencia de múltiples maneras, es

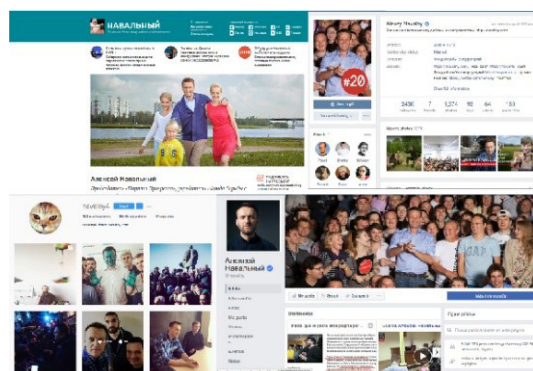
⁵ Algunas bases de datos como la *Global Nonviolent Action Database* (<http://bit.ly/2cyKYB6>) reseñan la *Snow revolution* con fechas diferentes, 2011 a 2012 en este caso. Sin embargo, hay un consenso en la mayoría de referencias, incluso las periodísticas y las de enciclopedias comunitarias como Wikipedia, las cuales datan las protestas de 2011 a 2013. En este trabajo se analizan elementos dentro del último rango mencionado, considerando que es importante anotar que hay acciones, tanto previas como posteriores, que pueden ser entendidas como parte del movimiento.

decir, “que una historia puede ser introducida en una película, *expandirse* a través de la televisión, las novelas y los cómics, y su mundo puede ser explorado y experimentado por medio del juego” (Jenkins, 2003; sin énfasis en el original). La transmedia, concepto acuñado inicialmente por Marsha Kinder (1991), implica repensar las dinámicas de producción de contenidos audiovisuales no solo en términos de ficción, sino también en la producción de relatos como los que pueden tejerse en otros procesos sociales.

Es así como se encuentra una amplia lista de referentes que reflexionan respecto a estrategias de transmedialización de contenidos (Cliff, 2017; Hayes, 2011; Klastруп & Tosca, 2004; Scolari, 2013). Reflexiones de las que se puede concluir que, en definitiva, se habla de sistemas de relaciones textuales entre medios o “Sistemas intertextuales transmedia” (Montoya, Vásquez y Salinas, 2013).

Retomando el caso, el sistema de contenidos realizados en torno a Navalny se puede agrupar en tres grandes categorías: las redes sociales virtuales, los sitios web y las herramientas web. Respecto a las redes sociales, cuenta con un perfil en cada una de las más populares: Facebook,⁶ Instagram,⁷ Twitter⁸ y Vkontakte,⁹ en las cuales publica actualizaciones de las actividades realizadas tanto por él, como por su fundación o por el movimiento de oposición. Las redes sociales de Navalny hacen constante referencia a sus publicaciones de blog y son actualizadas permanentemente.

Imagen 3 . Redes sociales y blog de Alexei Navalny



Fuente: Perfiles en Facebook, VKontakte e Instagram y Blogs.

⁶ www.facebook.com/navalny

⁷ www.instagram.com/navalny4

⁸ www.twitter.com/navalny

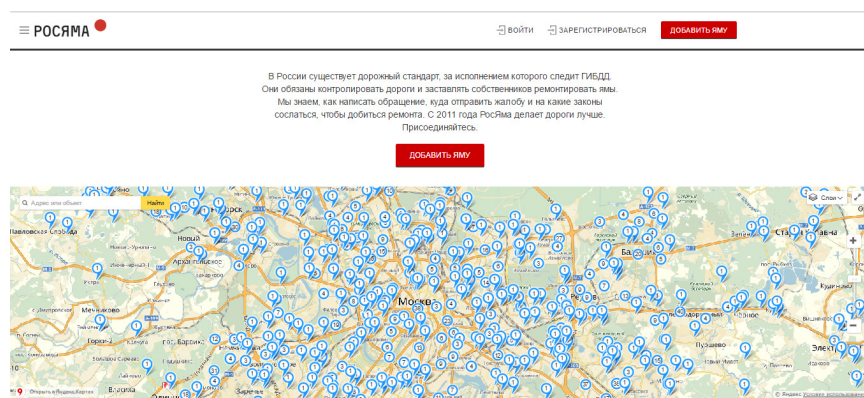
⁹ www.vk.com/navalny

Los sitios web son tres: el blog oficial de Alexei Navalny (www.navalny.com), que reúne las principales publicaciones, escrito en forma de bitácora en la que recoge casos de corrupción en el gobierno y algunas peticiones de ciudadanos; el blog en inglés (www.navalny-en.livejournal.com), que es la versión internacional de su blog oficial (sin actualizar desde 2014), y el sitio oficial del *Fondo para la lucha contra la corrupción* (www.fbk.info). Si bien este sitio lleva su sello, no publica allí con su nombre. Es el sitio de la colectividad de su fundación en la cual trabajan actualmente unas treinta personas.

Por último, se encuentran los elementos diferenciadores del ecosistema de Navalny: las herramientas web. La primera es RosZKH (www.roszkh.ru), proyecto que tiene como objetivo apoyar al ciudadano en el cuidado de sus derechos, facilitándole una herramienta web con la que puede hacer una declaración directamente al Estado sobre problemas que pueda tener en relación con su lugar de vivienda.

Su funcionamiento es sencillo: el ciudadano selecciona el tipo de problema que quiere declarar, especifica la naturaleza del mismo con los datos de ubicación, e indica un correo al cual llega la verificación de la declaración y, una vez confirmada, esta se envía a la autoridad competente. Tanto el equipo de la fundación como el ciudadano pueden hacer monitoreo del estado de la declaración.

Imagen 4 . Proyecto RosYama



Fuente: www.rosyama.ru

A diferencia de RosZKH, el proyecto RosYama (www.rosyama.ru) es menos privado: consiste en un mapa colaborativo (*crowdsourced*),¹⁰ en el que los ciudadanos denuncian grietas y aberturas en las vías rusas. Por ley, las dimensiones de las grietas en las carreteras no deben superar los 15 cm de longitud, 60 cm de ancho y 5 cm de profundidad;¹¹ el Estado ruso está en la obligación de vigilar las carreteras y repararlas en caso de daño. El proyecto se vale de fotografías y geolocalización para solicitarle a sus usuarios que localicen el problema, hagan una foto de él y lo ubiquen en el mapa.

Formas de participación: el prosumidor y su pugna por la autoría

Néstor García Canclini (1995) afirma que, incluso con la apropiación de los medios electrónicos de comunicación en lo público, los ministerios de cultura siguen “consagrados” a las bellas artes y, como máximo, se preocupan de la cultura popular tradicional. Ignorando por completo otras expresiones culturales, como los medios urbanos, donde se mueven el pensamiento y la sensibilidad masivos. De esta manera “se desentienden, por lo tanto, de los escenarios de consumo donde se forma lo que podríamos llamar las bases estéticas de la ciudadanía” (1995, p. 185).

Estos escenarios de consumo, que al día de hoy puede decirse son los que se generan con la penetración del internet en la cotidianidad y el aumento en el uso de las TIC –redes sociales, blogs, vlogs, etcétera–, supone también un cambio en las formas en que interactuamos, significamos y nos comportamos; ya que “la interacción cotidiana de las personas con estos artefactos digitales ha creado un vínculo mutuamente constitutivo de nuevos nichos culturales de producción de significado social” (Winocur, 2009, p. 13). Esos *nichos culturales*, sumados a la producción de significación, posibilitan una transición de la idea de *audiencia* homogénea y pasiva a la de un conjunto de individuos activos y atentos donde pasamos de ser un espectador a ser un actor que se apropia del texto, lo procesa y lo devuelve

¹⁰ Término utilizado para hacer referencia a la solicitud hecha a terceros para participar o aportar en la construcción colectiva de un proyecto.

¹¹ Reseñado en el sitio web del proyecto RosYama, con base en la *GOST R 50597-93. Carreteras y calles. Requisitos para la condición operacional, aceptables bajo los términos de seguridad vial*, norma estatal de la Federación Rusa. Recuperado de <https://bit.ly/2BNfXCJ>

con una producción de su propiedad. Esto es, “dejamos de ser audiencias y pasamos a ser productores, fans, movilizadores” (Rincón, 2012, p. 226).

El término de fan, aunque satanizado y caricaturizado en muchos casos, y que hace referencia a una persona devota o fiel a un texto específico, resulta un claro ejemplo de este tipo de apropiaciones y formas de asociarse actualmente. Para Jenkins (2010) los fans “constituyen una comunidad de consumidores especialmente activos, y que se hacen oír, cuyas actividades se centran en este proceso de apropiación cultural” (2010, p. 42). Los fans, aunque conscientes de la no pertenencia de las obras a las que son devotos, influyen tanto en ellas que logran llevarlas, de cierta manera, a ser textos de su propiedad. Son lectores que se apropian de los textos y los releen de una forma que sirve a diferentes intereses, y transforman la experiencia de la recepción en una cultura participativa rica y compleja (p. 37).

Es una especie de “piratería textual” en la que, durante el proceso, los fans sostienen una lucha con el autor por la posesión del texto y dejan de ser “un simple público [...] para convertirse en participantes activos en la construcción y circulación de significados textuales” (Jenkins, 2010, p. 38). Esta pugna entre fan y autor ha dejado una enseñanza respecto a las formas como se entiende la autoría y la producción de contenidos en los medios digitales en los que, una vez publicados, están sujetos a la lectura y modificación por parte de la audiencia. Como lo explica Jimena Zuluaga (2012, p. 252), “lo que hace que un contenido sea realmente digital” es el entendimiento de que su producción “no termina con la publicación” pues ello sería desconocer que en los espacios digitales se establecen la conversación y la interacción como norma: “después de publicar en línea el proceso de creación continúa porque el rol de las audiencias y de los autores, ahora difuso, genera un proceso continuo de construcción y re-interpretación de los mensajes y los contenidos” (2012, p. 252).

Dicho proceso de construcción y reinterpretación empodera a la *audiencia* en la medida en que las dinámicas de interacción audiencia-contenido permiten que la primera se apropie del segundo y lo intervenga, al punto de transformarlo e incluso hacerlo propio. De la misma manera, la brecha entre el productor del contenido y quien lo consume es cada vez más pequeña y difusa; inclusive en el término mismo en el que ya no se separan los dos roles, sino que se unen: *prosumidor*. Si bien este término fue anticipado por otros autores desde mediados del siglo pasado, fue Alvin Toffler quien lo introdujo en su libro *La tercera ola*:

Durante la primera ola, la mayoría de las personas consumían lo que ellas mismas producían. No eran ni productores ni consumidores en el sentido habitual. Eran, en su lugar, lo que podría denominarse “prosumidores” [...] Pues si examinamos atentamente la cuestión, descubrimos los comienzos de un cambio fundamental en la relación existente entre estos dos sectores o formas de producción. Vemos un progresivo difuminarse de la línea que separa al productor del consumidor. Vemos la creciente importancia del prosumidor (1981, pp. 171-172).

Por otro lado, José Octavio Islas (2008) afirma que en torno a la aplicación de prosumo en la Red y sobre cómo la web 2.0 ha transformado el comportamiento de los usuarios frente al contenido, estos transitan de “consumidores pasivos en activos prosumidores que han impulsado importantes transformaciones en el mercado al apostar por el recurso de la conversación, comprendiendo a Internet como efectivo multiplicador del capital intelectual” (2008, p. 36).

Profundizando en las características que separan a un prosumidor de una audiencia convencional, aparecen dos factores primordiales: la capacidad de búsqueda (*in-forming*) y la colaboración (Islas, 2008). La primera hace referencia a la capacidad de establecer y usar mecanismos propios de la búsqueda y el acceso a la información, lo que evidencia la autonomía del prosumidor frente al productor de contenido; partiendo, a su vez, de que toda persona con posibilidad de acceso a internet está en capacidad de cargar y descargar información. Respecto a la colaboración, se caracteriza al prosumidor por su afinidad con las ideas de solidaridad y construcción colectiva relacionadas con el diálogo y la interacción ya mencionadas.

A partir de todo lo anterior se pueden categorizar cuatro niveles de comportamiento para el análisis del prosumidor: consumo, producción, información y colaboración (tabla 1). El consumo hace referencia al medio y contenido con el que el individuo se está relacionando. La producción, por su parte, alude a los mecanismos de intervención sobre el contenido. La información se refiere a las estrategias y herramientas para la creación de nuevos contenidos o nueva información que alimenta la ya existente. Por último, la colaboración comprende las maneras como se amplía y fortalece el producto ya creado. Con relación a la tipología del individuo, se definen a su vez dos categorías: el ciudadano de a pie y el líder opositor (para este caso Alexei Navalny). La propuesta es analizar ambos tipos de individuo a partir de las cuatro características base del prosumo.

