


Evolution of Spanish Transmedia Teen Series: The Case of RTVE's PlayZ

Evolución de las series juveniles transmedia en España: el caso de PlayZ de RTVE



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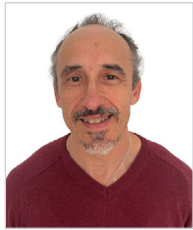
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Abstract:

In recent years, the ways in which series are consumed have changed, mainly because young audiences dedicate a large part of their time to the use of social networks and to the viewing of audiovisual content but do not feel represented in traditional products. In this context, Spanish public television (RTVE) has shown a strong commitment to young people and an interest in seeking solutions to attract this segment in digital narratives. This article aims to examine the transmedia strategy of the PlayZ series –RTVE's digital channel of young content– to determine whether public television responds to adaptations in the format and content that this audience demands. The main results of the study include the suitability of the media and formats used by the platform, as well as the integration of influencers in the artistic team. However, PlayZ has not opted for actions that promote user-generated content. Additionally, the platform has evolved, as its vocation of public service has been prioritized in its series and its transmedia strategy.

Keywords:

TV series; young people; transmedia narratives; public television; digital narratives.

Resumen:

En los últimos años se está produciendo un cambio en las formas de consumo de las series debido, especialmente, a una audiencia joven que dedica gran parte de su tiempo al uso de las redes sociales y al visionado de contenidos audiovisuales, pero que no se siente representada en los productos tradicionales. En este contexto, la televisión pública española (RTVE) ha manifestado un fuerte compromiso con los más jóvenes, así como su interés por buscar en las narrativas digitales la solución para atraer a este segmento. Este artículo nace con el objetivo de estudiar la estrategia transmedia de las series de PlayZ –canal digital de contenido joven de RTVE– para analizar si la televisión pública está respondiendo a la adaptación en formato y contenido que demanda esta audiencia. Entre los principales resultados del estudio cabe destacar la idoneidad de los medios y formatos empleados por la plataforma, así como de la integración de influencers en el equipo artístico. Sin embargo, PlayZ, no ha apostado por acciones que fomenten el contenido generado por el usuario. Además, se puede apreciar una evolución en la plataforma, donde se ha priorizado su vocación de servicio público en sus series y su estrategia transmedia.

Palabras clave:

Series de televisión; transmedia; jóvenes; televisión pública; narrativas digitales.

1. Introduction

1.1. Digital audiovisual entertainment and young people

One of the great beneficiaries of the change in consumer behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic was OTT (*over-the-top*) services (PwC, 2023). In fact, in Spain, the consumption of audiovisual content is one of the ways in which Spaniards most often engage with digital technologies (Fundación Telefónica, 2023). Relatedly, the consumption of digital content through platforms has risen to the detriment of traditional linear television consumption. In fact, traditional television consumption has decreased among all age groups, especially among young people (11% compared with 2022) and adults aged 25 to 44 years (12% compared with 2022) (Barlovento Comunicación, 2023). At the same time, 73.4% of internet users in Spain use connected televisions to consume online content (Fundación Telefónica, 2023).

This is especially interesting for young Spaniards, for whom watching television or series on platforms is the second most popular leisure activity (INJUVE, 2021). In fact, 56.4% of young people between 15 and 19 years old are subscribed to an audiovisual content platform, a percentage that corresponded to 52% in 2019 (Ministry of Culture, 2019; 2022), and 89.6% view online multimedia content, a figure higher than those of the other age groups (Fundación Telefónica, 2023). Digital leisure platforms “have become identity references for youth” (INJUVE, 2021: 165).

In this context, networks and platforms are trying to adapt to young audiences (Azurmendi, 2018); these efforts include teen series, which have experienced a boom in Spain in recent years (Gil-Quintana and Gil -Tevar, 2020). These series are characterized by the fact that they tell the story of an adolescent or a group of adolescents during their high school years and have a strong dramatic cut that, in recent years, is being hybridized to other genres (Masanet and Fedele, 2019). Another relevant feature of teen series is their transmedia nature (Schanke, 2019), which allows “the development of characters in an alternative way” and the immersion of the public in the story, using transmedia as a “connector between the stories and their dissemination on the young audiences [...] The way of telling stories changes and is conditioned to the present” (Mateos-Pérez, 2021: 154).

Relatedly, several authors have been rethinking the concept of “television” to very different screens and formats (Bengtsson et al., 2018; Schanke, 2019). Time, space and broadcasters no longer make up the television experience (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019), reaching a “liquid television” (Quintas-Froufe and González-Neira, 2016). Mateos-Pérez (2021), in his studies on *SKAM Spain* (Movistar +, 2018-2020) and *Merlí* (TV3, 2015-2018), concluded that transmedia stories help “to develop characters in an alternative way and allow the public a more immersive deep in history [...] In these new proposals, the transmedia form is used as a connector between the stories and their diffusion on young audiences [...] The way of telling stories changes and is conditioned to the present”(p.154). Furthermore, Lacalle et al. (2024) highlighted as an example of interactivity in Spain the teen series *UPA Next* (Atresmedia, 2022-), in which users could access the social profiles of the protagonists, as well as a virtual Academy in the metaverse and the website of the dance school where the series takes place. In this sense, the first series created by Instagram Spain –*Close Friends Forever* (Instagram, 2024)– stands out, as it stars the content creator Iker Unzu (Meta, 2024). However, this work examines these transmedia teen series in the context of public television, as we will discuss in detail later.

1.2. Series and transmedia

As Scolari (2019) noted, the introduction, development and expansion of the concept of transmedia (Kinder, 1991; Jenkins, 2006; Scolari, 2013), from the early 1990s to the present, has had its own life cycle. The concept of transmedia narratives was used to label and name the convergence of media (Jenkins, 2006), and it quickly became a “magic word” with a great impact in the academic and professional sphere (Scolari, 2019: 71). Jenkins (2003), in his well-known *MIT Technology Review* article, “christened” the term as follows:

In the ideal form of transmedia storytelling, each medium does what it does best so that a story might be introduced in a film, expanded through television, novels, and comics, and its world might be explored and experienced through game play. Each franchise entry needs to be self-contained enough to enable autonomous consumption (Jenkins, 2003).

Later, the author reflected on participation (Jenkins, 2006) and expanded his concept by indicating that transmedia should be a “*unified and coordinated entertainment experience*” (Jenkins, 2009) referring, among other issues, to the multiplicity of stories thanks to fans. The following clarification can be obtained from a current edition of a narrative dictionary:

There are various interpretations of both the origin and the meaning of the term transmedia [...] The main characteristic of transmedia in the field of communication is dissemination through various media [...] The transmedia practice emphasizes the activity of users and their involvement in the narratives through the media (Vílches, 2021: 730-731).

In a study of the historical journey of the term, Establés and Grijalba de la Calle indicated that transmediality is currently related mainly to “the breakdown of linearity, with the segmentation of audiences and interaction” (2022: 18).

A clear example of this is the case of the Norwegian teen series *SKAM* (NRK, 2015-2017) (Bengtsson et al., 2018; Schanke, 2019). This fiction was distributed (in a complementary way) on its website, on Instagram, and on the country’s public television, NRK, and became a global phenomenon (Schanke, 2019). Additionally, in *SKAM*, Instagram messages, SMS conversations and YouTube clips were also considered parts of the series that included fragments of the story that could be consumed only in those formats (Bengtsson et al., 2018). Bengtsson et al. (2018) employed different *focus groups* in Norway to evaluate the success of a series that was able to reward the audience when adolescents invested time and effort in sharing, discussing and decoding the texts of different platforms (Schanke, 2019). The participants highlighted the sensation of reality that was appreciated by being able to see the series in real time, as well as the flexibility and ability to control the viewing offered by digital platforms and the short duration of the content, fostering discussion in the community and the community. motivation to update platforms (Bengtsson et al., 2018).

