

Netflix as an audiovisual producer: a snapshot of the serial fiction co-productions

Netflix como productor audiovisual: Una radiografía de la coproducción de ficciones seriadas

Netflix como produtor audiovisual: um raio-x da coprodução de ficções em série

7

ARTICLE



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Abstract

Knowing the audiovisual products distributed by Netflix supposes a determining study scenario, since it allows us to obtain information on the strategy applied to satisfy the supply-demand process between the audiovisual giant and its global audiences. The objective of this article is to offer a snapshot of the original production of the VOD Netflix platform, specifically, breaking down and analyzing forms and trends in one of the recognized own production formulas: co-production, in

order to contribute to the development of specific knowledge about Netflix's own product portfolio.

KEYWORDS

Co-production, Fiction, Netflix, Series, Television.

Resumen

Conocer los productos audiovisuales distribuidos por Netflix supone un escenario de estudio determinante, puesto que nos permite arrojar información sobre la estrategia aplicada para satisfacer el proceso de oferta-demanda entre

el gigante audiovisual y sus públicos globales. El objetivo del presente artículo reside en ofrecer una radiografía sobre la producción propia de la plataforma de VOD Netflix, en concreto, desglosando y analizando formas y tendencias en una de las fórmulas de producción propia reconocida: la coproducción, con la finalidad de contribuir al desarrollo de un conocimiento específico sobre la cartera de productos propios de Netflix.

PALABRAS CLAVE:

Coproducción, Ficción, Netflix, Series, Televisión.

Resumo

Conhecer os produtos audiovisuais distribuídos pela Netflix supõe um cenário de estudo determi-

nante, pois permite lançar informação sobre a estratégia aplicada para satisfazer o processo de oferta e demanda entre o gigante do audiovisual e seu público global. O objetivo deste artigo é oferecer um raio-x da produção própria da plataforma VOD Netflix, especificamente, dividindo e analisando formas e tendências em uma das fórmulas de produção próprias reconhecidas: a coprodução, a fim de contribuir para o desenvolvimento de conhecimento específico sobre o portfólio de produtos próprios da Netflix.

Palavras-chave

Coprodução, Ficção, Netflix, Séries, Televisão.

1. INTRODUCTION

When talking about Netflix, reference is made to an unprecedented audiovisual production and consumption phenomenon. Netflix, as Lobato (2019) notes, is not only a content producer or distributor, nor is it a digital platform, but rather a technology-based producer, receiver and distributor conglomerate. In the words of this author, Netflix fulfills a number of specific roles such as video platform, audiovisual distributor, technology company, television network, software system, global media corporation, cultural industry, lifestyle, big-data business, mode of media consumption and even a ritual (Lobato, 2009).

A business that started as a home delivery DVD video club in 2007 was transformed into a production and consumption system that currently has more than 158 million users in more than 190 countries (Netflix, 2019). The formula for its successful career is still unknown, but recent works confirm that part of this success

lies in the system of recommendations, the simultaneous releases of movies and series, the availability of content and, above all, the commitment to in-house production (Tuñón & Gambari, 2019).

The company's turning point was found in 2011 when it began to acquire original content to distribute in streaming. The acquisition of this original content marked the starting point for the giant, which, until now had worked as a VOD platform offering content previously transferred by third parties. The premiere of the *House of Cards* series (USA, 2013) was the trigger for a new production industry that would make Netflix what it is today: "The global Internet TV network" (Netflix, 2019, s.p).

It is necessary to mention that the supervening media convergence of the phenomenon itself in streaming does not suppose a purely technological phenomenon, but is sustained by a significant cultural dimension (Jenkins, 2008). This statement refers to altering the user's way

of consuming and the planning of content flows in order to satisfy an increasingly demanding and empowered audience (Izquierdo-Castillo, 2015, p.819), diverting the power of the large production companies and audiovisual studios that have ceased to have a hegemonic position in the audiovisual business (Iordanova, 2012).

In order to respond to this new scenario of convergence of media, formats and cultural content, the company is betting on the distribution of original content as a resource that feeds audience demand. The power that consumption data gives on the Netflix platform itself is understood as the necessary wildcard to know what to produce, how to produce it and how to distribute it to the public. For this reason, the knowledge of audiovisual products distributed by Netflix supposes a determining study scenario, since it allows presenting information on the strategy applied to satisfy the supply-demand process between the audiovisual giant and its global audiences.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Netflix phenomenon is taking on an important dimension in academic research. However, few studies have had a diachronic-historical approach that allows to offer a snapshot of the evolution of the platform's content, with the exception of the investigations by Antin-Goldenberg (2018) or Urbano and Araujo (2018) that focused on television dramas in the Brazilian market. The state of the research around Netflix seems to focus on the study of the platform's business model (Ojer & Capapé, 2012; Izquierdo-Castillo, 2015; Neira, 2015; Evens, 2014 Páez, 2017; Heredia-Ruiz, 2018) and in its advertising aspect (Del Pino & Aguado, 2012; Pérez & Cornelio, 2018; Mayorga-Escalada,

2019), as well as data and information management (Fernandez et al., 2016).