Tabla 1. Comportamientos del prosumidor según su tipología

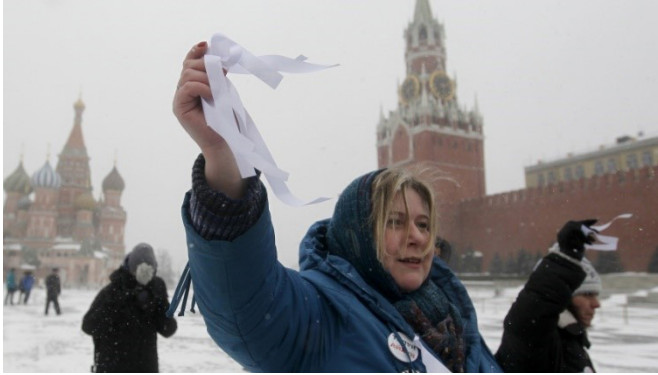
Prosumidor	Consumo	Producción	Información	Colaboración
Tipología del usuario.	Medio y contenido.	Mecanismos de intervención.	Estrategias y herramientas para obtener nueva información.	Ampliación y fortalecimiento del contenido existente.

Fuente: elaboración propia basada en los referentes teóricos sobre el prosumo.

Como prosumidor, el ciudadano ruso se relaciona con diferentes tipos de medios: los medios de comunicación tradicionales, los medios digitales y las publicaciones de otros ciudadanos. Los contenidos que consume, para este caso, se relacionan con las diferentes posibilidades de ejercer su ciudadanía, es decir, accede a convocatorias sobre protestas o manifestaciones, encuentra aplicaciones que le permiten denunciar problemas en su ciudad y ve imágenes relativas a la situación actual de su país. De la misma manera interviene estos contenidos por medio de la participación activa en el diálogo con ellos: asiste a las manifestaciones de protesta y utiliza el distintivo característico (como la cinta blanca),¹² captura y publica imágenes de lo que sucede a su alrededor. Es un ciudadano que se apropia de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación para investigar y obtener información en la web y que está en capacidad de ampliar dicha información con el uso de sus dispositivos móviles y la utilización de herramientas colaborativas.

¹² Popularizada en su momento como símbolo del descontento hacia el resultado de las elecciones. El uso de las cintas blancas comenzó a darse primero en la web en contenidos de blogs, expandiéndose luego hasta las calles; aparecen además cintas blancas en los brazos de las personas y en objetos como los automóviles (Vassilieva, 2011).

Imagen 5 . Protestantes con la cinta blanca,
distintivo del movimiento, marzo de 2013



Fotografía de Maxim Shemetov, Reuters. Fuente: Global Politics (2013, diciembre 9, <http://bit.ly/2osyPyr>).

Del otro lado, está el rol de Alexei Navalny como figura visible de la oposición. Tanto su oficio como su trayectoria hacen de él un ciudadano empoderado, capaz de entender el contexto de los sucesos que ocurren en su país, analizarlos y producir un contenido que sea efectivo y visible para otros ciudadanos. Navalny participa activamente en la denuncia de la corrupción del gobierno al que se opone y hace veeduría de los procesos que de sus contenidos y aplicaciones se desprenden.

Como prosumidor, Navalny está siempre en constante diálogo con otros ciudadanos en la Red. Tiene una fuerte relación digital con los medios de comunicación y cuenta con perfiles activos en las redes sociales virtuales más populares, los cuales actualiza de forma permanente. Asimismo, es un blogger muy reconocido en su país, medio que utiliza para denunciar y convocar a otros ciudadanos para que se involucren en las acciones que él organiza. Adicionalmente tiene presencia frecuente en los medios de comunicación tradicionales. Una característica esencial de Alexei Navalny como productor de contenido es que sus estrategias llegan a los ciudadanos desde diferentes frentes comunicacionales, que pueden iniciar con una intervención en la calle y terminar con la interacción en los aplicativos webs.

Tabla 2. Prosumidor en la *Snow Revolution* según su tipología

Prosumidor	Consumo	Producción	Colaboración	Información
Ciudadano	Se relaciona en paralelo con la información publicada por los líderes opositores, los medios de comunicación y otros ciudadanos en redes.	Interviene participando en las protestas, en algunos casos hablando con los medios. Registra y comparte en tiempo real lo que sucede.	Se vale de la consulta en la web de la información que le pueda ser necesaria. Utiliza sus dispositivos móviles para producir imagen, sonido o video.	Amplía el contenido existente al participar, tanto en acciones físicas como en la alimentación de herramientas web basadas en <i>crowdsourcing</i> .
Líderes opositores	Se relacionan en primera instancia con la información oficial publicada por el gobierno y por otras asociaciones. Interactúan en las conversaciones generadas por lo que publican.	Producen textos de opinión en los que denuncian aspectos que no concuerdan con su punto de vista y promueven situaciones que consideran favorables.	Se valen de la consulta web, los medios de comunicación, las leyes, y de las informaciones publicadas por otros líderes o ciudadanos.	Amplían el contenido existente con la creación de herramientas colaborativas en las que, de la mano con el ciudadano, se construyen contenidos de carácter social.

Fuente: Elaboración propia.

En este punto es importante mencionar que si bien es evidente que los modos de participación (como las formas de prosumo) han detonado nuevas formas de ser y estar en sociedad que potencian el flujo y producción de la información, estas son consecuencia a su vez de otros conceptos como los de *audiencia* y ciudadanía, los cuales han tenido también revisiones en sus significados tradicionales gracias a la llegada de las NTIC.¹³ Esto supone entender que, así como el prosumo detona la transmedialización de un contenido, este es en sí producto de las formas de ser y estar en la web: las formas de ser *audiencia* y las formas de ciudadanía.

¹³ Sigla para “Nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación”.

Ser una celebridad ciudadana, la posibilidad de ser visto

Para Rosalía Winocur “[l]a visibilidad garantiza la inclusión en un mundo cuya representación se ha desplazado de lo palpable a lo comunicable” (2009, p. 69), lo que le permite al individuo pensarse como sujeto existente en relación con el otro y consigo mismo.

En relación con el otro por la inclusión y la pertenencia, posibles gracias a las redes sociales y las comunidades virtuales, donde el usuario puede interactuar, dialogar, compartir y, sobre todo, sentirse parte de una comunidad o red. Considerando que “lo que se ha modificado no es el deseo de pertenecer, sino el sentido y las formas de pertenencia” (Winocur, 2009, p. 77).

Respecto al nivel de existencia más íntimo (consigo mismo), Omar Rincón afirma que el teléfono celular aparece como un artefacto más apto para la intimidad, donde el individuo registra y conserva su vida personal. Es desde los celulares donde hoy se tejen los relatos de las subjetividades “y los nuevos modos de ser comunidad y esfera pública [...] En el celular somos orales, luego somos ciudadanos, luego podemos gritar, luego contamos, queremos contar” (2012, p. 231). Pero el asunto comienza a generar una especie de *crisis identitaria*; históricamente las personas que ocupan el lugar de la recepción en el proceso comunicativo han recibido distintos nombres según el medio, la disciplina o la rama con la cual se les mire: se pueden listar, entre otros términos, los de receptor, audiencia, público, masa, usuario, etcétera. Es ahí donde surge la pregunta ¿cuál de todas estas posibilidades es la que ocupamos actualmente?

Para Rincón (2012, p. 232), “la revolución tecnológica, comunicativa y política de nuestro tiempo” nos ha permitido ejercer cualquier rol en el proceso de comunicación, desde productores, periodistas, fans y seguidores, “todo, menos audiencias”. Esto gracias a que no somos una masa simplemente, sino un conjunto de actores activos que son, en simultáneo: “1.0 (silencio), 2.0 (masa), 3.0 (comunidad) y 4.0 (*celebrities* ciudadanas)” (Rincón, 2012, p. 182).

El *silencio* hace referencia al momento en que el ciudadano no accedía a la información, donde solo unos pocos ilustrados y poderosos tenían acceso a la verdad mientras que al ciudadano corriente se le exigía no participar porque no contaba. La masa aparece con la llegada de la modernidad, el periodismo, el cine, la radio y la televisión. En ese momento se comenzó

a ser *rating*, estadísticas. La comunidad, como consecuencia de las nuevas tecnologías, entiende al ciudadano como productor. Por último, se es al tiempo activista, fan, movilizador, productor, etcétera. El individuo rompe la pantalla y quiere ser una celebridad, quiere visibilidad, quiere estar en las esferas públicas para buscar reconocimiento. “¿Ciudadanías débiles? Tal vez, pero útiles para ganar autoestima pública y para ganar poder en la vida cotidiana. Ciudadanías *lights* que se hacen posibles en comunidades en red. ¡Queremos la pantalla, no nos conformamos con medios!” (Rincón, 2012, p. 233).

La tabla 3 propone como matriz de análisis los cuatro momentos de los que habla Rincón, entendiendo que según la circunstancia se puede estar en una de las cuatro categorías o en todas a la vez.

Tabla 3. Las formas de ser audiencia

Individuo	1.0 Silencio	2.0 Masa	3.0 Comunidad	4.0 <i>Celebrity</i> ciudadana
Tipología del usuario.	Las acciones en las que calla, no cuenta o es ignorado.	Las acciones que lo convierten en una estadística, en un conglomerado homogéneo.	Las acciones en las que colabora comunitariamente.	Las acciones en función de su visibilidad.

Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de Rincón (2012).

A propósito de la aplicación de las formas de ser audiencia (Tabla 3) al caso de estudio en la tabla 4, de Alexei Navalny se puede decir que es una gran celebridad ciudadana y como tal, es muy poco el *silencio*. Las celebridades ciudadanas se caracterizan por su gran nivel de visibilidad en las esferas públicas de la virtualidad y Navalny sabe estar en ellas. Su nivel de influencia es muy alto, contando con promedios de seguidores en las redes sociales digitales de miles de usuarios, y en algunos casos, como en Twitter, con casi dos millones.¹⁴ Aun con su éxito digital, sus

¹⁴ Aproximadamente: 75 692 en Instagram, 338 933 en Facebook y 1 775 833 en Twitter. (Datos tomados de sus perfiles en las redes sociales ya mencionadas. Consultado el 3 de febrero de 2017).

acciones lo llevaron a estar en la categoría de *silencio* en el momento en que fue condenado por malversación de fondos en 2013.¹⁵

Tabla 4. Aplicación de las formas de ser audiencia al caso Navalny

Individuo	1.0. Silencio	2.0 Masa	3.0 Comunidad	4.0 <i>Celebrity</i> ciudadana
Ciudadano	En las acciones lideradas por el gobierno. Cuando sus denuncias no surten efecto.	Cuando participa de acciones colectivas como las manifestaciones de protesta o un encuentro celebratorio	Cuando participa en función de lograr objetivos comunes, como en el caso de Ros-Yama. También cuando interactúa con contenidos de bloggers.	La visibilidad del ciudadano se establece en la medida que existe, participa y comparte en redes sociales
Líderes opositores	El líder opositor participa, tiene muy poco silencio al ser el rostro y la voz de muchos. Pero es silencio una vez se convierte en preso político.	Es masa cuando se une a manifestaciones y encuentros como un ciudadano más. Es masa al entenderse como parte del colectivo al que representa.	Es comunidad cuando propone espacios de trabajo colaborativo.	Su naturaleza es en sí visible, tiene alta presencia en la web, da discursos, aparece en medios de comunicación, le hacen reseñas y es el protagonista del movimiento al cual pertenece.

Fuente: Elaboración propia.

Del otro lado se encuentra el ciudadano y sus formas de ser audiencia. El ciudadano es *silencio* desde la perspectiva del gobierno, es decir, para los medios oficiales que evitan incluir en sus transmisiones mensajes y

¹⁵ En febrero de 2017 se da un nuevo caso de condena contra el opositor ruso, esta vez impuesta por el Tribunal Leninski de la ciudad de Kírov, argumentando malversación de fondos y que supone una suspensión de cinco años para Navalny. Dicho proceso ya tenía un antecedente con la condena a cinco años de cárcel, impuesta en julio de 2013. Este último suceso ha generado diversas reacciones respecto a si se asiste a una persecución política, teniendo en cuenta que en el 2018 son las elecciones presidenciales en Rusia y Navalny había anunciado su intención de candidatura (Yegórov, 2017). Adicionalmente, el 26 de marzo de 2017, Navalny vuelve a ser noticia al ser tomado preso durante las protestas contra la corrupción ocurridas el mismo día y convocadas por él (BBC Mundo, 2017).

contenidos que reivindicquen sus intereses; el día de la manifestación en la plaza de Bolotnaya en Moscú, los medios oficiales rusos solo transmitieron las manifestaciones que se dieron en apoyo a Vladimir Putin.