In Spain, numerous studies have analysed transmedia series (Costa and Piñero, 2012; Cascajosa, 2016; Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020; Villén and Ruiz del Olmo, 2020), the relationship between transmedia and the viewer, as well as the active participation of the audience (Torregrosa-Carmona and Rodríguez-Gómez, 2017; Miranda and Figuero, 2016; Rubio Jordán, 2021), and even the proposal of methodologies and models to analyse the transmedia strategy of television series (Guerrero-Pico, 2014; Formoso, 2015). To analyse the relationship between transmedia and viewer engagement, we have worked with methods based on questionnaires or *focus groups* for series followers (Torregrosa-Carmona and Rodríguez-Gómez, 2017) or in the analysis of user-generated content (UGC), which allows us to explain the role of the *fan* in a transmedia

series (Miranda and Figuero, 2016). Other investigations have focused on analysing or categorizing the different strategies used to expand the universe of the series (Tur-Viñes and Rodríguez Ferrándiz, 2014; Formoso, 2015; García-Vega and de la Fuente, 2022).

In Spain, the protagonists of teen series increasingly have profiles on social networks that provide the content of any adolescent of this age (García-Muñoz and Fedele, 2011) and that promote debates and the participatory culture of this segment of the population (Gil-Quintana and Gil-Tévar, 2020). These profiles have become a new space for investigating the audiovisual representations of youth (Villén and Ruiz del Olmo, 2020). In fact, “86% of internet users from 12 to 74 years old use social networks” (IAB, 2024:75). However, the users who spend the most time online are young people from 12 to 34 years old (IAB, 2023). WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube are the most commonly used social networks in Spain, and Telegram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest are the social networks have continued to grow in 2023 vs. 2022, with TikTok being the one that has grown the most rapidly (IAB, 2023). Additionally, YouTube is no longer the platform in which the highest volume of views is consumed, since TikTok has surpassed it, with a growth of 250% between 2020 and 2021 (IAB, 2022); moreover, 82.4% of young Spaniards are also content creators, especially on Instagram (68.2%) and TikTok (35.5%) (Centro Reina Sofía and FAD, 2022).

Undoubtedly, these trends highlight significant changes in the audiovisual consumption of young people. This, added to the increase in the use of social networks and the perception of this segment of the population that television series adapted to their habits are not created, has contributed to the fact that Radio Televisión Española (RTVE), as a public service channel, has proposed the creation of content adapted for and aimed at young audiences.

1.3. *Transmedia and public television: RTVE and its commitment to young people through PlayZ*

In recent years, national public television has opted to develop transmedia strategies for its television series, which have been analysed by several authors (Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster, 2018). In fact, *Águila Roja* (RTVE, 2009-2016) was one of the first Spanish series for which the story was expanded to multiple platforms, and the subject has already been addressed from an academic perspective (Costa and Piñero, 2012; Guerrero-Pico, 2014). On the other hand, the historical fiction *El Ministerio del Tiempo* has been examined in various studies (Rodríguez-Mateos and Hernández-Pérez, 2015; Cascajosa, 2016; Miranda and Figuero, 2016; Scolari and Establés, 2017; Torregrosa-Carmona and Rodríguez -Gómez, 2017; Miranda-Galbe et al., 2021). The series can be classified as a success if it is measured as a product “oriented to the new model of social television” (Cascajosa, 2016: 63). To examine the relationships of users with their social networks, especially with Twitter, Rodríguez-Mateos and Hernández-Pérez (2015) analysed their transmedia through the data of the *tweets* that included the most popular *hashtags* during the broadcasts of the episodes. The work of Azurmendi (2018) is also relevant because they took the series (along with other transmedia products of European public TV in France, Germany and the United Kingdom) as an example of the work that public televisions are doing to reconnect with their young audiences through the transmedia. According to this author, transmedia narratives are best received by audiences through entertainment (Azurmendi, 2018). Another case that merits study is the EITB series *Go! Azen* (EITB, 2009-), with works that, through case methodology and interviews, analyse the impact of its mobile app (Larrondo-Ureta et al., 2020) and others that, from an educative perspective, define it as a

pedagogical resource for the young population due to the visibility of their values and diversity in their plots (Junguitu-Angulo and Osuna-Acedo, 2023).

Like this work, many of these investigations have the common denominator of young people and their consumption. The work on *Go! Azen* concluded that one of the main challenges in the field of the media in its role as a public service is that of “adapting the mentality about television in relation to young people and about the associated processes of audience measurement, consumption and investment in programs and products”. (Larrondo-Ureta et al., 2020: 2020:1452).

If we focus on RTVE, Law 17/2006, in Article 25, states that the Corporation must pay special attention to children and youth (BOE, 2006, Art. 25). However, in 2023, Mediaset, Atresmedia and YouTube ranked above RTVE in “aggregate audiovisual share”, which allows us to compare traditional television channels with platforms (Barlovento, 2023). Thus, while YouTube had an aggregate audiovisual share of 11.7% and 37.8% among young people aged 18 to 24, that of RTVE was 11.2% (Barlovento, 2023). In fact, young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are the segment of the population that perceives the least variety in RTVE’s content and those that consume the least of its channels, with 30.8% of regular viewers compared with 73.5% of viewers common in people aged 65 or over (CMNC, 2023). This has been a challenge for RTVE, which has been forced to learn about and adapt to the consumption behaviours of young people, which differ greatly from those of the rest of its audience (Segarra-Saavedra, 2018). Thus, one of the main objectives of Spanish public television is to generate native digital content focused on young audiences through the PlayZ platform (RTVE Commission, 2020).

In addition to RTVE’s interest in attracting young audiences and the rise of transmedia, a third factor should be mentioned; specifically, public television was digitized in the early years of the 21st century as a bid to extend their content through online strategies (Medina and Ojer, 2010). This was one of the reasons for Law 17/2006, of June 5, on state-owned radio and television, which was “inevitable in a context of technological development” (BOE, 2006, Preamble). In 2008, when RTVE began to innovate in its digital media in a competitive way, drawing inspiration from other public television networks such as the BBC (Medina and Ojer, 2010). In this context, the *RTVE Lab* was born in 2011 as a media laboratory, that is, a project with the function of researching, experimenting with and developing technological innovations with the aim of being up-to-date with new ways of telling stories at the rhythm of the different media (Subires, 2019).

PlayZ was originally developed as a free platform and then was expanded through social networks, focused on an audience of people between 13 and 24 years old; an individual in this age group watches little conventional television but is a “great consumer of audiovisual content outside of traditional distribution channels” (González Saavedra, 2020: 8). However, the audience of PlayZ is not clearly stated, and some content is consumed by people over 35 years old (Casado et al., 2023). In fact, knowledge of the PlayZ platform is 25.6%, and although young people know about it more than adults aged 30 to 35 years old do, this segment of the population consumes it more (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023a). Similarly, Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al. (2023a) reported that 24.4% of young people feel little reflected in the contents of PlayZ, while 20.6% somewhat and 21.6% highly reflected (the remaining 33% N/A).