A trend can be seen in the study of the convergence of streaming television with consumer media (David, 2010; Uribe, 2016; Uman, 2018); although after an extensive bibliographic review it was found that the focus that has generated the most interest around fiction on Netflix is the study of audiences and reception (Simmons, 2013; Costas-Nicolas, 2014; Dhoest & Simons, 2016; Montero, 2015) as well as the most recent cultural studies on the audiovisual discourse of the products offered (Raya et al., 2018; Margarita, 2020).

Although it is true that the concept of media convergence of Jenkins (2008) would be the starting point for the study of serial fiction production in new digital and multimedia contexts, other theoretical considerations allow addressing the impact and phenomenon of such productions in the global television market. We refer, for example, to the concept of "indigenization" (Buonanno, 1999), which defends the necessary adaptation of audiovisual production to national and/or local demands and contexts to guarantee acceptance by audiences. Also, the concept of "cultural proximity" (Straubhaar, 2003) acquires importance in this sense, implying a necessary determination when establishing a value strategy in the audiovisual market. The author himself understands this cultural proximity as:

Cultural capital, identity, and language tend to foster an audience desire for cultural proximity, which leads audiences to prefer local and national productions to those that are globalized and/or Americanized. (Straubhaar, 2003, p. 76)

These concepts make it possible to focus on the social impact of co-production and to understand that the determining factor when producing for a localized market implies a series of social dimensions that condition the format, content and the way of distribution itself. In other words, and in line with the statements of the aforementioned authors, it is necessary to know the sociocultural context in which an audiovisual product will be distributed to guarantee reception among local audiences.

2.1. UNA ACLARACIÓN TERMINOLÓGICA SOBRE LA PRODUCCIÓN DE FICCIÓN SERIADA DE NETFLIX.

When analyzing the strategy of co-production on Netflix, we must bear in mind that its own production has been developed at different formal levels (cinema, serial fiction, programs and other derivatives such as documentaries or documentary series of different genres and themes). In addition, it is necessary to make a terminological clarification of the different formats that acquire the name of "Netflix original" in the context of television fiction, since the label can cause confusion. Despite the fact that the platform generically labels using the tag "original content" or "original series", different versions of this generalized content have been detected, which are:

- Original production in English: Refers to content in which the company is the original producer of the product, normally through a strategic alliance with private producers. Serial fiction products of great global success have emerged from this type of alliance, such as *Stranger Things* (USA, 2016) or *Narcos* (USA, 2017).
- Original foreign language production (non-English): These shows are created by Netflix and are spoken completely or almost completely in a language other than English. Some have the option to watch English dubbing and others are subtitled. In any case, they follow the dynamics of the previous ones and products such as *Club de Cuervos* (Mexico, 2015) or *Marseille* (France, 2016).
- Continuations: The company, within its own production catalog, takes up programs that were originally broadcast on another television channel and creates new seasons in search of the expansion of a previously tested success. Examples of this category are found in seasons 3, 4 and 5 of *Black Mirror* (United Kingdom, 2011) or the phenomenon generated by the second season of *Money Heist* (Spain, 2017).
- Co-productions: Netflix joins forces with television networks from different countries and become partners when it comes to producing content, seeking the commitment to the local product that will later be distributed globally.
- Acquired Rights: These programs, despite being labeled as original by Netflix, are programs that have been broadcast in different territories and exclusive distribution rights have been purchased for broadcast in other countries. They may be available in the territory of origin and in other countries where Netflix does not have the first broadcast license, without the "Netflix original" label, long after it was broadcast on the original network.

This clarification allows us to understand that the study of co-productions focuses on the company's alliances with television networks in the territories in which it operates, thus ca-

rying out a commitment to the local product. Despite the fact that we are referring to a company with a global focus, the truth is that it has been involved with the national products of each place since its inception through strategic alliances with television networks in each territory¹. It is an investment that can be called geo-cultural and that responds to the natural demand of audiences. In addition, it has opted for audiovisual production in the local language and with trending actors from different countries, in order to strengthen local ties through products that, later, could be exported to other global catalogs of the company itself.