El ciudadano se convierte en masa una vez sale a la calle a manifestarse y atiende a las acciones colectivas a las que es convocado. Es en este momento en el que se convierte en una cifra: 50 000 personas se manifestaron el 10 de diciembre en la Plaza Bolotnaya y 100 manifestantes fueron arrestados por la policía (Global Nonviolent Action Database, s. f). El ciudadano es comunidad cuando actúa individualmente en función de un bien común. Las estadísticas que se ofrecen en el sitio oficial del proyecto RosYama muestran que, a mayo de 2017, la red para el reporte de grietas en las vías creada por la comunidad ha conseguido hacer reparar 24 213 aberturas en las calles y carreteras.

Dado el carácter de la serie de protestas de la *Snow revolution*, el ciudadano participante de la misma cumple con todas las características para ser un ciudadano de la Red (*netizen*), estando siempre atento y vigilante a lo que sucede para actuar. El ciudadano ruso que aceptó la invitación por redes para salir a las calles a protestar es el mismo que, aún hoy, saca su teléfono celular para tomarle una foto y reportar una grieta en las vías. Este ciudadano es el que se siente motivado para cooperar colectivamente de diferente manera: le interesa alcanzar los objetivos comunitarios en los que se denuncia la corrupción en su país y lo mueve un sentimiento de patriotismo y pertenencia hacia este.

Ciudadanías: vigilancia y ciudadanía digital

García Canclini (1995) habla sobre una sociedad civil mundial que se caracteriza por un proceso de integración transnacional, por tener una capacidad decisoria mucho mayor que la de los partidos políticos, sindicatos y movimientos sociales de alcance nacional. “Concebir el ejercicio de la ciudadanía sólo a nivel local o nacional es el equivalente político de enfrentar a Sony o Nestlé con estrategias de comercio minorista” (p. 192).

Esta relación transnacional en la que convergen diversos repertorios, se relaciona con las formas como los nuevos medios de comunicación afectan a la ciudadanía. Para Jenkins (2008) los nuevos medios operan con principios diferentes a los que eran usados anteriormente por los medios de la comunicación de masas. Los nuevos se caracterizan por la posibilidad de acceder tanto a ellos como a la información, por la posibilidad del ciudadano de hacerse partícipe y porque posibilitan una comunicación recíproca donde sus partes son iguales y no hay un mensaje que va de uno a muchos.

Esta posibilidad de acceso a la información conlleva la idea de que ahora se es un *ciudadano informado*, que tiene a su disposición la información necesaria para ejercer su ciudadanía. Sin embargo, esta concepción de ciudadano no implica necesariamente una condición más autónoma del mismo pues, si bien puede acceder a la información, es probable que no sepa qué hacer con ella. Para Jenkins (2008) a lo que se hace referencia en términos de ciudadanía actualmente es a una especie de vigilancia, a una forma de colaboración comunitaria: el “tránsito de la concepción individualizada del ciudadano informado hacia el concepto cooperativo del ciudadano vigilante” (p. 227).

El ciudadano vigilante, más que dispuesto a llevar la iniciativa, tiende a estar atento y observante, listo para actuar cuando sea necesario: y sabe cómo hacerlo, no es ausente sino alerta. Se ve al ciudadano vigilante más como un actor que establece relaciones colaborativas con otros, como alguien “entendido en ciertos ámbitos, algo al tanto de otros, operando en un contexto de confianza mutua y recursos compartidos” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 227).

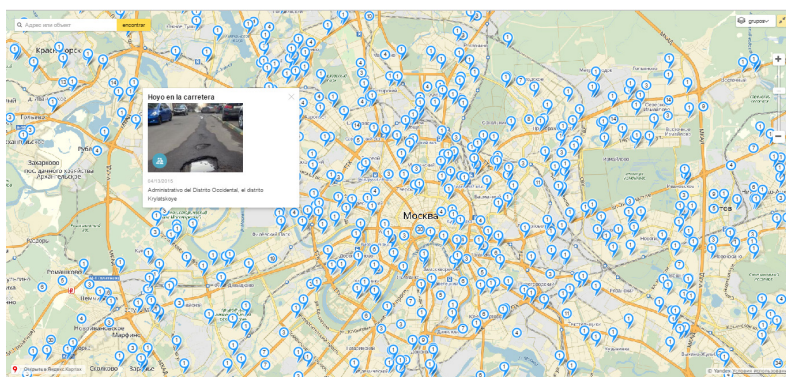
Por otro lado, como lo señala Zuluaga, los ciudadanos del siglo xx tienen la capacidad de comunicarse a través de la Red; son nuevas formas de ciudadanías capacitadas en el uso de los medios de comunicación. Siempre

están *online* y visibles. Productores de un lado, consumidores del otro, son *netizens*: “Las audiencias activas. Lo que en inglés se llama *netizens* –algo así como ciudadanos de la red” (Zuluaga, 2012, p. 242).

Los ciudadanos de la Red están empoderados, combinan las características del prosumidor, de la sociedad civil transnacional y del ciudadano vigilante. En este punto RosYama entra como un claro ejemplo de las formas de vigilancia ciudadana, se trata de ciudadanos de a pie dispuestos a participar, a involucrarse con las causas, a denunciar. Quienes publican en proyectos como RosYama son personas que cumplen con las características antes mencionadas del prosumo: colaboran, producen contenidos y rastrean información con el fin de ser y estar en comunidad.

La fundación *Fondo para la lucha contra la corrupción* supo aprovechar esto dotando a sus proyectos de mecanismos para facilitar la denuncia ante las entidades del Estado. Así, aplicaciones como RosYama cuentan con versiones tanto en iOS como en Android que posibilitan la publicación desde el teléfono, lo que hace al sitio más eficiente (Hinojosa, 2012).

Imagen 6. Mapa colaborativo de RosYama



Fuente: Mapa colaborativo de Moscú construido a partir de los reportes de ciudadanos rusos en el proyecto RosYama (<https://rosyama.ru/>).

De la misma manera, se realizan conexiones para facilitar el registro desde los perfiles de las principales redes sociales: Facebook, VKontakte y Google+, con lo cual se le ahorra al ciudadano el tener que llenar los tradicionales formularios de registro. Como resultado, se encuentra un servicio que facilita la denuncia de los deterioros en las vías del país. Con un resultado de 88 595 denuncias y 24 213 fallos corregidos.

Conclusiones

A propósito de las formas de agencia y relacionamiento, las redes sociales y en general los medios digitales posibilitan el activismo político al establecer nuevos principios operacionales diferentes a los ya establecidos en los medios tradicionales como la televisión y la radio. Conceptos como los de accesibilidad, interactividad, participación y reciprocidad permiten que se establezca una comunicación entre iguales y no de uno a muchos.

Estas facilidades para comunicarse políticamente en la web se basan en que las fronteras entre lo íntimo y lo público se difuminan, lo cual hace que el usuario transite constantemente entre lo personal, lo familiar y lo social mientras se encuentra *online*. En este sentido, se recomienda tener en cuenta tres factores al momento de pensar en contenidos transmediales cuyo fin sea detonar la cooperación y la participación ciudadana, a saber: los ámbitos de pertenencia, los modos de interacción y los ecosistemas mediáticos.

Los ámbitos de pertenencia se refieren a las formas de ser y estar en sociedad, a la importancia de permitir que quien interactúe con la convocatoria pueda sentirse en red, en comunidad, en visibilidad. Una cosa es poner como foto de perfil una cinta blanca y otra es amarrarla a la puerta del carro, pero ambas constituyen una misma acción: la respuesta a una invitación para identificarse como comunidad.

De igual manera, la posibilidad de estar conectado le permite hacer una transición entre ciudadano-audiencia a ciudadano-prosumidor o *netizen*; esta transición es posible gracias a que para entrar en los medios digitales solo se necesita contar con un dispositivo móvil y una conexión a internet, es decir, las puertas abiertas al prosumo. Lo cual se hace evidente con la implementación de aplicaciones como RosYama y RosZKH, en las que el usuario, además de pertenecer a una comunidad, se encuentra con un sitio donde la información ya está filtrada según su necesidad y donde se apela a su capacidad de consumir y producir contenido comunicacional.

Esta forma de pensar al individuo implica considerar también sus modos de interacción: cómo y en qué momento el ciudadano está

inclinado a participar activamente y de qué manera se puede detonar dicha participación. Lo anterior implica una revisión de las formas como se ha entendido históricamente al usuario y entender que este puede ser múltiples audiencias al tiempo y que se encuentra en un tránsito constante entre la generalidad de la masa y la individualidad de la celebridad, acomodándose a estas según el momento del día, el medio con el que interactúa y el interés que en él se suscita.

Por último, la necesidad de compaginar las formas de comunicación de la llamada cultura de la convergencia y los ecosistemas mediáticos que se entretajan: las redes de contenidos y plataformas que configuran la estrategia de comunicación transmedia. El entramado de contenidos producidos por, y en torno a Alexei Navalny, son un claro ejemplo de cómo se puede construir una estrategia de comunicación transmedia que posibilite la movilización social por medio de contenidos que se dirijan a ejercer la ciudadanía tanto de manera vigilante (estando atento a lo que sucede en el entorno) como en la web (actuando de manera colaborativa y fortaleciendo las aplicaciones basadas en el *crowdsourcing*); contenidos que promuevan acciones ciudadanas como la veeduría, el monitoreo a los procesos y la acción colectiva. Estrategias de comunicación que extiendan el relato no desde la narración sino desde las formas de ser y estar.

Para finalizar, si bien existe ya un acuerdo respecto a que el nivel narrativo de un contenido no es inherente a su carácter transmedial (la llamada *expansión*), pareciera que las metodologías, las categorías de análisis y las estrategias de diseño se quedaran cortas cuando se trata con otros tipos de comunicación.

Lo anterior arroja una serie de inquietudes para abordar: ¿acaso el concepto de narrativa transmedia se queda corto para describir procesos que no son necesariamente narrativos? ¿Se podría hablar mejor de estrategia transmedia? ¿Cuáles son las metodologías de trabajo para potenciar las capacidades de las audiencias en su ejercicio de ciudadanía? Interrogantes que exigen una reflexión que excede las posibilidades de este trabajo. Lo que sí se puede afirmar a partir de este análisis es que participar de una estrategia que combine diferentes formas de convocatoria, medios de comunicación y mecanismos de participación, supone un ejercicio de ciudadanía múltiple y amplificada.

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Beyond Hollywood: Transmedia Strategy for Niche Audiences

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Introduction

Recent technological and cultural developments, centred around the popularisation of the Internet, have led to significant and ongoing changes in how audiences are interacting with and experiencing stories (Jenkins, 2006).

There is no more central issue in media and communications studies today than the proposition that we are in the middle of a rapid process of change that is seeing established or ‘old’ media being challenged for primacy in audiences’ and users’ attention by new modes and types of production, dissemination and display (Cunningham, Silver, & McDonnell, 2010, p. 119).

It is in this landscape that the practice of transmedia storytelling has enjoyed a tumultuous place of prominence across media and cultural studies, advertising and marketing research (Fast & Örnebring, 2015).

When scholars and practitioners discuss transmedia storytelling,¹ they inevitably find themselves referencing worlds created by large media conglomerates. High budget ‘Hollywood’ spectacles like *Star Wars*, *The Marvel Cinematic Universe* and *Game of Thrones* are the most visible

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¹ Referring to a timeless practice dating back before the dark ages (Evans, 2011), transmedia storytelling in a modern context is based on the concept of transmedia intertextuality (Kinder, 1991). Transmedia intertextuality describes the way in which large media conglomerates expand successful media franchises by creating new forms of interaction and storytelling such as spin-off series, video games and merchandise. Coined by Jenkins (2003), the term transmedia storytelling refers to multiple delivery platforms (such as films, games or books) providing separate but interlinked narratives within the same narrative world. “For example, in *The Matrix* franchise, key bits of information are conveyed through three live action films, a series of animated shorts, two collections of comic book stories, and several video games. There is no one single source or ur-text where one can turn to gain all of the information needed to comprehend the Matrix universe” (Jenkins, 2007). Transmedia storytelling then refers to how separate but interlinked narrative modes are used to construct “a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts” (Evans, 2011, p. 30).

transmedia stories (Hadas, 2014). They form a large part of the practice's developmental history (Johnson, 2012) and a large portion of transmedia practice in the digital age has emerged from the marketing and narrative practice of media franchises owned by large conglomerates (Livingstone, McKenny, & Flanagan, 2017). However, beyond the evergreen pastures of conglomerate owned narratives, independent storytellers have been using their own, alternate forms of transmedia storytelling to create successful, meaningful, and sustainable projects. There are those who argue that transmedia storytelling is potentially better for small businesses as they rely on innovative content to differentiate themselves from larger competitors (Bressler, 2012; Deuze, 2010).