PlayZ provides a combination of programs developed by *influencers*, *webdocs*, teen series with the language, format and themes typically consumed by the youngest audience and the incorporation of *influencers* in distributions (Segarra-Saavedra, 2018); thus, an exchange of the public between social networks and the platform is established (Rodríguez-Martelo and

Maroto, 2022). The appearance of *influencers* in the content of PlayZ generates interest and a feeling of belonging among young people, causing this audience to feel attracted to the platform and want to interact through their social networks (Maroto and Rodríguez-Martelo, 2019). In fact, after friends, family and acquaintances, *influencers* have the social profiles that social network users follow the most: 53% follow someone, a figure that increases to 78% in young people between 12 and 17 years old (IAB, 2022).

The series created by PlayZ tend to be carried out by young people, who frequently use their mobile phones, and address themes typical of this age (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023a). Additionally, PlayZ series are broadcast on the platform but follow a liquid distribution strategy, as the episodes can also be viewed in full on YouTube (García et al., 2021). However, although PlayZ's strategy is aimed at creating original youth content, on YouTube, it increasingly has less weight than original fiction does, and a greater balance with nonfiction is being established (García et al., 2021).

In short, the line that separates screens and content seems to be more blurred than ever (Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020), so characters have to explore the limits between reality and fiction. A series is increasingly fleeting in our conversations and, even in our memory (Neira, 2020), and the need to keep an engaged and participative audience can find a solution in a transmedia strategy that generates characters with whom the viewer can be identified and that they are part of a story that extends beyond traditional television (Villén and Ruiz del Olmo, 2020).

This study explores the transmedia strategies used in PlayZ's teen fiction series to determine whether public television responds to adaptations in the format and content demanded by the youngest. From this, we derive the general objective of the research GO (General Objective): to study how public television responds to changes in the consumption of young people through its fiction series.

Some studies have focused on isolated PlayZ series (Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020; Vázquez-Herrero, et al., 2019); others have focused on the platform's strategy beyond its fictional content (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023a; García et al., 2021). However, few studies have investigated X-rays of fictional channel production since its inception (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023b). Thus, with the idea of continuing to expand the study of this platform, the following specific objectives are proposed:

SO1: Identify the characteristic features of the transmedia strategy of PlayZ's teen series.

SO2: Detect and analyse the trends in the evolution of the transmedia content of the selected PlayZ teen series.

2. Methodology

To meet these objectives, we utilized a qualitative methodology, which was based on an analysis of the structure of transmedia narratives, following the proposal of García and Heredero (2015). The common thread of this proposal is the narrative universe of a series to identify the different elements that compose it (in the different media) and the relationship that is created between them. In this model, different phases are established to analyse the structure of transmedia narratives. First, the macrohistory (narrative base of transmedia) and its extensions must be identified and analysed, understood as the rest of the pieces that are part of the universe of fiction (Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster, 2018). Afterwards, the entire transmedia universe is

mapped, and a chronological line is defined with the fictional contents that follow the temporal space of the narrative diegesis of the series.

García and Heredero (2015) propose the following elements to consider in the mapping of a transmedia universe: (1) identification of the extension; (2) the medium in which it is disseminated; (3) the target audiences and role of those audiences, detailed in Annex 1 according to the classification of Hernández and Grandío (2011) and Guerrero-Pico (2014); (4) the parts into which each extension is divided; (5) the narrative elements that participate in the extension (intervening characters, space and time); (6) the function of extension in history; and (7) the official content/user-generated content (UGC).

The model proposed by García and Heredero (2015) was modified in the following ways:

- In this analysis, in addition to the diegetic contents, the nonfictional contents of the series were incorporated, as has been done in other transmedia analyses, such as *La Peste* (Hernández, 2019).
- This means that although the chronology of the fictional elements is analysed, a temporal graph is not included since the nondiegetic elements cannot be incorporated.
- In addition to the medium, the format in which the expansion is carried out was included in the analysis, as already suggested by other studies on transmedia (Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster, 2018; Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023b)
- In the classification of audience roles (Annex 1), playful role/player was added (Guerrero-Pico, 2014).
- The interactions in transmedia social profiles are also indicated in the model. Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra (2020) examined audiences and interactions in social profiles by analysing the date, type of publication, content, number of views generated, number of reactions, number of comments and number of times the content is shared. Moreover, the interactions received in each of the social profiles of the strategy are analysed on the basis of the following data: number of followers, number of publications and average number of likes.
- To analyse the functions of the extension of macrohistory (point 6 of the mapping), we worked on the classification of Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) from the *touchpoints* of Askwith (2007), which has already been used in other analyses of fiction transmedia (Pardo-Larrosa and Martínez-Cano, 2020; Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023b). This classification is summarized in Annex 2.

The final analysis template that will be followed in the study is presented below (Table 1).














Table 1. Template used for the analysis of the transmedia series

		References
EXTENSION IDENTIFICATION	Extension of the transmedia universe that is being analysed.	García y Heredero (2015)
MEDIUM/SUPPORT and FORMAT	Determination of support or medium in which said content is developed (social network, platform, support, <i>offline</i> action) and the format in which it is carried out.	García and Heredero (2015); Ivars-Nicolás y Zaragoza-Fuster (2018); Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al. (2023b)
INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	In the extensions in social profiles: - Number of followers. - Number of publications. - Average “likes” on Instagram.	Hidalgo-Marí y Segarra-Saavedra (2020)
TARGET AUDIENCE AND ROLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observer role. - Diffusing role. - Discursive role. - Creative role. - Playful role. 	Developed in Annex 1.
PARTS INTO WHICH THE EXTENSION IS DIVIDED	Ways in which the extension is divided (episodes, number of social media profiles).	García y Heredero (2015)
NARRATIVE ASPECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Characters - Space - Time. 	García y Heredero (2015)
ROLE OF EXTENSION IN HISTORY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expanded access. - Adapted content. - Expanded content. - Brand products. - Related activities. - Social interaction. - Interactivity. 	Developed in Annex 2.
OFFICIAL CONTENT/UGC	Determination of whether the analysed content is developed by the chain/platform or if it is UGC.	García y Heredero (2015)

Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

In the figures presented in the results, the categories of the variables “user role”, “role in history” and “official content/UGC” are detailed in the following legend:

Figure 1. Legends prepared for the maps of the transmedia strategies

AUDIENCE ROL	FUNCTION OF EXTENSION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
 Observer role	 Expanded access	 Official Content
 Diffusing role	 Adapted content	 UGC
 Discursive role	 Expanded content	
 Playful role	 Related Activities	
 Creator role	 Social Interaction	
	 Interactivity	

Source: own elaboration on the basis of the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015) and Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018)

To select the sample, we examined the production of the PlayZ fiction series (categorized by the platform as “series de PlayZ”), considering that other works have already focused monographically on series in isolation, with great attention to the first series, *Si fueras tú*. For this reason, we decided to choose a sample that covered the PlayZ teen series released from the platform’s birth (2017) to the year of the last release (2022), choosing one for each year of broadcast.

Because we wanted to analyse the progression in transmedia content aimed at young people, we established the following inclusion criteria: (1) they were teen series; (2) they were original PlayZ series; and (3) they had a transmedia strategy.

The following series were selected (their plots are detailed in Annex 3):

- *Si fueras tú* (2017).
- *Bajo la red* (2018-2019).
- *Boca Norte* (2019).
- *Riders* (2021).
- *Ser o no ser* (2022-).

3. Results

The main results obtained for each of the series analysed are presented below.

3.1. *Si fueras tú* (2017)

The macrohistory of *Si fueras tú* consists of 8 episodes. This series is characterized by the fact that the public's decisions affected this macrostory: after the broadcast of each episode, the audience could vote on which of two options Alba (the protagonist) would choose.

To carry out this transmedia strategy, five social networks, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and WhatsApp, as well as the series' own website, which functioned as a starting point for viewer participation, were used (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019; Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020). Five days before the premiere, this platform published a video tutorial for following the transmedia strategy.