Co-production is understood to be a successful strategy that allows the proliferation of serial fiction products. As of 2008 and derived from the global economic crisis, the audiovisual sector experienced a paralysis of projects. Some countries like Japan used this format to revive their market and it was a model copied by other countries to revive their national television fiction. Thus, co-productions involve alliances with television networks in each region that allow the development of new audiovisual products, repeating success in the region itself and allowing the transnationalization of the fictional product to an interconnected hegemonic market.

3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objective of this article is to offer a snapshot of the own production of the Netflix VOD platform, specifically, breaking down and analyzing forms and trends in one of the recognized formulas of own production: co-production. Based on this global objective, the following specific objectives emerge:

- a) Analyze the way in which co-productions are established according to the language and the countries with which the productive alliances are generated.
- b) Offer classified information on genres, formats and characteristics of serial fiction programmes co-produced by Netflix.
- c) Provide a taxonomy of the different fictions co-produced by Netflix that allows glimpses of preferences and strategic trends.

All these objectives are intended to contribute to the development of specific knowledge about Netflix's own product portfolio, an incipient study but one with great socio-cultural impact that is worth reviewing. In addition, the current state of the matter, as well as the difficulties (both geographic and operational) to access totalizing information and data on the co-production of the platform justify the purpose of this work. The aim is to provide an encyclopedic descriptive contribution to Netflix's own production (specifically to serial fiction co-productions) that may serve for future related research.

In order to achieve the objective, we have worked with a mixed methodology, with an exploratory approach based on obtaining data and its qualitative interpretation, although it is true that the descriptive needs of the work have led

1 In Latin America, for example, relations with Telemundo, Telefe, RCN and others, allowed Netflix to offer a wide content of soap operas to its audiences, something necessary to position itself territorially.

to the results being supported by quantitative data.

The sample selection has been compiled by going to the global Netflix catalog and with specific support from press references, corporate content and external resources. The following have been excluded from the sample selection: cartoon series (although the animation-themed series have been taken into account), those tagged as documentaries in both fiction and non-fiction and documentary-style miniseries, a booming sub-genre in self-production in non-English language. Three serially labeled and structured educational programs have also been eliminated since the content does not correspond to the object of study. Once the established criteria were applied, a total sample of 53 study cases was obtained.

When collecting the information to be able to offer the snapshot about the Netflix co-productions, an ad hoc variable collection table has been created that recorded the following variables: series name, country of origin, co-producer network, original language, number of seasons, number of chapters and average duration of chapters. In addition, the dominant genre of each series and the thematic particularities have been coded in order to detect booming genres and themes if possible.

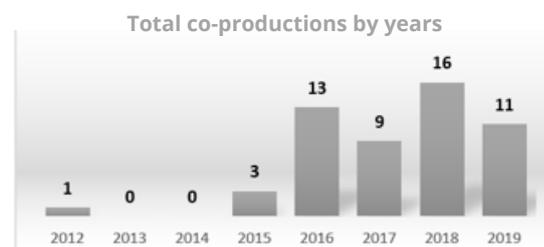
It should be noted that the sample selection has been made based on the definition and scope of the co-production formula explained in the theoretical framework, which excludes co-productions based on business strategies with private producers and alludes to alliances with television networks in an attempt to revive the production of the networks and feed the Netflix catalog with a more national fiction offer, even though it is subsequently distributed globally.

4. RESULTS: THE PHENOMENON OF CO-PRODUCTION ON NETFLIX.

Among the original production formats, the increasing presence of co-productions in which Netflix acts as a participant in the production process of the series is detected. Within this category, 53 co-productions have been located in the entire Netflix catalog. Despite the fact that the first series co-production was recorded in 2012, there are two years of absence in this matter and it is not until 2015 when the productive formula is resumed. The year with the highest number of co-productions is 2018, with little significant variations in the rest of the years (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Total co-productions by years



In general terms we can say that English, as expected, is the language par excellence of co-productions. The productions in Japanese (8 cases) or, in an incipient way, the co-productions in Spanish also acquire importance in the count. Meritorious features are not detected in the rest of the languages, a rather specific relationship between years and co-productions is noted. As can be seen in Table 1, there is a trend towards co-production in languages other than English, specifically, a commitment to languages from minority territories but with a strong track record in serial fiction production. Although they are understood as specific features, we could speak of a possible predisposition that, undoubtedly, must be contrasted with the evolution of subsequent years (Table 1).