This paper puts forward an alternate way of analysing transmedia projects, using an interdisciplinary toolkit based on business strategy theory to cut through some of the problems of transmedia research. In doing so it puts forward a framework for analysing transmedia strategies. Using this framework, it also conducts a case analysis of a leading independent project, *Sofia's Diary*. Originally a Portuguese narrative about the daily trials of a teenage school girl, *Sofia's Diary* was repackaged and remade in over 30 different territories around the world. Analysing it with these frameworks demonstrates an alternate, successful strategy for engaging specific niche audiences, one that is reliant upon fostering a sense of social connection and showcasing a deep understanding of specific audiences through the way that stories are told.

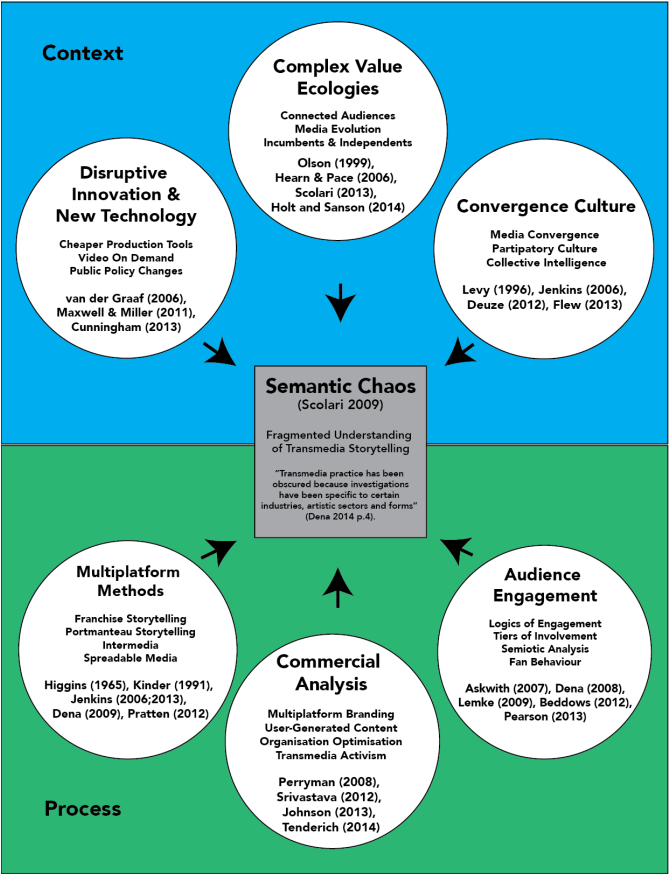
The Trouble with Transmedia Storytelling & Transmedia Literature

Transmedia storytelling has many documented benefits for practitioners; enhanced longevity and commercial success of story worlds (Hardy, 2011), greater word of mouth amongst global audiences (Sinnreich, 2007), higher audience satisfaction (Long, 2007) and servicing a large variety of audience members with catered content (Smith, 2009). It follows over the last decade of placing consumer communities and meaningful interaction at the centre of successful strategy within most industries (Whitler & Morgan, 2017). However, "the nature and breadth of transmedia practice has been obscured because investigations have been specific to certain industries, artistic sectors and forms" (Dena, 2014, p. 4). What may be

the greatest irony of transmedia research is that, founded upon a philosophy of holistic and synergistic approaches to storytelling, the field lacks a holistic and synergistic approach to understanding transmedia that is directly relevant to practice.

Reviewing the existing literature, it is clear that most applications and investigations of transmedia storytelling are clouded by ‘semantic chaos’; a blurring of both meaning and application as a multitude of different people with different agendas adapt transmedia storytelling for their own means (Scolari, 2009). Figure 1, overleaf, illustrates this chaos. It shows the separate silos of research pushing and pulling on transmedia storytelling.

Figure 1 . Semantic Chaos in Transmedia Storytelling



Source: Cliff (2017, p. 5).

As Figure 1 demonstrates, transmedia storytelling is a concept that stands at the intersection of many competing methods and ontological perspectives.² This is no more evident than in the perceived need of most scholars to clarify their definition of transmedia storytelling before conducting any in depth analysis. In doing so, understanding the application of transmedia storytelling to practice is often confused or fractured by competing ideas, as multiple people from different disciplines adopt or adapt these definitions to suit their own ends (Jenkins, 2012). In practice, this has led to leading practitioners like the late Brian Clark branding transmedia storytelling a lie, lamenting the evolution of transmedia storytelling from an experimental, emerging practice to a blurred concept with unfocussed and seemingly unending applicability (Clark, 2012).

Reviewing the literature, however, there is a solution to this chaos. Discussions of transmedia storytelling focus on the practice as a “process rather than an end result”, a *strategic* way of storytelling (Fast & Örnebring, 2015, p. 4). Yet, despite leading transmedia scholars such as Jenkins (2006), Scolari (2009), Norrington (2010) and Holt and Sanson (2014) all referring to transmedia storytelling as a strategy, there are almost no works that analyse transmedia storytelling from a strategic perspective.³ This paper takes up that challenge.

The Strategic Perspective

Strategy is what a company does *differently* to its rivals, the activities that it undertakes that give it a unique position in a marketplace and a sustainable competitive advantage (Magretta, 2012). As this section shows, not only is it directly relevant to the concept of transmedia storytelling, but there are already frameworks that have existed for decades in the sphere of strategic research that can be used to understand the benefits and application of transmedia in practice.

² See Appendix A for a list of similar definitions as people explore this space.

³ One article does use strategic theory to conduct a resource-based analysis of the Taiwanese television industry. Hsu and Shih (2013) recommend a shift towards the use of transmedia storytelling by public broadcasters as, in their view, it provides them with more sustainable production pathways. Their work demonstrates the benefits of applying strategic theory to transmedia storytelling and that media conglomerates using a strategic approach are likely to be effective in leveraging their resources to help differentiate their narrative experiences. However, their article does not provide a framework for the analysis of transmedia storytelling as strategy.

When leading scholars such as Jenkins (2006), Dena (2009) and Scolari (2013) investigate the transmedia concept, they do so by centring their analysis on the entertainment market. They analyse how storytelling companies create worlds that leverage changes to audience behaviour within that market. For example, Jenkins (2006) grounds the rise of transmedia storytelling today on storytellers aligning themselves with their audiences; creating experiences that appeal to a modern audience empowered by digital technology (convergence) to work together (collective intelligence), share and participate in narratives that they enjoy (participatory culture). This focus upon the audience and leveraging changes within the marketplace reflects what is known in business thinking as the efficiency paradigm.

The efficiency paradigm proposes that the actions of firms determine industry structure, that dominant firms are those who are more efficient than their rivals (Rosenbaum, 1998). By knowing a market better (Porter, 1991), being more efficient at generating value for that market and its customers (Rosenbaum, 1998) and/or avoiding competition altogether (Kim & Mauborgne, 2013) a firm succeeds and industries develop. Analysing transmedia storytelling strategy under this paradigm means analysing how storytelling firms differentiate themselves from one another by understanding their market (market dynamics, competitive environment and consumer behaviours) and then aligning their resources accordingly to achieve competitive advantage (Collis & Montgomery, 1998).⁴

Concepts developed by Michael Porter, a seminal business scholar in competitive advantage, have direct relevance to transmedia storytelling. In particular, Porter (1996) links sustainable success to “combining activities” and amplifying the value produced by a business” (p. 73), a process that is also the guiding ethos of transmedia producers who seek to create a “whole that is bigger than the sum of its parts” (Falzon, 2012, p. 926). It is for this reason that we can use competitive advantage theory

⁴ Competitive advantage is a vital consideration within this view of strategy, as it focusses analysis upon the different ways that companies leverage their resources to succeed (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). Hamel and Prahalad (1989) epitomise this perspective, arguing that a company can establish a vision for success based on a desired position within a market and then stretch their resources to achieve that goal (strategic intent). However, an alternate, resource based view also exists within this paradigm in which a firm is seen as making the most profit by optimising available resources to meet market demand (Barney & Clark, 2007).

to coordinate the disparate silos of transmedia research (media culture, semiotics, marketing, branding, narrative theory etc.) when analysing transmedia projects.

Step 1: Context and Generic Strategies

The first step in separating different types of successful transmedia strategies is a consideration of context and the generic strategic response that a company develops as a response to that context. Regardless of industry, developing sustainable and competitive strategies is directly related to how a company acts to take advantage of the context in which they operate (Aaker, 1998). Porter (1991) argues that an individual strategy is then shaped by a company's capabilities and the goals of each firm within that context.

Adapting these concepts to the sphere of transmedia storytelling, this is most evident in how scholars discuss Hollywood productions. A pervasive discussion within transmedia and broader media culture scholarship is that large, dominant incumbent media producers, such as Hollywood studios, and small independent and/or emerging producers use transmedia storytelling to compete in a vast, expanding and increasingly crowded global video market.

Many scholars and critics have noted that media ownership is controlled by an increasingly small number of mega-corporations. Viacom, Time Warner, News Corp, Clear Channel and Disney all have separate divisions for the creation of TV shows, films, comics, and video games. These divisions allow media conglomerates to retain a percentage of the profits from each branch, rather than having to outsource such components to a competitor. Due to this horizontal integration, the entertainment industry has an incentive to produce content that moves fluidly across media sectors (Smith, 2009, p. 10).

As Smith notes, incumbents within the media production sphere have been able to adapt and hold on to their place of dominance by using transmedia storytelling. A small oligopoly of Hollywood production companies has dominated media production related to the motion picture business for the last century (Silver, 2010). This is perhaps why the most visible and most commonly studied examples of transmedia

storytelling in the literature are those undertaken by large companies, such as the major Hollywood studios.⁵

Those that do analyse low budget and niche styles of transmedia storytelling also describe it as a reaction to specific threats or opportunities apparent in a marketplace. Cunningham (2013) argues that smaller companies turn to transmedia storytelling because they are forced to innovate in order to remain competitive. Similarly, Scolari (2014) uses semio-narrative analysis to demonstrate that an independent retelling of *Don Quixote* represents a visible “new dimension” of transmedia storytelling, a successful project predicated on being a socio-cultural mirror of its surroundings. This directly reflects a core argument put forward by Porter about the strategies of small businesses:

Unlike the giants, small businesses cannot rely on the inertia of the marketplace for their survival. Nor can they succeed by brute force, throwing resources at problems. On the contrary, they have to see their competitive environment with particular clarity, and they have to stake out and protect a position they can defend (Porter, 1991, p. 1).

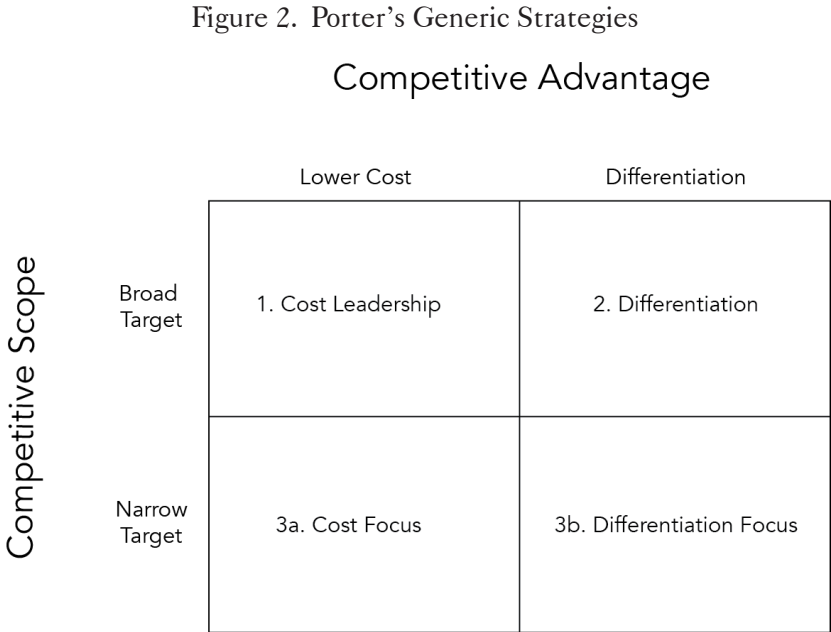
This shows that these strategic ideas are directly relevant in forming a framework for analysing how and why different organisations choose transmedia storytelling, regardless of if they are large or small.