Thus, every week, a new chapter was streamed on Facebook and on the PlayZ platform. After this, Alba published a video on Facebook asking how to act when faced with a problem, and users voted through the use of emoticons. The response rate on the profile was high, through votes, comments and shares, within a short time frame, especially since users only had 24 hours to vote (Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020). In the second chapter, voting was also allowed through Instagram, which caused participation on Facebook to fall below 15% (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Image 1. Publications of the Instagram and Facebook profiles of *Si fueras tú*



Source: @sifuerastuplayz/Facebook profile "*Si fueras tú-Playz*"

These social profiles incorporated expansive content from the narrative universe, such as police files related to the case of disappearance being investigated in the series. On Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, content outside the diegesis, such as trailers or live virtual encounters, was also incorporated to promote the series, which is especially relevant because of the impact on the social networks of protagonists (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019). In some of these video encounters, actors from other PlayZ series or RTVE productions joined and talked about *Si fueras tú* and other content related to the chain. An example of this is the video meeting of Óscar Casas (one of the protagonists of the series, which currently has 3.2 million followers on Instagram) and Mario Casas (an actor already recognized in 2018, currently with more than 7 million followers).

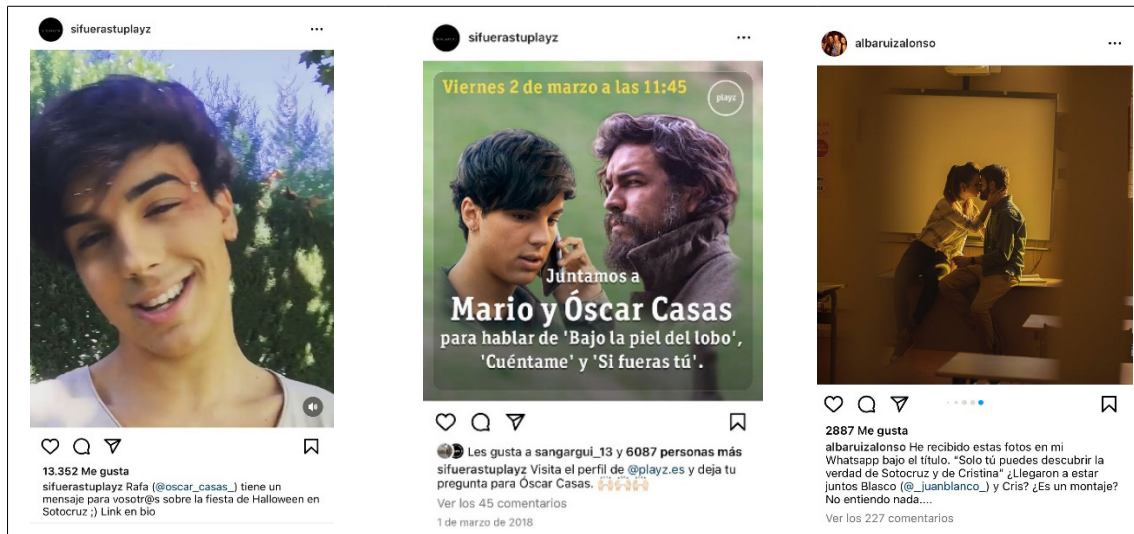
Contests were also held, such as promoting public participation in the filming of the series. The promotion strategy of this contest was through the characters themselves, who uploaded videos to the Instagram profile warning that Nerea (the organizer of a Halloween party) had allowed them to invite more people and that the link to join could be found in the account bio.

Furthermore, Alba's character has her own Instagram profile (@albaruizalonso), which contains expansive information about the series, such as photographs she has received related to the disappearance or messages from her friend Marta. Alba's account began to publish images almost a month before the start of the series, prior to the macrohistory, although it was updated simultaneously.

The profiles of the series and the protagonist were officially created by RTVE, so users could intervene by adding *likes* and comments but could not participate creatively in the generation of story expansions. Actions related to interactivity have had the greatest social impact on these profiles, specifically, Alba's live performances after each episode and the votes to decide what happened in the series (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Additionally, a WhatsApp chat in which one could interact with Alba was created. However, communication in this social network (in which 8,900 followers participated) was unidirectional and did not achieve the level of conversation that was intended (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019; Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020).

Image 2. Publications of the Instagram profile of *Si fueras tú*



Source: @sifuerastuplayz/@albaruizalonso




























Finally, after the premiere of all the chapters, *Si fueras tú* was released in film format, as would happen with most of the PlayZ series. All these contents (series and film) were also published on the PlayZ YouTube channel, as were the video encounters with the actors. Notably, in some of these video encounters, followers were asked to send their comments or theories (UGC) so that they were commented upon by the actors (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019).

Image 3. Screenshot of a video meeting in which UGC is promoted



Source: YouTube profile @playz

Figure 2. Summary map of the transmedia of *Si fueras tú*

EXTENSION	MEDIUM/PLATFORM AND FORMAT	INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	AUDIENCES ROLE	PARTS	NARRATIVE ASPECTS	FUNCTION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
FILM	 Video			1	Film featuring the entire TV series and previously unreleased scenes		
SOCIAL PROFILES	 Post, Instagram Stories and Facebook Live	Instagram: 15000 followers. 120 posts. Average of 8585,35 "likes". Facebook: 17881 followers. Twitter: 1484 followers	 	Profile adapted to the different social networks. More developed on Facebook and Instagram	Non-diegetic	 	 
ALBA'S SOCIAL PROFILE	 Instagram posts	2116 followers. 12 posts. Average of 1933 "likes"		1 social profile	Main character		
WHATSAPP	 WhatsApp messages			1 channel	Main character		
PLAYLIST	 Creation of Playlists			2 lists			
COMPETITION - PARTICIPATION IN FILMING	 On-site filming. Instagram post			1 event	Fiesta de Halloween en la serie		

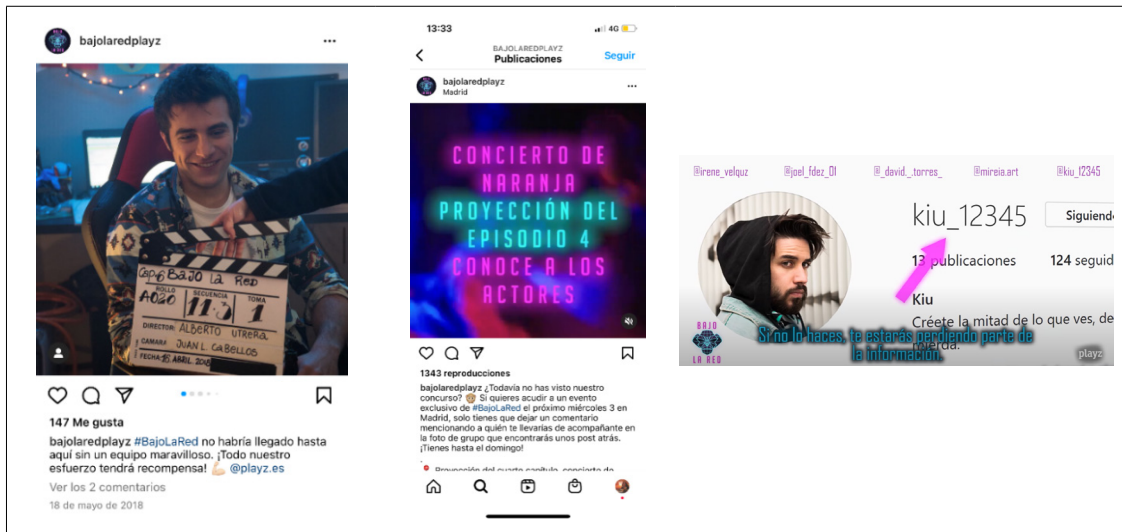
Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

3.2. Bajo la red (2018-2019)

RTVE (2019) presented the *Bajo la Red* series as a “transmedia series” and, before its broadcast, published a video tutorial on how to follow the series on different platforms. This macrohistory (the series) involves transmedia expansions disseminated through Instagram. Attractive *influencers* were incorporated into this segment of the population to interpret some of the protagonists (among them, Angy Fernández with 361,000 followers on Instagram and Manuel Huedo with 396,000).