Porter’s generic strategies for competitive advantage also provide a framework for direct comparison of transmedia strategies. Porter (1991) argues that competitive advantage can be attained using three generic strategies: 1) differentiation to a mass audience, 2) cost leadership (i.e. low cost) to a mass market or 3) focus –targeting specific market segments/ audiences and within that segment using either differentiation or cost leadership to a niche audience.

You can have consistently lower costs than your rivals [...] Alternatively, you can differentiate your product or service from your competitors’, in effect making yourself unique at delivering something your customers think is important. That allows you to command a premium price (Porter, 1991, § 20).

⁵ In the business sphere this is referred to as incumbent advantage, with many companies sustaining their dominance of an industry by using their size and resources to reach a broad audience at a level of cost and quality their competitors cannot hope to match (Bain, 1954; Hearn & Pace, 2006).

Referencing his earlier research on generic strategies for competitive advantage, Porter’s article *Know Your Place* puts forward the following framework, Figure 2, for comparing the strategic decisions of different organisations. In particular, he links smaller independent companies to a narrow competitive scope, with their strategies specifically catered towards niche audience targets, and large companies to a broad target audience.



Source: Diagram from the University of Cambridge (2015), reproduced from pp. 11-15 of Porter (1985), *Competitive Advantage. Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*. New York, NY: Free Press.

As Figure 2 illustrates, the scope of a company’s target audience or marketplace combines with the focus of a company’s activities, allowing for an analyst to assess three generic strategies: differentiation, cost leadership and focus.

- 1 *Differentiation* refers to a firm seeking to compete by being unique to its buyers.
 - a. Uniqueness is often used to command a premium price by appealing to one or more aspects of a product that the customers of

that industry perceive as important. True differentiation establishes a position that is very difficult to replicate and thus generates sustained competitive advantage (Porter, 1985).

b. This is commonly seen in Hollywood franchises as they use stars, visual effects and scales of production that their smaller competitors simply cannot hope to afford (Silver, 2010).

- 2 *Cost leadership* refers to a firm becoming the leader of its industry based on lower operational costs than its competitors.

a. This can refer to economies of scale, proprietary technology, access to raw materials –anything that produces a sustainable advantage through a superior return on investment for the firm (Porter, 1985).

b. When combined with the common idea of lowering barriers to entry within transmedia research (Phillips, 2012; Pratten, 2011; Wang & Singhal, 2016), this also extends to lowering the cost of audiences in engaging with the story world by making access more convenient, immediate or personalised for the audience.

- 3 *Focus* refers to a company either;
 - a. seeking to compete in a niche market segment by providing a lower cost product that represents good value
 - b. seeking to differentiate their product from others in a niche market, either servicing an unusual need or creating superior value in a different way e.g. a delivery system that best serves that market (Porter, 1985).

Each of these categories, when considered alongside existing transmedia research, provides the first step for cross-analysing transmedia storytelling strategies.

Step 2: Strategic Implementation and Audience Engagement

Beyond objectives and external considerations, Porter also provides a methodology for analysing the implementation of strategies themselves. His article *What is Strategy?* breaks the analysis of strategy into three segments: defining a company's unique position, trade-offs and strategic fit (Porter, 1996). These segments then drive the success of a strategy –its ability to achieve competitive advantage. This section combines these elements with transmedia storytelling audience engagement research to form the second step in analysing transmedia storytelling strategies.

Unique positioning means delivering “a unique mix of value [...] Choosing to perform activities differently or to perform different activities to rivals” (Porter, 1996, p. 64). It involves linking together the value proposition (what the company or organisation is providing for its audience) and the value chain (how the company or organisation coordinates its resources to create the maximum value for that audience (Magretta, 2012)).⁶ This can be seen in how transmedia researchers talk about the way media platforms are leveraged to engage an audience. Leveraging a unique mix of media platforms to tell a narrative provides an audience with new forms of engagement that keep them interested, engaged and entertained (Alexander, 2011). Some experiences are designed so that they preference entertainment and immersion, while others focus on different aspects like social connection, mastery and self-efficacy (Askwith, 2007). It is how audience attention is directed through and across story modes that makes each transmedia strategy unique (Scolari, 2013), and this pursuit of unique positioning through engagement provides a strong point of comparison between different approaches.

Trade-offs refer to the necessary sacrifices that a company or firm intentionally makes to create their unique position and ensure its sustainability. A unique position cannot be attained without actively making trade-offs that forgo the advantages of another position (Porter, 1996). This is reflected in how transmedia scholars such as Dena (2008) and Evans (2008) divide audience segments into three tiers:

- 1 Low: 85% of the audience form a passively engaged or time poor portion who will not experience all that the producers have created.
- 2 Medium: 10% will be moderately engaged and create some word of mouth about the project, driving some of their own interaction.
- 3 High: 5% will actively seek out all story modes, foster social connections with other audience members because of this narrative world and interact at every opportunity.

A transmedia producer cannot design an experience, especially on a low budget, that focusses on engaging all tiers at once to the same degree

⁶ Magretta writes specifically about Porter’s relevance to contemporary business practices, showing that these particular advances on strategy, while now two decades old, still underpin the majority of business thinking today. She argues that those who content with Porter about these elements of strategy are often actually expanding upon his ideals rather than proving any logical inconsistencies.

(Phillips, 2012). They must make concessions in time, money, autonomy or ease of use in order to sustain the engagement of audiences⁷ with different expectations for their engagement (Dena, 2008). Therefore, each project contains certain trade-offs in the way it seeks to engage its audience, trade-offs that are linked to their guiding strategy and the context in which they operate.

Strategic Fit, the final component, stipulates that strategy is about *combining* activities. “Fit locks out competitors by creating a chain that is as strong as its strongest link” (Porter, 1996, p. 70). It is broken into three tiers:

- 1 Simple consistency between activities and overall strategy.
- 2 Each activity reinforcing other activities.
- 3 Optimisation of effort.

This component directly reflects one of the core tenants of transmedia storytelling, the idea of a whole being created that is greater than the sum of its parts (Gambarato, 2012). Transmedia storytelling is concerned not only with separate stories that form part of a larger world, but with creating a web of what Higgins (2001) termed as intermedia, the meaning generated between different points of interaction, by the way in which those points are arranged together. For example, in *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries*, a character removing itself from social media and, in effect, not posting any content for a while, adds more story through the arrangement of media rather than the creation of any new content (Whyte, 2013). When one character was shamed for sexual promiscuity within the narrative world, she posted less online, engaged with other characters less and her online playlists changed to reflect her struggle (J. Bushman, personal communication, August 24, 2015). In this way, we can use strategic fit to compare how different projects arrange their stories so that they form a cohesive world that engages audiences with an expanding and cohesive experience.

When these three components are considered together they provide a framework for analysing the strategic implementation of transmedia stories. This, in combination with Step 1, allows for an analysis for why

⁷ Particularly relevant to contemporary storytelling, is a consideration for the immediacy of different story modes available and how that impacts on the audience’s experience (Bostan & Marsh, 2012).

producers choose certain strategies, how it is related to their individual contexts and what advantage those strategies give their projects in the marketplace.

The next section put this framework into action, showcasing how low-budget, independent storytellers took advantage of their production contexts and produced unique transmedia storytelling strategies that provided them with substantial competitive advantage. The text in question is one of digital transmedia storytelling's earliest successes, *Sofia's Diary*.

Sofia's Diary

*People don't buy content, people buy
experience, people buy context.*

N. Bernardo

Diário de Sofia (*Sofia's Diary*) was a low-budget, independent and experimental project that originated in Portugal in 2003. Created by author and producer Nuno Bernardo, it is regarded as one of the earliest success stories from the pioneering years of digital transmedia storytelling (Gambarato, 2012). A project designed for teenage school-girls in Portugal, it used multiple low-cost media platforms to relay the daily struggles of Sofia as she went through elementary school. The first iteration of the project was a runaway success, with over 200 000 monthly visitors to the blog, 19,000 mobile subscribers and 4 seasons on a state television broadcaster RTP2 (Stack, 2008). It also sold over 500,000 books in a country of just 10 million people and, in the coming years would be reproduced in over 30 territories and adapted into 10 different languages (Bernardo, 2011a). *Sofia's Diary* achieved all of this success in a manner that differed fundamentally from the big-budget, global distribution and market saturation tactics of narrative franchises like *Lego* or *The Marvel Cinematic Universe* (Zeiser, 2015). As this case study demonstrates, it was through a niche, cost-focussed and iterative use of transmedia storytelling that *Sofia's Diary* found its success.

Context & Objectives

When *Sofia's Diary* began in 2003, most of the television programming available to teenage girls in Portugal was not aimed at them, consisting

instead of a saturation of adult soap opera. Bernardo realised this while he conducted research working for another company. His research indicated that there was also a lack of storytelling content on the platforms that school girls were using; namely mobile phones, radio (in the car), and web blogs (N. Bernardo, personal communication, October 13, 2015).

The reason we wanted to do a teen diary was because, at the time of course we needed to make some money and we needed to make this a very commercial experience. At the time, I wrote some studies and the studies said that the big consumers of mobile entertainment, the ones who were really paying for content, were teenage girls. They were not paying for music, they were not paying for videos, because they're downloading it illegally. But they were paying for ring tones, for the cute bears for wallpaper for their phone... people don't buy content, people buy experience, people buy context (N. Bernardo, personal communication, October 13, 2015).

For these reasons, the project was initially pitched to local Portuguese networks as a television show with interactive phone and online components that would make the audience feel like they were a part of Sofia's life. However, despite positive feedback from the network, *Sofia's Diary* was rejected because these platforms were untested. The network deemed it too risky and lacked confidence that it was a financially viable project due to its non-traditional and unusual multiplatform approach (Bernardo, 2011b).

As it was their first project, this left beActive (Bernardo's company) with a tension between a contextual opportunity and their own objectives. At the time when *Sofia's Diary* was conceived (and arguably still today), independents in the European market and in particular in Portugal, generally relied upon traditional financing approaches to make the majority of screen content (Miller, 2014).

Unlike Hollywood studios, European independents must generate a production model on a project-by-project basis because they can only produce the film if they get funding from third parties. When they do receive backing and produce a film, they must reassign almost all of their works' rights to external companies in order to facilitate the distribution and marketing of their work (Bernardo, 2014, p. 18).

The problem facing Bernardo's production company was that relying on a traditional approach to financing projects would leave them without the control, revenue or sustainability that came from funding their own intellectual property. To create narrative content with this model, an independent production company such as Bernardo's faced a constant reliance on the input of others (Bernardo, 2015). beActive Entertainment needed to find a sustainable source of revenue and to avoid direct competition with larger companies who could easily bully them out of contention with better resources.

Unique Position

When a company generates "blue oceans" or "uncontested spaces where the competition is irrelevant [...] you invent or capture new demand", they are able to achieve a unique competitive advantage (Kim & Mauborgne, 2013, p. 124).⁸ In blue ocean strategy, rather than competing in an existing market or "red ocean", a company focusses upon creating value in a way that previously did not exist. This type of approach can be used to explain why beActive used transmedia storytelling strategy, as it provided them with a unique position and a blue ocean for *Sofia's Diary*.

Learning from their initial failure to find traditional pathways for the project, beActive adapted their project and self-invested in the minimum amount that they needed to get the project noticed. Focussing on text messaging and an online blog, beActive refocussed and launched their experience as a game. A press release from the project's launch proclaims,

This game, never seen before in Portugal, gives the participants the power to 'decide' Sofia's daily actions: if she will go to a lesson or not, if she accepts her boyfriend's request, making new friends, introducing or expelling a character, and many other decisions (beActive, n. d).

⁸ A core example of this that they use is that of the famous entertainment company Cirque De Soleil. More than a decade ago, Cirque De Soleil exploded into a global force by generating their own market. Instead of using the expensive animal acts of a circus or the dialogue dependent storylines of traditional theatre, they blended acrobatics and showmanship with music and mime, creating a new market that was not quite theatre or circus and directly competed with neither (Kim & Mauborgne, 2013). While some consider these strategies directly contradictory to the warlike grounding of Porter's notions of competitive strategy, Magretta (2012) reminds us that to do so is a fallacy born from a lack of interrogation of Porter's work over time. Porter's strategy evolved to become essentially about the pursuit of uniqueness, rather than competition, an ideal of Kim and Mauborgne's blue ocean ideals.

As the interactive hints within this press release indicate, from the beginning, beActive emphasised social connection with *Sofia's Diary*. Creating the project as a transmedia narrative was a deliberate strategic choice by beActive so that audience members would feel like they were one of Sofia's friends (N. Bernardo, personal communication, October 13, 2015).

From its initial "game" roots, the project developed into a narrative that was deliberately and strategically spread across different platforms so that it mirrored the way that its target audience, teenage girls, were actually using media in their daily lives (N. Bernardo, personal communication, October 13, 2015). As the popularity of Sofia's Diary grew online among teenage girls, the producers employed a publicity stunt to cast the face of Sofia⁹ hoping to stimulate further interest in the program. The casting announcement resulted in thousands of teens lining up around a city block hoping to become the face of the project, and television studios that had originally rejected Bernardo's concept¹⁰ approached beActive to make a television component. Soon audiences could also watch daily 5 minute shows after school that continued the narrative of *Sofia's Diary* (Miller, 2014). Fans could even read a column in a teen magazine once a month that summarised how Sofia was going or buy books that recapped each season of the show.

This structure is indicative of effective strategic fit, one of the core underlying aspects of competitive advantage within Porter's model. Using low cost, fragmented and interlinked media components, Bernardo told the single narrative of Sofia's life. This is what Pratten (2011) and Gambarato (2012a; 2012b) describe as a 'portmanteau' transmedia story. Rather than seeking long-term engagement with individual story modes, *Sofia's Diary* used different story modes to provide alternate perspectives (such as the books and online blogs),¹¹ methods of interaction (active

⁹ A publicity strategy that can be traced back to producer David Selznick in 1937-38 to cast the role of Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind* (Bridges & Boodman, 1989, pp. 212-229).

¹⁰ Their reception was positive but they could not commit to financing the story due to uncertainty over financial returns from this untested format.

¹¹ The books provided two forms of alternate perspective. In the series penned from the perspective of the main character, *Sofia* they helped to provide additional information from her point of view on events that had already happened. In another series, they reimagined events from the perspective of her younger sister, still covering the same single narrative but from a different perspective. Additional perspective is something that Jenkins recognises as part of transmedia storytelling's power to provide independent but interlinked story modes that further a narrative world and an audience's engagement of that world (Jenkins, 2007).

discussion and SMS interactions and passive television viewing) and new pieces of information (radio, television and SMS). These elements worked holistically together, adding different dimensions to the single narrative of Sofia's daily dilemmas.

Because of this effective strategic fit, beActive achieved a unique position in the marketplace in the following ways:

- They became a non-competitive, investment opportunity for their formal rivals, creating tailored content that filled gaps in their programming.
- Rather than competing with larger productions on any one format, they used small bursts through each media channel to gain a spot in the market.
- They turned a regional, non-English speaking marketplace (Portugal) into a competitive advantage.
- Through their trial and error, they created an ongoing revenue stream in format sales in other regional areas and larger English-speaking markets.¹²
- Their format of analysing young women in a region and holding up a mirror to their daily experiences through a socially connected narrative and a strong female lead became an ongoing source of passive income that helped to sustain beActive and generate further projects.
- They focussed on lowering barriers to entry for their audience and thus the physical and emotional cost of engaging with their narrative for that audience.

These elements of unique positioning show that the project reflects Porter's notion of narrow, cost leadership strategy (3a in Figure 2). The project was created for a specific audience and, as the project grew, each stage saw the producers return to how they could engage audiences in a convenient, native manner for the audiences. Each additional channel was also only added when a partnership deal was struck with a channel

¹² A format, language most often used in the television production space, refers to a particular structure for telling a story. Producers control the intellectual property relating to how their story is told, even when it is dispersed across multiple platforms and this allows them to license or sell that format to other production companies who wish to use that structure (Bachmayer, Lugmayr, & Kotsis, 2010).

specific investor (Bernardo, 2011b). However, this unique position did not come without substantial trade-offs;

- A reliance upon a small number of highly engaged audience members to drive the involvement of the wider public at the start of the project.
- As is detailed in Cliff (2012; 2017), Hollywood projects tend to rely upon a broad reach to generate a cycle of engagement that then draws in highly connected audience members and rewards their participation.
- *Sofia's Diary* was a finite concept. This is what allowed it to be packaged and resold. However, following the growing up story of a teenager and tapping in to that market meant giving up the never ending dream or “evergreen” aspirations of traditional Hollywood transmedia (J. Gomez, personal communication, September 17, 2015).
- Upfront investment meant a period of uncertainty and the potential for significant loss in a trade-off for retaining intellectual property control and long-term revenue from the project.
- As the project grew, Bernardo also had to allow for less audience interactivity with the development of the narrative world, something that had been a mainstay of the early portions of *Sofia's Diary*.
- In his interview, he noted that real interaction had to give way to the illusion of conversation and choice, something that Bernardo linked to the style of transmedia strategy becoming more like that of a Hollywood studio as the project grew (N. Bernardo, personal communication, October 13, 2015).

Each of these trade-offs represented a point of choice for the producers of *Sofia's Diary*. In making these choices, beActive chose to apply transmedia storytelling in a manner vastly different from a large ‘Hollywood’ studio rather than competing with that sort of content in a smaller arena. By using a cost-leadership strategy for a niche audience, *Sofia's Diary* became an enduring example of a successful, independent transmedia storytelling strategy.

Conclusion

Sofia's Diary is just one example of how strategic thinking can be used to pierce semantic chaos and bring together existing research to understand the relevance and effectiveness of transmedia storytelling. There are transmedia stories across each of Porter's four generic strategy quadrants.¹³ Additionally, Porter is just one of many competitive advantage theorists with models that can help to unify transmedia thinking. As this brief case study of *Sofia's Diary* demonstrates, strategic thinking is a viable and effective tool for bringing multiple disciplines to bear on innovative projects. Further in depth analysis can be undertaken by applying tools like semio-narrative analysis from media culture (Ibrus & Scolari, 2014), audience engagement analysis from fan behaviour studies (Askwith, 2007), frameworks for inciting longevity of engagement with story from advertising (Andrews, Durvasula, & Akhter, 1990). However, until further studies can be conducted, this case study shows that transmedia storytelling does have direct relevance to creative practice, especially if we use strategic thinking to establish the goals, contexts and objectives of producers who are telling their stories.

¹³ *The Marvel Cinematic Universe* as broadly focussed differentiation, *Doctor Who* as broadly focussed cost-leadership and *The Lizzie Bennet Diaries* as narrow differentiation to name a few.

Appendix A. Methods and ontological perspectives of Transmedia storytelling

Approach	Key Source	Summary
Adaptation	(Dena, 2009; Smith, 2009)	Creating another version of a narrative in a form different from the original. E.g. adapting a book into a transmedia storytelling form for example <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> became <i>The Lizzie Bennett Diaries</i> on YouTube and other platforms.
Augmented Reality Games	(Abba, 2009)	Audience members must transverse platforms to make sense of the story, piecing together a single narrative from multiple pieces scattered across different platforms.
Cross-media	(Mungioli, 2011)	A term often used interchangeably with transmedia, especially in European circles. It can, however, be used as an umbrella term in the same fashion as multiplatform storytelling.
Distinct Media	(Dena, 2009)	Distinct media is a term that Dena coins to refer to the specifically crafted individual media platforms that all are part of a storytelling practice.
Distributed Narrative	(Walker, 2004)	“Distributed narratives are stories that aren’t self-contained. They’re stories that can’t be experienced in a single session or in a single space. They’re stories that cross over into our daily lives, becoming as ubiquitous as the network that fosters them” (p. 2).
Entertainment Architecture (Entarch)	(Konzal, 2011; 2012)	A sub-strategy of transmedia storytelling that refers to a web-native, specifically interactive form of entertainment.
Intermedia	(Higgins, 2001)	This refers to the imaginative space constructed by audiences “between media”. Intermedia is the construct, the emotions and the experiences that people have when various media are combined.
Multimodal Narratives	(Ruppel, 2009)	Used to describe stories told through sequential and causal distribution of story “modes” or components.

Approach	Key Source	Summary
Multiplatform Storytelling	(Bolin, 2007, 2010)	Similar to transmedia storytelling except these narrative do not necessarily contain independent narrative extensions. This can be seen as a larger parent term within which transmedia storytelling operates.
Multimedia	(Dena, 2009)	“Multimedia is a terribly polysemous term, it is invoked here rhetorically to denote the conventional association with a mix of text, images, video and sound. The problem with this notion of multimedia is that it is often regarded as being representative of all expressive possibilities, yet is oblivious to other medial factors such as the delivery medium” (p. 4).
Serialised Narrative	(Jenkins, 2010)	Most often applied to television narratives, this refers to stories told one after another that rely upon the narrative contained in the text released chronologically before them to make sense.
Transmedia	(Dena, 2009; Jenkins, 2006)	A larger umbrella term for a mix of media platforms that work together to form something. This can apply to branding, fictional and factual storytelling, activism, franchising, business models, education and marketing.
Transmedia Practice	(Dena, 2009)	“The theory of <i>transmedia practice</i> examines a creative practice that involves the employment of multiple distinct media and environments for expression” (p. 1).
Transmedia Storytelling	(Jenkins, 2011)	A narrative or narrative world told through multiple unique but interlinked media platforms. Ideally each platform is its independent, with little to no replication of other platforms.

Source: Cliff (2017, p. 200).

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The Digital Marketing Power of Transmedia: Applying Keller's Brand Resonance Pyramid to the Marvel Cinematic Universe

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Introduction

Historically, brands are a fairly recent phenomenon in the entertainment industry. Just a few early films became sequels, and most remained largely as standalone stories developed without thought for subsequent extension or commercial exploitation beyond their initial releases. The product was also linear: a passive experience that consumers watched from start-to-middle-to-end with no personal interaction or influence.

Successful film promotion was geared towards the crucial first weekend of release by raising consumer awareness via a “push” approach: making consumers conscious about the product via direct communications methodologies such as advertising, or incentivising a cinema visit via promotions such as pre-screenings. Positive word-of-mouth (WOM) was crucial in raising awareness of a film to ensure its retention in cinemas beyond the opening weekend.

Major releases such as the early films in the *Batman* franchise enjoyed large advertising campaigns funded by high marketing budgets justified by large potential audiences. Low-budget or specialist films appealing to niche audiences were unable to justify high “marketing expenditures” and relied on word-of-mouth (WOM) generated by traditional film publicity techniques, i.e. pre-screenings promoted or two-for-one ticket offers.

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Such techniques were broad, slow and offered little scope for the precise targeting required by specialist films with narrow audiences.

This paper offers a practical and theoretical contribution to understanding development and marketing of rich intellectual properties (IP) in the entertainment industry, such as films, television programs, comics and games. The impact of digital will be specifically considered. Using a case study of the successful *Marvel* films, featuring characters such as *Iron Man*, *Thor* and *The Avengers*, the paper aims to show that current ideas about brand equity can be applied. Through a critical analysis of the success (or otherwise) of the marketing of such products, the paper utilizes a leading brand exponent –Kevin Keller– on the importance of Customer Brand Equity. Applying Keller’s (2009) ‘Brand Resonance Pyramid’ (BRP) to entertainment industry IP produces different, but complementary findings to the paradigm of product development, to which the BRP has been previously applied. How to market IP in the entertainment industry needs to be considered due to the rapid technological changes in how IP assets are created and accessed, and the changes in audience and associated buying behaviour where media IP products are driven by globalised audiences who engage digitally.

Reaching high levels of brand resonance at the apex of Keller’s pyramid means satisfying the key requirements of loyalty, attachment, community and engagement. Marvel films achieve this by drawing on the concept of Transmedia (Jenkins, 2006), which stresses a narrative thread that moves across multiple platforms, and where it offers an analysis that considers both IP content and the form. Marvel films sell characters with sets of narratives stretching back fifty years and that are globally consumed across a range of mediums. They have a ‘roadmap’ of over a dozen films planned for the next decade which will mutually reinforce each other’s brand equity to mitigate the costs and risk of developing new IP and the ability/need to exploit a franchise frequently across digital channels.

The paper will consider implications for theory and practise on how ideas of transmedia might enrich and inform the brand equity of other IP assets and suggests an agenda for future research.

The Changing Digital Entertainment Environment

The entertainment industry has experienced a high degree of “*creative destruction*” as a consequence of the digital process. Films, TV and gaming content is increasingly created and delivered online and is disrupting previously successful business models. The music industry has seen an established, viable and highly successful commercial model largely disappear and revenues dramatically reduced as consumers have increasingly sourced, downloaded and utilised content-often without paying.

Though a new revenue source for music has begun to appear via digital downloads or streaming, it is insecure and does not provide a certainty of business model or previously enjoyed levels of revenue. In Film TV and games, the downloading and distribution of content via effective peer-to-peer file sharing and increased broadband capability is forcing commercial operators to explore the ability to maintain and protect existing brands, and to identify new business models to create sustainable revenue streams in the face of profoundly changing consumer behaviour. “Digital Natives” or Millennials increasingly see mobile platforms as their first stop for entertainment products.