Instagram profiles were created for each of the five main characters (currently not available, an example from the tutorial is included in Image 4), in which they began to spread *stories* and publications before the first chapter of the series was broadcast. In these networks, it was possible to observe whether the objectives of the boys were being fulfilled with the help of the Achiever. This meant that, in the chronological line of the narrative universe, the macrohistory and the expansion were broadcast simultaneously (although they started days before on Instagram); thus, after the broadcast of the first chapter of the series, we could see the continuation of the characters on Instagram.

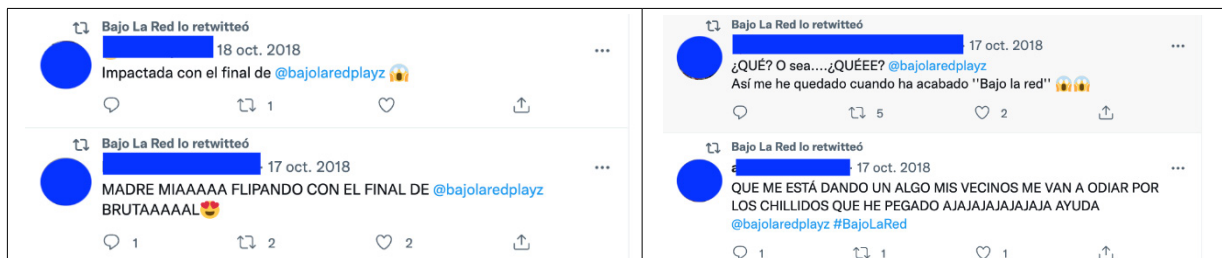
Image 4. Publications of the Instagram profile of *Bajo La Red*



Source: @bajolaredplayz and PlayZ YouTube Profile

In addition to the narrative content, *Bajo la Red* has an Instagram profile (@bajolaredplayz), which was also replicated on Twitter and Facebook. These social networks (in the case of Instagram through *posts* and *stories*) promoted the series, published images of the shoot and reported on its transmedia strategy. Users' reactions were shared on Twitter, promoting a discursive role.

Image 5. Reactions at the end of season 1 of *Bajo la Red*



Source: Twitter

The creation of a *fan* account (@fcbajolared) that operated between August and October 2018 and shared the content created by the official profile (not UGC), should be noted. This profile invited a WhatsApp group to talk about the series; however, it is currently in disuse and includes only one user.

On the other hand, an event was organized for *fans* in Madrid to which the actors attended, a concert was held by the group that interprets the title song, and episode four of the first season of the series was seen exclusively. Conducting the contests on social networks (through comments and mentions, again promoting a discursive role) gave people the opportunity to meet the protagonists of the series in said event.

The soundtrack of *Bajo la Red* can be found on Spotify, in the albums “Bajo la Red (Original Music from the RTVE Series)” and “Bajo la Red (2nd Season) (Original Music from the RTVE Series)”. The YouTube profile included the video clip of the original song of the series, as well as reactions of the actors to the viewing of the chapters, content adapted as compilations of scenes and the films originating from the episodes of the first and second seasons.

With the premiere of its second season, an additional episode was broadcast as a *spin-off* entitled “Gabriel’s Awakening”. A new character –Julia– was introduced in the first episode as an actress of the *influencer* Marina Yers (RTVE, 2018). In this episode, the motivations of one of the main characters of season 2 (Gabriel) were explained, allowing the viewer to improve their understanding of the end of the series.

Figure 3. Summary map of *Bajo la red* transmedia

EXTENSION	MEDIUM/PLATFORM AND FORMAT	INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	AUDIENCES ROLE	PARTS	NARRATIVE ASPECTS	FUNCTION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
FILM	  Video			2 (1 film per season)	Film with the whole TV series		
SPIN-OFF EPISODE	  Video			1	Introduction of Julia (Gabriel's partner, character from season 2)		
SOCIAL PROFILES OF THE SERIES	   Post on all networks and Instagram Stories.	Instagram: 3161 followers. 108 posts. Average of 377,94 'likes'. Facebook: 1113 followers. Twitter: 220 followers.		Profile adapted to the different platforms	Non-diegetic		
SOCIAL PROFILES OF THE CHARACTERS	 Post and Stories on Instagram	Social profiles do not currently exist		5 social profiles	Main characters in the moments and spaces in which it takes place.		
FAN SOCIAL NETWORKS OF THE SERIES	  Post on Instagram. WhatsApp groups	Instagram: 50 followers. 7 posts. Average of 13,43 'likes'.		1 social profile + 1 WhatsApp group	Non-diegetic		
MEET THE CHARACTERS EVENT	 On-site event. Post on Instagram.			1 event	Non-diegetic		

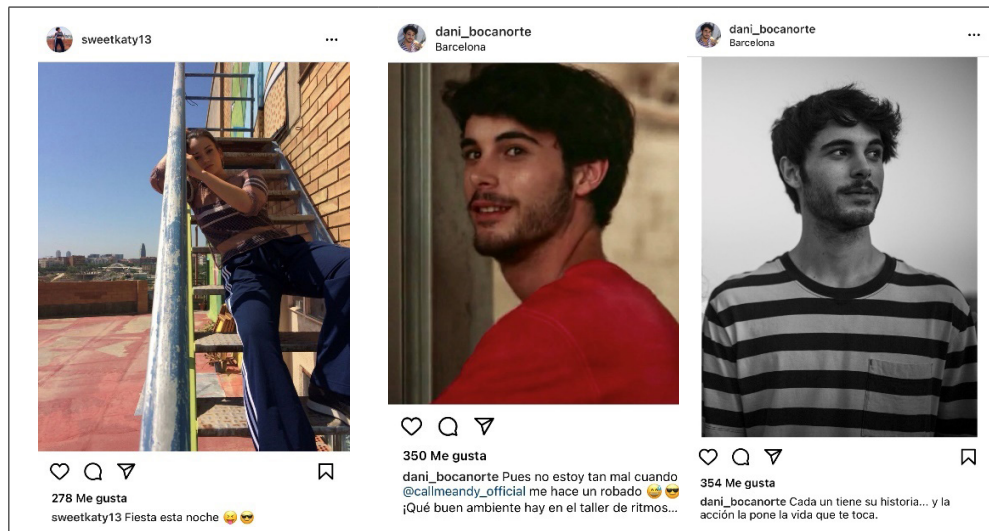
Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

3.3. Boca Norte (2019)

Extensions of this macrohistory (the series) have been identified through four media: Instagram, Spotify, Facebook and Twitter; however, great efforts to deepen the fictional content were made on the first two platforms.

PlayZ decided to create the Instagram profiles of the eight protagonists (Annex 4). The platform once again employed actors known to this audience, such as David Solans, previously in the successful teen series *Merli* (TV3, 2015-2018), or Guillermo Campra, an actor from *Águila Roja* and *Bajo la Red*. In these profiles, *stories* and publications that were related to the series were uploaded, allowing some interaction with the user (discursive role). However, no new stories that are part of the narrative were generated. The photographs of the characters are the publications that obtain the highest average number of *likes*, especially in the case of Dani (David Solans).