Developments in digital distribution channels

There have been three principal areas of development for the digital distribution of music, film and TV.

Copy protected downloads were initially favoured by music companies (Romer, 2002), but low level take up and complaints about technological incompatibility, added to paid content access limitations, reduced industry enthusiasm (Barnett, 2007). Subscription streaming music services are significantly showing more success with services like Apple Music and Spotify, which increase their market share. While these services are showing some Return on Investment (ROI) potential, revenues remain smaller and returns to artists less than encouraging (Dredge, 2015). The free at point of delivery streaming services like YouTube, and Spotify’s free version are more widely accessed, but as Dredge (2015) article shows, revenues for IP creators are normally small.

All this bodes poorly for a successful films and tv commercial distribution. The streaming services model experiences incompatibility and fragmented catalogues (Tennent, 2015), leading to customer

dissatisfaction. Even the free-to-use (in the UK) BBC iPlayer is struggling to accrue legitimate users after an initial strong release (England, 2015). In addition, there is little scope for brand or commercial extension.

Globalisation developments in the entertainment industry

Other factors are influencing the launch of entertainment IP, particularly films. Recently, the release timescales and theatrical “window” for a film (the time between showing it in cinemas and its distribution as DVD and, now, online platforms) has reduced significantly, as entertainment companies seek to reduce the risk of piracy and take advantage of the preferred mode of distribution and access increasingly favoured by young consumers.

The effects of piracy –enhanced by the ability to easily and quickly copy and disseminate film and TV programming digitally– and the benefits of simultaneous, global film releases to amortise marketing costs–are driving the convergence towards global releases.

In addition, the emergence and growth of major new markets like China reflect the ongoing movement away from the US as the prime market, simultaneous with the development and production of indigenous IP that has –and must have– international potential. Films designed by Disney and Sony for the Chinese market, or with a strong Chinese cultural element reflect the move into local language films and TV shows (Shone, 2014).

As Millennials, or “digital natives”, are more focused on consuming entertainment IP via digital platforms due to their preferred buying behaviour, the need to counter piracy and exploit the “long tail” revenues via a wider and more sustained distribution and product availability, means digital processes will further reinforce this approach. Netflix was projected to spend \$6bn on original content in 2017 (Goodfellow, 2017) and aims at building a subscriber base of 200 million in the near future (Duke, 2015). These developments mean that digital will become the key driver, and increasingly impact on the development of entertainment markets.

Transmedia

The marketing of the intangible brand facets, according to Shostack (1977), means the value offering will be defined by consensus realities and not by the external attributes of physical products. Therefore, the

value of a film will be mediated or defined by the consumer's experience (Priem, 2007).

Transmedia conceptually enables an analysis of IP via the exploration of what happens to "stories told across multiple media" (Jenkins, Purushotma, Weigel, Clinton, & Robison, 2009, p. 86). It is "a particular narrative structure that expands through both different languages (verbal, iconic, etc.) and media (cinema, comics, television, video games, etc.)" (Scolari, 2009, p. 587). Regarding the marketing of IP

it not only affects the text but also includes transformations in the production and consumption processes. Researchers and producers visualize *new business opportunities for the media market* as new generations of consumers develop the skills to deal with the flow of stories and become hunters of information from multiple sources (Scolari, 2009, p. 589; our emphasis).

The ability offered for consumers to digitally develop their own content for its incorporation into existing and future IP is key. By giving consumers the tools to produce User-Generated Content (UGC) they can directly develop, implement and contribute towards the development of IP interact and then influence its future direction.

The transmedia process is changing its form and the final outcome is highly uncertain and unpredictable. Past attempts have been made to combine linear and interactive entertainment forms, i.e. *Fightbox*, developed by BBC Worldwide to create a new and innovative entertainment format. However, the programme was not a success, with viewing figures hitting a high of only 56,000 and a low of 6,000 viewers, figures close to a zero rating in the BARB audience measurement system (The Guardian, 2003).

Consumer desire and demand to increasingly engage with and influence IP is incentivizing entertainment organisations to take advantage of the potential that transmedia theoretically offers, both creatively and commercially. However, commercial barriers such as organizational silos mean few are willing to risk losing money in their vertical (i.e. film) by investing in another vertical (e.g. online games).

The media industry therefore remains conservative. Major entertainment organizations like Disney and Warner Bros, whose operations cover all forms of mainstream media, remain focused on "franchises" but increasingly know that "transmedia" offers huge potential.

The Brand Resonance Pyramid and the entertainment industry

We propose the application of an existing theoretical framework relating to developing brands repurposed in a digital context, in order to provide a (marketing) template for evaluating and developing new forms of commercial models and IP for entertainment brands in the digital age. It is important to identify the key marketing components of successful transmedia properties.

Keller's (2009) original Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model theory sought to understand brand building in terms of consumer knowledge structures, different brand development stages and the branding objectives at each stage.

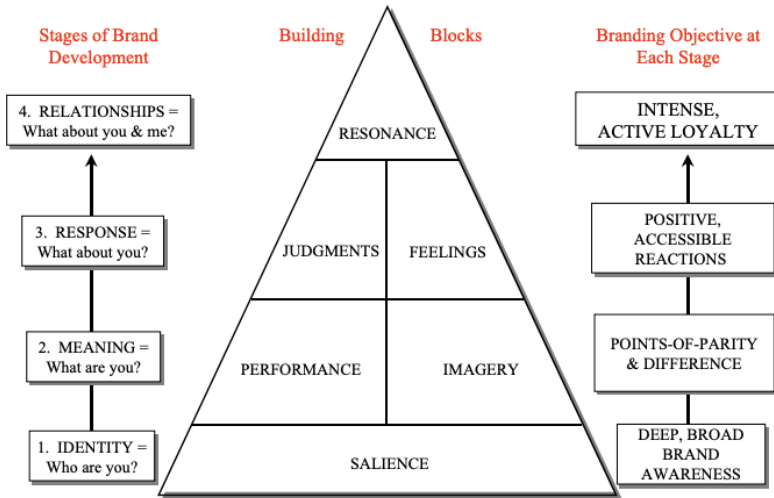
The model consisted of four ascending steps (2009, p. 143):

- i) Ensuring customer identification of the brand and cognitive association with a specific product class or customer need;
- ii) Establishing brand meaning totality in the minds of consumers by strategically linking tangible and intangible brand associations;
- iii) Eliciting appropriate customer responses in terms of brand-related judgement and feelings and;
- iv) Converting brand response to create an intense, active loyalty relationship between customers and the brand.

These four steps reflect a pyramid of six brand building blocks with customers, consisting of rational (tangible) facets like product characteristics that meet basic consumer "needs" and emotional (intangible) facets that create a "want" via incorporated social approval, personality and, brand values and experiences (Keller, 2009).

Resonance is the ultimate objective of the pyramid: developing a relationship whereby consumers feel "in-sync" with the brand. Genuine one-to-one marketing and interaction with individual customers is achievable via digital platforms and makes the pyramid an appropriate model for application to digital brand development and subsequent evaluation.

Figure 1 . Customer-Based Brand Equity
model pyramid (Keller, 2009)



Source: Diagram reproduced from Keller (2009, p. 144).

Each stage of the pyramid assists in identifying the new brand building drivers to do so in a digital entertainment context.

- 1 *Brand salience*: how easy/often “customers think of the brand under various purchase or consumption situations” (Keller, 2009, p. 143).

The key brand development and brand objective at this stage is to create an identity and deep awareness. Young consumers are increasingly consuming entertainment IP via digital platforms. Buying and consumption behaviours are also changing fundamentally: for example, television programming is downloaded and watched later at a time of personal convenience.

Digital is also driving distribution saliently. Digital platforms, such as Netflix with films, are increasingly the preferred mode of access for entertainment IP a development that is presenting challenges in relation to illegal purchase and consumption patterns, such as accessing IP for free (Duke, 2015).

Developing, maintaining and retaining brand control and keeping salience across multiple platforms is a key challenge.

- 2 *Brand performance*: how well is the product or service meeting the functional needs of the consumer (Keller, 2009, p. 143).

The move by the games industry towards online –and in particular– mobile gaming reflects this process. It also presents an opportunity to exploit *The Long Tail* by maintaining product availability indefinitely and to generate revenues over extended periods. The functional needs of both consumers and developers of IP are being affected by consumer preference to develop and influence IP via user-generated content (UGC) or to promote it via social media. The brand development objectives of entertainment companies involve retaining control of their IP identifying and building revenue streams whilst still satisfying the needs of the consumer in the digital era.

- 3 *Brand imagery*: “the extrinsic properties of the product of service” and how the brand “meets customer’s psychological or social needs” (Keller, 2009, p. 143).

The pyramids objectives include performance and imagery stages to create meaning and establish points-of-difference (PoD). The brand’s associations must be meaningful to consumers and achieve differentiation to create preference. Digital is increasingly the focus for brand development, promotion and status for the millennial target audience.

- 4 *Brand judgements*: “focus on customers’ own personal opinions and evaluations” (Keller, 2009, p. 143).

The growth and power of eWOM is hugely influencing brand judgements. Consumer ability to congregate in communities to discuss, state preference and create content via user-generate content is profoundly affecting the creative direction of storytelling and development of associated content.

eWOM is defined by Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh and Gremler (2004) as “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet” (2004, p. 39). Targeting Communities or Influencers is increasingly the preferred communications medium for entertainment marketers via effective eWOM, to rapidly disseminate positive opinion digitally.

- 5 *Brand feelings*: what “are customers’ emotional responses and reactions with respect to the brand”? (Keller, 2009, p. 143).

The key brand development objectives at the judgement and feelings stage are to induce a (positive) response from consumers and associated accessible reactions. Digital interactivity is increasingly enabling entertainment marketers to achieve this, whilst also presenting challenges in controlling and managing brand attributes and perceptions regarding the target audience.

- 6 *Brand resonance*: the nature of brand relationship customers have and the extent they feel “in-sync” with it (Keller, 2009, p. 144).

The key objective of the pyramid is to achieve brand resonance to reflect psychological depth and activity levels engendered by associated customer loyalty. Achieving resonance means companies can build symbiotic relationships with consumers and intense active loyalty via customer interactivity and engagement digitally.

Entertainment products are inherently emotional and involve “escapism” and the “suspension of disbelief”. If resonance is achieved, it can potentially extend a brand into more product and media categories to reduce costs and strategic risk.

As Keller outlines, certain product categories potentially allow for more resonance due to higher interest and activity levels. Entertainment brands such as *Marvel*, with large followings, are synonymous with this, and digital is enhancing and further enabling this process to realise increased resonance levels.

New forms of (digital) creation, distribution, delivery and consumption of entertainment is making insightful analysis, evaluation and understanding of the relationship such consumer groups have with essential digital entertainment brands.

Extending the Brand Pyramid: Developing Resonance in a Digital Context

The amortisation of a brand by developing digital assets across emerging and different platforms means that transmedia conceptually presents a format that potentially offers new ways of engaging the core audience with entertainment IP and increase brand resonance.

The resonance component of the pyramid is increasingly important, given the digitally orientated behaviour of the core entertainment audience and its preference for accessing content digitally. It also provides a relevant model to identify and evaluate future success factors in the digital era, in relation to the specific categories that resonance constitutes. These are:

i) *Behavioural loyalty*

Behavioural loyalty relates to repeated purchases and the amount or brand share of category volume or “share of category requirements”: “how often and how much do customers purchase a brand?” (Keller, 2009, p. 145). Repeated brand purchases and of associated goods are central to the commercial success of entertainment organizations today.

Transmedia, brand development and exploitation across additional platforms offers major opportunities for entertainment companies to generate repeat purchases and value by extending the brand across new platforms, via digital’s ability to increase personal attachment through interactivity, content creation and personal influence –key requirements to elevate resonance.

ii) *Attitudinal attachment*

Creating greater loyalty also requires deeper attitudinal attachment that is generated by developing marketing products that fully satisfy consumer needs. Participating in digital communities or developing user-generated content (UGC) are pertinent examples. The loyalty, affiliation and devotion inherent in entertainment brand franchises such as *Star Wars* are central to ongoing brand investment. By demonstrating longevity and by being adopted by both older and emerging consumers means realising economies unavailable to new franchises. Digital engagement with a brand franchise reinforces loyalty via closer and deeper engagement.

iii) *Sense of community*

Identification with a brand community reflects an important social phenomenon: the feeling of “kinship or affiliation with [others] associated with [a] brand” (Keller, 2009, p. 145). These connections increasingly occur online around digital communities who engage, interact, discuss and disseminate views and opinion globally as never before.

The audience developed over time for brands like *Star Trek* via *Trekkies* is manifested online in the context of communities. The ability to meet, interact, influence and contribute to a brand in real-time significantly enhances the ability to lock customers to the franchise.