Image 6. Publications of the characters of Boca Norte



















Source: PlayZ

The social profiles of the series were also created on Instagram, Facebook (Boca Norte-PlayZ) and Twitter (@bocanorte_playz). The Instagram account was especially used (through *posts* and *stories*) to publish images of filming, *making of* and promotional photographs of events, such as the *premiere* of the series, in which people popular with this audience were invited as former contestants of the *reality Operation Triumph*.

Finally, the series featured different nationally recognized trap artists to create songs that appear in fiction. However, these songs are not presented in their entirety in *Boca Norte*, so the Spotify album expands the information provided in the series. *Trap* is one of the most consumed genres among young audiences, so we see that all the contents of *Boca Norte* are focused on

the same audience. However, in this part of the transmedia, the user has a merely diffusing role: he can only listen to the music offered on the platform and share it.

Figure 4. Summary map of Boca Norte transmedia

EXTENSION	MEDIUM/PLATFORM AND FORMAT	INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	AUDIENCES ROLE	PARTS	NARRATIVE ASPECTS	FUNCTION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
FILM	 Video			1	Film with the whole series		
SOCIAL PROFILES OF THE SERIES	 Post on all networks and Instagram Stories.	Instagram: 2170 followers. 67 posts. Average of 602.8 'likes'. Facebook: 381 followers. Twitter: 147 followers.		Social profiles adapted to different platforms	Non-diegetic		
SOCIAL PROFILES OF THE CHARACTERS	 Post and Stories on Instagram	A breakdown is given in Appendix 4.		8 social profiles	Main characters of the series in the moments and spaces in which it takes place.		
ORIGINAL SONGS	 Spotify songs	Average number of plays of the 8 main songs: 7,132.25. Most listened to song: 15,384 plays. 35 monthly listeners to the group 'cast of the Boca Norte series'.		22 songs	They appear in the series. Andrea creates one of them		

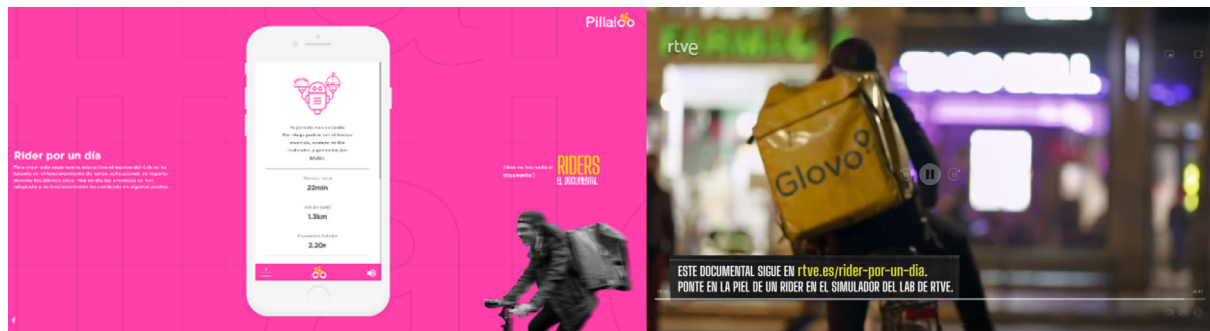
Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

3.4. *Riders* (2021)

The macrohistory of *Riders* is the teen series of the PlayZ platform. This fiction was part of a transmedia project that “aims to bring you closer to the situation of the *riders* and that you live it for a day” (RTVE, 2021) through the episodes of the series, gamification and an interactive documentary (available at RTVE Lab). These contents fulfil an informative, nonnarrative task; that is, they are not part of the fictional universe of the series but rather delve into a reality that tries to reflect this strategy.

In the game *Rider for a day*, users can learn about the experience of a home delivery person by controlling an application similar to that of these workers. In the game itself, data that explain the situation of this sector are provided, so while users play (playful role), they learn more about the situation of the *riders*.

Image 7. Frame of the documentary and image of the video game



Source: RTVE Lab

For its part, the documentary explains the debate around the so-called “Rider Law”, the regulation of the workers at that time and what was intended to be modified. In this action, users have an observer role, which allows them to learn more about the real situation that the protagonists face in the series.

The three products (series, documentary and game) lead back to the other contents, shaping a complete experience through the transmedia strategy.

No social profiles were created for this series (the content is centralized in the PlayZ networks). However, a playlist was created on YouTube (which PlayZ makes with most of its original content), so viewers can watch the episodes, the film, interviews with the actors and a video with all the cameos of *influencers* in the series, such as Pantomima Full (533,000 followers on Instagram), Victoria Martín (387,000 followers) or former contestants of *Operación Triunfo*. The *PlayZ* TikTok profile also includes scenes from *Riders*, as well as excerpts with *influencers* and comic videos adapted to the platform.

Figure 5. *Riders* transmedia summary map

EXTENSION	MEDIUM/PLATFORM AND FORMAT	INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	AUDIENCES ROLE	PARTS	NARRATIVE ASPECTS	FUNCTION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
FILM	Video			1	Film with the whole series		
VIDEOGAME “RIDER POR UN DÍA”	Videogame			1	Non-diegetic		
DOCUMENTAL “RIDERS”	Documentary short film			1	Non-diegetic		

Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

3.5. *Ser o no ser* (2022-)









The series *Ser o no ser to be* (macrohistory) seeks to address “without prejudice a highly topical issue and sheds [r] light on the experiences of a group unknown to many or misunderstood by others” (RTVE, 2022). In fact, to build the scripts for this story starring a transgender adolescent in his transition process, an educator and a sociologist collaborated (RTVE, 2022). The first season was awarded the best fiction in the ODA (Observatory of Audiovisual Diversity) 2022 and a special mention in the *Students Jury Special Prize* in Prix Italia 2022, and it was nominated for the best Spanish-speaking series in the GLAAD (*Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation*) Awards 2022 (RTVE, 2023).

This his first season, he did not bet on a transmedia strategy. However, in the second, the documentary “Ander Puig. The dream of being an actor”, referred to the life of the actor who starred in the series. This documentary did not seek to expand diegesis but rather to inform and deepen the reality of a transgender person, thus maintaining the same objective as macrohistory. Thus, the viewer has an observing role.

This 12-minute documentary was released a week before the second season on the RTVE platform and on YouTube (currently, it has 2.5K views in this medium). Additionally, in 2022 (with the premiere of the first season), “El videoblog de Ander Puig” was broadcast on PlayZ’s YouTube profile, an interview with the actor in which he talks about his adolescence, his similarities and differences with the character what (Joel) plays and how he faced his transition process.

In this series, the contents are once again published in the official profiles of PlayZ. A YouTube playlist was also included with interviews with actors, outtakes, highlights from fiction, trailers and a *making of* titled “Detrás del escenario”. In the TikTok profile of *PlayZ*, scenes from fiction and challenges such as “*random* questions from *PlayZ*” or fragments of interviews with the actors (especially from the mentioned documentary) can be found. In these TikTok contents, hashtags related to concerns of this population are used, such as #transvisibilidad, #LGBTI or #health.

Figure 6. Summary map of the transmedia of *Ser o no ser*

EXTENSION	MEDIUM/PLATFORM AND FORMAT	INTERACTIONS RECEIVED	AUDIENCES ROLE	PARTS	NARRATIVE ASPECTS	FUNCTION WITHIN THE STORY	OFFICIAL CONTENT / UGC
FILM	 Video			1	Film with the whole series		
DOCUMENTAL “ANDER PUIG. EL SUEÑO DE SER ACTOR”	 Documentary short film			1	Non-diegetic		

Source: own elaboration based on the contributions of Guerrero-Pico (2014), García and Heredero (2015), Ivars-Nicolás and Zaragoza-Fuster (2018) and Villén and Ruiz del Olmo (2020)

4. Discussion

In this study, we aimed to study how public television responds to changes in the forms of consumption of young people through its fiction series. To do this, we analysed the structure of the transmedia narratives of a sample of PlayZ teen series from its origin (2017) to its last released teen fiction series: *Ser o no ser* (2022-2023).

In relation to OE1, RTVE's commitment to creating content aimed at a young audience seems to be reinforced by the choice of the media they use in the transmedia of their series. Specifically, RTVE mainly uses Instagram to distribute their content (social profiles have been created for the protagonists of 3 of the 5 series analysed). This medium also tends to be used in the transmedia strategies of Spanish and European teen series such as *SKAM* or *UPA Next* (Schanke, 2019; Gil-Quitana and Gil-Tévar, 2020; Villén and Ruiz del Olmo, 2020; Lacalle et al., 2024). These series (and the diegetic social profiles that are created) feature highly successful actors and *influencers* among the youth audience, confirming the importance of these content creators for PlayZ because of their ability to attract this audience to fictional content and its transmedia strategy (Maroto and Rodríguez-Martelo, 2019). This also highlights the platform's commitment to using different formats, such as the songs published on Spotify for *Boca Norte*, which appear incompletely in the series and are part of its plot, or the *Riders* video game.

However, in relation to the characters of *Boca Norte*, their profiles do not exceed 250 followers or 300 *likes*, with the exception of the portrait photos of Dani (David Solans), which reach approximately 350. Transmedia stories must deepen and develop characters and stories in an alternative way (Mateos-Pérez, 2021). In the social profiles of the characters of PlayZ, adapted and expanded content is combined, but little additional information is incorporated into the plots of the series. This makes it difficult for viewers to engage, as it reduces the reward with new content (Schanke, 2019). However, there are exceptions, such as the clues on Instagram regarding the disappearance in the series *Si fueras tú*. On the other hand, short videos and *stories* work very well among this segment of the population (Bengtsson et al., 2018). Considering the efforts of PlayZ to adapt to the youth audience and digital formats (Medina and Ojer, 2010; RTVE Commission, 2020) and the rise of mobile consumption among young people (Fundación Telefónica, 2023), it could be useful to expand this content (as has begun to be done in a promotional way) to shorter videos and on platforms such as TikTok, which are so successful among this audience (IAB, 2022). Along these lines, the way to incorporate macrohistory or its plots into social networks could continue to be explored, as *SKAM* did (Bengtsson et al., 2018) or in the series produced by Instagram Spain (Meta, 2024).

Another characteristic of PlayZ is the publication of the episodes of its series on the platform and YouTube (García et al., 2021), one of the social networks most used by the Spanish population (IAB, 2023). This network is also used to incorporate expanded access to the final film made from the series (formed by the sum of the episodes of a season) and additional audiovisual content through playlists, with the original content having increasing weight. nonfiction (García et al., 2021). On the other hand, the scarce use of WhatsApp, the social network most commonly used by young people in Spain (IAB, 2024), should be noted, as PlayZ did not achieve the level of conversation expected in *If you were* (Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2019; Hidalgo-Marí and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020); however, this network has been used in other successful transmedia strategies of RTVE, such as that of *El Ministerio del Tiempo* (Torregrosa-Carmona and Rodríguez-Gómez, 2017).

All of the teen series are promoted on both the PlayZ platform and their social profiles, as well as their transmedia strategies, are explained through an instruction manual. Thus, the sensation of experience at different moments, formats and platforms that

a transmedia series provides, in which the viewer has control in its form of consumption, is promoted (Bengtsson et al., 2018). Although, until 2020, two-thirds of the PlayZ series had their own social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023b), in the last PlayZ projects analysed, the contents of the Teen series were centralized in the platform networks. Along these lines, the amount of transmedia content per series has been reduced, and they are more focused on promoting it or deepening the issues they address than working on narrative aspects and, thus, expanding the fictional universe.

In this sense, the trends of these transmedia strategies (OG2) of the selected series have evolved both in format and content, which is reminiscent of the changes to the series on the platform (macro stories). Thus, while several of PlayZ's first transmedia teen series (such as those analysed, including *Si fueras tú* and *Bajo la red*) combined the teen genre with the *thriller* such that transmedia was closely related to solving the case and exploring the characters through expanded and interactive content, the latest series on the platform address topics that concern its audience through related activities. In this sense, Jenkins (2005) explained narratives that are incorporated into video games, many of which come from the *thriller* because looking for evidence and exploring spaces can attract the viewer but that the melodrama gives other rewards that have not yet been explored.

This is related to the idea of Junguitu-Angulo and Osuna-Acedo (2023) that public television can be a pedagogical resource for the young population. In series such as *Riders*, PlayZ includes, as a characteristic of its production style, its function of public service through formats focused on a young audience and issues that concern this population (job insecurity). Social factors (such as the work situation), together with intrapersonal factors and the transmedia experience, can motivate the appearance of *fandom* in a series (Sundet and Petersen, 2021). This may provoke a greater feeling of representation on the part of the young population, where only 21.6% were highly reflected with the contents of PlayZ (Eguzkitza-Mestraitua et al., 2023a). This social involvement of the public platform has been seen from the beginning, for example, with the treatment of *bullying* that underlies *Si fueras tú* or the incorporation of a soundtrack of female *trap* artists in *Boca Norte* (in this case, through transmedia).

Relatedly, the roles of users have shifted: in the first series analysed by PlayZ, a discursive role was promoted through a creator, which encouraged users to follow the clues of the case with adapted content. Additionally, interactivity and social interaction with the user were relevant when the transmedia strategy was created. In these series, the intention of the platform in which users create original content (UGC) is appreciated. A clear example is *Si fueras tú*, in which, through video encounters on YouTube, followers were encouraged to share theories about what was happening in the series. Although the *thriller* genre makes it easier for *fans* to share their discoveries about the story, encounters on YouTube, or even on Twitch, two of the social networks in which Spaniards spend the most time (IAB, 2024), they could be of interest to seek user participation in new drama series from PlayZ.

Similarly, in series such as *Boca Norte*, which focused on the relationships between the characters, the role of the user was more discursive or disseminating, and its transmedia strategy aims to learn more about its protagonists through content adapted or expanded from macrohistory. In *Riders* or *Ser o no ser*, there is a greater presence of the observer and playful roles, which allows us to delve into reality through activities related to a more informative than narrative nature, designing transmedia strategies with a predominance of nondiegetic actions.

5. Conclusions

Transmedia narratives are becoming a solution for series that need to connect with an audience that consumes a large amount of audiovisual content (Villén and Ruiz del Olmo, 2020) but does not feel represented by traditional television and its forms of consumption (Navarro and Vázquez, 2020). At this time of adaptation, when conventional channels are suffering (Neira, 2020), it is relevant to study the role of public television such as RTVE, which is committed to this segment of the population (BOE, 2006, Art. 25).