The time and energy devoted by true *Batman* aficionados is immense and provides a powerful form of loyalty and promotion for the brand. eWOM promulgates this effect, and speed of diffusion exaggerates this attribute. The success of the “*Why So Serious*” transmedia campaign that went viral for *Batman: The Dark Knight* demonstrates the power and importance of a community for the effective marketing of a film franchise.

iv) *Active engagement*

The stronger sense of community among fan-bases engenders real loyalty to a brand and favourable intentions. This reflects Keller assertion that strong affirmation of brand loyalty comes when customers invest time, energy, money and other resources in the brand beyond simple purchases (2009, p. 145).

Though interaction was possible in the pre-digital age in a very limited form, the ubiquity of digital devices such as mobiles has made interaction between consumers more prevalent and profound. As the Brand Resonance Pyramid outlines, customers can now invest greater time and personal resources beyond that expended during consumption previously. Digital communications and communities offer club membership, regular updates, engagement via ongoing dialogues with fellow aficionados and the potential to act as brand ambassadors.

A Transmedia Case Study to Demonstrate the Impact of Brand Resonance: The Marvel Universe

The Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) describes a range of media offerings. The content originated from a range of comics published by Marvel since the early 1960s. Since the first appearance of the *Fantastic Four*, the range of outputs has included not just comics and films, but books, records, magazine, clothes and animated and live action television content. While this vast range of content forms a backdrop to the analysis of transmedia as a way of developing and cross promoting products, forthcoming analysis focuses on the current and planned MCU, initiated by the *Iron Man* release in 2008.

MCU sought to develop a single coherent and integrated universe. The initial sixteen movies featured Marvel characters but little significant incentives to create any inter-textual or transmedia integration. While these IP were used to successfully spin-off tie-in products, they did little to develop an audience's awareness of the other characters in the Marvel universe (Johnson, 2012). However, the success of the movies produced in the early 2000s gave Marvel the financial position to directly control production with editorial oversight from the comic book managers (Johnson, 2012).

The movies demonstrated an orchestration of plot and characters across individual movies similar to the published comics and previous iterations of superhero movies. For example, *The Avengers* (2012) featured characters Thor, Hulk, Captain America and Iron Man, each of whom had been the lead in a film in the preceding three years. The increasingly inter-dependent plotting established a continuity and an inter-textual linkage that created "world building" and the unfolding of media franchises across many different media (Jenkins, 2006). Recent Marvel movies demonstrate strong facets of Universe building, such as *Guardians of the Galaxy* releases, set on planets far from Earth, yet featuring characters, motivations and events in the same 'universe' as in the other Marvel movies.

The Marvel Road Map

This all-encompassing universe of Marvel continuity is fuelled by an accelerating rate of releases. However, the IP is being developed across other platforms. More than fifty episodes of live action television shows, animated television episodes and comics featuring Marvel Universe characters have been already developed.

Keller (1993) considers customer-based brand equity to be the "differential effect that a consumer's knowledge about a brand has on their response to marketing for that brand" (1993, p. 8). For the MCU, this relies on the recognition of the principal protagonists i.e. the hero or villain of any particular treatment.

Marvel IP's objective is to achieve brand equity not just via brand facts but also through "thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences" (Keller, 2009, p. 143). For this to happen, a number of brand pyramid steps need to be achieved. In the following application of the pyramid, particular attention will be paid to the transmedia characteristics of the

Marvel Cinematic Universe, to highlight the particular value of a transmedia approach to the development of Customer Brand Equity in potential audiences for media content.

The Marvel Cinema Universe and User Generated Content

Marvel comics have a well-established cannon of user-generated content ranging from independently published comics fanzines, such as *The Comi-collector* (Bails, 1965), to the annual ComiCon in San Diego, where major film releases are scheduled (Kamen, 2015).

Marvel Studios have promoted the importance of user-generated content in a range of innovative ways. The background stories that integrate the different characters, assembled in *The Avengers*, was released as a digital comic. Each character's origin was drawn by a fan, who had been offered the opportunity to create the art in a competition, using digital authoring tools (Farooq, 2015). This generated interest in the publication even before the release of inter-textual stories that drew together characters from different IP. Fans were able to create origins which offered an easy entry point to any consumers. The winners were announced at ComicCon 2015 in San Diego.

Johnson analysed the value of fans and their world view (a form of virtual user generated content) and found that the existence of fans validated Marvel Studios' expertise in managing the IP of the Marvel Cinema Universe, meaning they were able to leverage this whilst retaining close control of the films (Johnson, 2012).

The MCU case shows how transmedia material is highly suited to marketing high value digital IP by analysing its characteristics in relation to marketing and the use of Keller's Brand Resonance Pyramid.

The Brand Resonance Pyramid builds on Keller's earlier Customer-Based Brand Equity Model, which considered customer-based brand equity to be the: "differential effect that a consumer's knowledge about a brand has on their response to marketing for that brand" (Keller, 1993, p. 8). For the MCU, this relies initially on the recognition of the principal protagonists of any particular treatment. The CBBE consists of six components: salience, performance, imagery, judgments, feelings and resonance.

It is the final pyramid part, Resonance, that is potentially the most relevant for transmedia. For Marvel IP to achieve brand equity and not just "the facts about the brand –but also the thoughts, feelings, perceptions,

images, experiences” a number of steps need to be achieved, as outlined in the brand resonance pyramid. In this application of the pyramid, particular attention will be paid to the transmedia characteristics of the Marvel Cinematic Universe to highlight the particular value of a transmedia approach for the development of Customer Brand Equity in potential audiences for media content.

Brand Resonance

The four elements of the brand “resonance” component of the brand pyramid are all directly related to the characteristics of transmedia and the digital landscape. Consequently, “resonance” offers a specific sub-framework to evaluate core components of transmedia development and marketing.

i) *Loyalty*

The rapidly rising cost and risk associated with entertainment IP development makes longevity a key factor in the success of “universes”.

Behavioural loyalty relates to repeated purchases and the amount of share of category volume a brand enjoys. To be profitable, a brand must be bought often and in volume to generate Customer-Lifetime Value (CLV).

By locking consumers into a brand, via digital technology/platforms, communications and communities transmedia offers the possibility of ongoing dialogue and interaction with a brand/IP

ii) *Attitudinal attachment*

Behavioural loyalty is necessary but not sufficient for resonance to occur. Consumers need to buy because of strong personal attachment, and not just to satisfy a basic “need”. A brand needs to be viewed as special, and consumers need a positive “attitude” towards it.

Technology and transmedia “worlds” are facilitating dynamic brand communities, one-to-one immersion and the potential to contribute towards a brand via UGC.

iii) *Sense of Community*

Identification with a brand community may reflect an important social phenomenon whereby consumers feel kinship or affiliation with other people associated with the brand. Connections may involve fellow brand users, consumers or company representatives.

Increasingly, these occur online. Digital is enabling large, global communities coalescing around brand franchises and fan-bases that connect consumers and assist in the development of “collective intelligences” or knowledge (brand) spaces. These will potentially be the source of new, emergent and dynamic UGC.

iv) *Active Engagement*

Brand affirmation loyalty is strongest when customers invest time, energy, money into the brand beyond just consumption –joining a club, receiving product updates or engaging in exchanges with community members. Digital communities are providing the means to really do this.

Marvel fans want not just to experience or purchase a brand, they want to participate, collaborate and contribute towards its development. Digital is the means of doing this; transmedia IP is the outcome.

Table 1. Applying Keller’s Brand Resonance Pyramid to the Marvel Cinematic Universe

Brand Salience
Stage 1: Identity: who are you
• What type of heroes/characters do you like? • Psychological, Anti-Authority, Anti-Hero, Corporate or “Underdog”
Branding objective: Deep broad brand awareness
• Character and brand recognition • Extend across platforms • Comic association • Link different characters • Migrate movies to comics, TV, games and other digital content
TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:
• Brand platform extension • Storyworld immersion –move into “fourth space” • Link and contribute to multiple storylines • Expand stories and develop new content characters
Keller’s Sub-Dimensions:
CATEGORY IDENTIFICATION, NEEDS SATISFIED
• Films, TV, Games Print, Digital/Online series • “Got to have ‘em all” • Completeness: “collectors museum” • Customer escapism

Brand Performance (rational)

Stage 2: Meaning: what are you?

- Character association
- Origin story
- Sequel linkage
- “Crossovers”

Branding objective: points of parity/difference

- Purchase levels
- Consumer “needs” satisfaction
- Awareness

TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:

- Brand, immersive engagement
- Community membership
- Participation and collaboration
- Loyalty program

Keller’s Sub-Dimensions:

PRIMARY CHARACTERISTICS & SECONDARY FEATURES, PRODUCT RELIABILITY, DURABILITY & SERVICE ABILITY, SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, EMPATHY, STYLE & DESIGN, PRICE

- Well-made films
- “Outside Directors”
- Creative Controllers
- Longevity
- Value

Brand Imagery (emotional)

Stage 2: Meaning: what are you?

- What aspects of the IP are you familiar with?
- What aspects are different from previous history, situations, usage?

Branding objective: points of parity/difference

- Brand name and attribute communication
- Distinctive appearance
- Consistency

TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:

- Do you want back-story?
- Origin re-tellings
- More about the characters

Keller’s Sub-Dimensions:

USER PROFILES, PURCHASE & USAGE SITUATIONS, PERSONALITY & VALUES, HISTORY, HERITAGE, EXPERIENCES

User created images

Brand Judgements (rational)

Stage 3: Response: what about you?

- Do previous movies and IP reassure you content will be high quality/credible?
- Do you care about the characters or the plot?
- How do you feel about the movie and characters?
- What story elements do you relate to?

Branding objective: positive accessible reactions

- Satisfies Marvel consumer “needs”
- Positive feedback
- Ongoing engagement
- Immersive experiences

TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:

- Immersion and participation
- Stories continue in comics, TV and other movies
- Brand extension into digital space
- Loyal fans demonstrate continuing resonance

Keller's sub dimensions:

QUALITY, CREDIBILITY, CONSIDERATION, SUPERIORITY

Different from other competitors and iterations?

Brand integrity

Positive eWOM

Brand Feelings (emotional)

Stage 3: Response: what about you?

- How do you feel about the movie?
- How do you feel about the characters?
- What story elements do you relate to?

Branding objective: positive accessible reactions

- Is a “want” or desire being created?
- Brand community association
- Advocators and ambassadors
- Personal connection with IP

TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:

- Will consumers join the “community”?
- Will they want to participate and co-create?
- Stories followed in comics, on TV, or in other movies?
- Consumers demonstrate empathy and “brand attachment”
- Community affiliation

Keller’s Sub-Dimensions:

WARMTH, FUN, EXCITEMENT, SECURITY, SOCIAL APPROVAL, SELF-RESPECT

- Social belonging
- Positive emotions
- The “feel good” factor
- Buzz
- Connection with peers
- “Sense of belonging”

Brand Resonance

Stage 4: Relationships: what about you & me?

- Do you share your excitement with peers?
- Do you follow the story between films in comics/games?
- Do you connect with the brand and fans via social media?
- Brands events, i.e. ComicCon

Branding objective: intense active loyalty

- Ready to share and act as advocate for the movie
- Extend market/brand lifecycles
- Brand/IP extensions
- Consumer data

TRANSMEDIA ELEMENTS:

- Digital “communities”
- Content co-creation
- Meet/interact with new fans
- Opinion sharing
- “Internal” (brand) marketing

Keller’s Sub-Dimensions:

LOYALTY, ATTACHMENT, COMMUNITY, ENGAGEMENT

- Ongoing commitment
- Brand advocates/ “Influencers”
- Online participation
- Collaboration and participation
- The Marvel “Tribe”

Fans to super-fans

Source: Own elaboration based on the Sub-dimensions of brand building blocks (Keller, 2009), Building Strong Brands in a Modern Communications Environment, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, Vol. 15, num. 2-3, pp. 139-155.

Conclusion and Future Research

The preceding analysis demonstrates the power and potential of digital marketing for an entertainment franchise in previously obtainable ways. Keller's Brand Pyramid offers a theoretical framework for the evaluation of potential transmedia IP and achieving brand resonance.

However, further research is needed in what is a rapidly developing and evolving context.

How do consumers influence an entertainment brand, precisely in a digital context: how can digital brand equity be created?

Via what digital outlets and communications do consumers prefer to engage with entertainment products and how can their inputs through these platforms exert influence on the IP?

How can brand resonance and associated relationships be deepened and enhanced going forward to create enhanced "loyalty" towards both major and niche franchises by exploiting the digital process?

How can transmedia storytelling be most effectively used across a range of digital platforms to increase IP brand resonance?

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