In conclusion, Spanish public television seeks to respond to changes in the forms of consumption of young people through its series of originals and its transmedia strategy. This coincides with the trend of other European public televisions and their transmedia strategies, which demonstrate an effort to connect with this audience through the integration of new narratives (Azurmendi, 2018). The latest PlayZ series combines fictional narratives with informative and nonfiction records, as has been done previously with transmedia efforts in Spain, such as *La Peste* (Hernández, 2019). Thus, in the case of *Riders*, we would not even speak of a “transmedia series” but of “experience” (RTVE, 2021), which, with a markedly informative and awareness-raising nature, reflects reality. The transmedia of the teen series analysed shows a change in the trend of PlayZ in recent years, with more reduced strategies, but which seek to reach the young audience through the deepening of issues present in the public debate, as well as formats and media. that this population consumes. One of the main challenges of the platform will be to continue adapting to an audience in the continuous evolution of its consumption habits and in which the viewing of short videos predominates (Bengtsson et al., 2018).

In short, this analysis of the transmedia structure of PlayZ’s teen fiction products provides a clear picture of these series with an identity that is characterized by (1) a majority use of Instagram and YouTube (where they are broadcast, in addition to the official platform, the episodes); (2) little depth in the dramatic plots in the expanded contents; (3) bet on innovative media and formats such as video games or original Spotify songs; (4) a pedagogical orientation (through the instruction manual) that confirms the interest of the platform for the young audience to discover and consume these strategies; (5) little promotion of participation through the UGC; and (6) predominance of the observer and discursive role (although with cases of interest related to the playful and creative role). On the other hand, the importance of *influencers* in PlayZ’s teen series is worth highlighting, as we could conceive of them as a way to bring the narrative closer to the reality of the users. This occurs with the social profiles of the characters (played by *influencers*), in which we see publications or *stories* of the protagonists at the time and place in which the series takes place (narrative universe), or with the documentary about the protagonist of *Ser o no ser*, in which the topics covered in fiction (diegetic content) are explored through the real experience of the protagonist actor (non-diegetic content).

Notably, a limitation of this study is the lack of quantitative data to make a direct comparison of the contents and their weights in the strategy, which is a topic of great interest for future research. In addition to measuring the impact in a quantitative way, to deepen the reception of the audience, qualitative interviews with users of the platform could be carried out. On the other hand, in future studies, original series from other public television stations in different countries or from private networks and platforms could be included in the sample to identify strengths, weaknesses and examples of good practices that will help reinforce PlayZ’s transmedia strategy. and of all RTVE and to understand and attract the attention of this public.

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7. Specific contributions of each author

	Name and Surname
Conception and design of the work	Sara Valenzuela-Monreal, Javier Lozano Delmar and Rafael A. Araque-Padilla
Methodology	Sara Valenzuela-Monreal and Javier Lozano Delmar
Data collection and analysis	Sara Valenzuela-Monreal
Discussion and conclusions	Sara Valenzuela-Monreal and Javier Lozano Delmar
Drafting, formatting, version review and approval	Javier Lozano Delmar and Rafael A. Araque-Padilla

8. Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest contained in this article.

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10. Appendix

Appendix 1. Audiences Role

OBSERVER ROLE	The user can not generate any content on the platform and is limited to consuming content.
DIFFUSING ROLE	The user shares content online and with other users.
DISCURSIVE ROL	The users can not create content but actively participate in the transmedia experience through forums, reactions, and comments.
PLAYFUL ROLE	The user engages with gamification products.
CREATOR ROL	The user generates content that “contributes to the transmedia expansion or compression of the narrative world they consume, whether through works where creativity predominates (fanfiction, fanvids, fanart) or products aimed at promoting that narrative universe” (Guerrero-Pico, 2014: 262).

Source: García & Heredero (2015), based on previous classifications by Hernández & Grandío (2011) and Guerrero-Pico (2014)

Appendix 2. Types of Functions

EXPANDED ACCESS	The full macro-story is made available on other media or platforms.
ADAPTED CONTENT	Excerpts that reuse or adapt content already created for the macro-story.
EXPANDED CONTENT	“Original content that provides information expanding the user’s understanding of narrative fiction” (Ivars-Nicolás & Zaragoza-Fuster, 2018: 260). This can include textual extensions (expanding the series’ narrative universe); relevant information (details that enrich the “encyclopaedic knowledge within the fiction”); or extratextual information (content that expands the series outside the fictional universe, such as a making-of) (Ivars-Nicolás & Zaragoza-Fuster, 2018: 260).
BRAND PRODUCTS	Promotional material or merchandise.
RELATED ACTIVITIES	Activities requiring the consumer to adopt an active role and participate. These can include: themed activities; experiential activities (video games or role-playing games); or productive activities (the user generates content).
SOCIAL INTERACTION	Interactions that enhance user content, either through a horizontal relationship with the audience (viewer-created platforms); vertical (between viewers and the show’s technical and creative team); or diagonal (audience interaction with characters).
INTERACTIVITY	User contributions that are recognised or influence the original content.

Source: classification by Ivars-Nicolás & Zaragoza-Fuster (2018), based on Askwith’s work (2007)

Appendix 3. Selected Sample

TEEN SERIES	SYNOPSIS	SEASONS
<i>Si fueras tú</i> (2017)	Spain's first interactive fiction series (Hidalgo-Mari and Segarra-Saavedra, 2020). It tells the story of Alba, a young woman who, after moving in with her uncle, discovers she resembles a girl who went missing six months earlier. Alba decides to investigate what happened to the missing girl.	1 (8 episodes)
<i>Bajo la Red</i> (PlayZ, 2018-2019)	This series follows a group of young people who join a chain of favours. However, the actions required to achieve their dreams (the favours they requested) push their ethical boundaries, trapping them in the chain. Irene decides to join the chain after her sister's death, suspecting that the chain's organiser, "El Conseguidor" is responsible, and she is determined to uncover their identity. Winner of the Golden Globe for Best Web Series at the World Media Festival in Hamburg (Comisión RTVE, 2020).	2 (Season 1: 6 episodes. Season 2: 7 episodes and 1 special episode as spin-off)
<i>Boca Norte</i> (PlayZ, 2019)	This series, awarded Best Digital Broadcast Content at the 2019 Ondas Awards, tells the story of Andrea, a teenager from a privileged Barcelona neighbourhood who moves to a less affluent area due to a conflict in her past. Her father forces her to join a local youth centre, where she meets a group of young people and forms a dance club that changes her life (RTVE, 2019).	1 (6 episodes)
<i>Riders</i> (RTVE, 2021)	This series follows Axel, a university student who, despite studying video game design, must start working as a delivery rider to support his family. This job eventually leads him to get involved with a group of drug traffickers. Through this premise, the story depicts how Axel and a group of riders strive to make a living.	1 (7 episodes)
<i>Ser o no ser</i> (RTVE, 2022-)	This series follows Joel, a young trans person who seeks to become an actor while "facing the emotional and physical challenges of his transition" (RTVE, 2023).	2 (Season 1: 6 episodes. Season 2: 6 episodes)

Source: compiled from RTVE synopses

Appendix 4: Boca Norte characters' Instagram social profiles

CHARACTER'S NAME	PROFILE	NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS	NUMBER OF POSTS	AVERAGE OF LIKES
Andrea	@andrea_d_o	126	14 + 1 <i>story</i> destacado	119,57
Dani	@dani_bocanorte	182	12 + 1 <i>story</i> destacado	290,8
María	@maria_gisbertbcn	164	20	145,7
Sarah	@sarah_is_dancing	110	12 + 2 <i>stories</i> destacados	110,67
Lu	@luu_dj	107	16	106
Andy	@callmeandy_official	120	9	148,11
Katy	@sweetkaty13	157	15	188,93
Carol	@ka__rol	33	5 + 5 <i>stories</i> destacados	30,8

Source: own elaboration