Table 1

Total of Netflix co-produced series by language and by year

	2012	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TO-TAL
English	1	2	9	4	14	7	37
Japanese		1	2	4	1		8
Spanish			1		1	1	3
German			1	1			2
French						1	1
Korean						1	1
Dutch						1	1
TOTAL	1	3	13	9	16	11	53

The first recorded television fiction co-production corresponds to the series *Lilyhammer* (2012) in English but also presented in the Norwegian language. This series of three seasons and 24 chapters is the starting signal for what will be the formula of Netflix's programming distribution strategies. It is the first case in which the platform collaborated with NRK (Norway) in the production of a comedy series. Despite the fact that 2012 marked the start of the co-production in fiction, it took three years to find similar examples again that came in 2015 from co-productions such as *Between* (2015, City; Canada), the animated series *H2O: Mermaid Adventures* (2015, in collaboration with ZDF/Germany & France Télévisions/France) or *Atelier* (2015) the first Japanese-language co-production in collaboration with Fuji Television. These are exploratory co-productions ranging between 2 or 3 seasons with an average duration of 25 minutes per episode.

2016 was an exponential leap in Netflix co-productions, registering a total of 13 series (see Table 2). Despite the fact that this year the English language is still the most relevant with examples such as the youth dramas *Degrassi: Next Class* or *Lost & Found Music Studios* (both co-produced with the Family Channel network in Canada), it continues with the relationship with Fuji Television for the production of *Good Morning Call* and new strategic alliances are opened in Japan for the creation of the drama *Hibana: Spark*, co-produced with Yoshimoto Kōgyō. Also, relations with RTVE began for the production of *Four Seasons in Havana*, this being the first co-production of Netflix in Spanish (Table 2).

Table 2

Co-productions of 2016

	SERIES	LAN-GUAGE	Nº SEA-SONS	Nº CHAPT.	DURA-TION	NETWORK	COUN-TRY
1	Degrassi: Next Class	English	4	40	30—45	Family Channel	Canada
2	Lost & Found Music Studios	English	2	27	30—45	Family Channel	Canada
3	Good Morning Call	Japanese	2	27	30—45	Fuji Television	Japan
4	Hibana: Spark	Japanese	1	10	30—45	Yoshimoto Kōgyō	Japan
5	Beat Bugs	English	3	52	30—45	7TWO	Austra-lia
6	Cuba Libre	German	1	8	30—45	ZDF	Ger-many
7	Bottersnikes & Gumbles	English	2	52	30—45	7TWO	Austra-lia
8	¡Kazoops!	English	3	26	30—45	ABC	Austra-lia
9	Cuatro estaciones en La Habana	Spanish	1	4	80—90	RTVE	Spain
10	Paranoid	English	1	8	30—45	ITV	UK
11	Dirk Gently: Agencia investi-gaciones holísticas	English	2	18	30—45	BBC America	USA
12	Crazyhead	English	1	6	30—45	E4	UK
13	Viajeros	English	2	24	30—45	Showcase	Canada

This year's series are characterized by not being excessively long, with a maximum of one or two seasons in 76% of cases (10 fictions) compared to 24% of longer series. *Degrassi: Next Class* with four seasons and 40 chapters in total and *Beat Bugs* with three seasons and 52 chapters stood out. The duration of the chapters responds to the standard of production extended in the television fiction industry, with chapters ranging from 30 to 45 minutes in length, somewhat consolidated in traditional television fiction. Only one example stands out for the duration of the chapters and this is the case of the Spanish series *Four Seasons in Havana*, which has chapters with a duration of around 90 minutes despite having a season of four episodes (close to the miniseries format).

The thematic bet is based on the dramatic genre, with the exception of the British co-production of *Crazyhead*, and subgenres close to science fiction are introduced. For example, *Dirk Gently: Holistic Detective Agency* (BBC America) or animation fictions as seen in products derived from co-production with 7TWO (Australia) such as *Beat Bugs* or *Bottersnikes & Gumbles*.

With the arrival of 2017, the number of co-productions is significantly reduced, registering 9 series in total (see Table 3). It is curious how this year the number of co-productions in English and Japanese coincide, four for each case (88.8% of the total co-productions for the year). It is noted how the platform strengthens its relationships with Japanese networks such

Table 3

Co-productions of 2017

	SERIES	LAN-GUAGE	Nº SEA-SONS	Nº CHAPT.	DURA-TION	NETWORK	COUN-TRY
1	<i>Frontier</i>	English	3	18	30—45	Discovery	Canada
2	<i>Samurai Gourmet</i>	Japanese	1	12	15—20.	Kyodo Television	Japan
3	<i>Anne with an E</i>	English	2	17	30—45	CBC	Canada
4	<i>El Chapo</i>	Spanish	3	34	50—60.	Univision	USA
5	<i>Kantaro: The Sweet Tooth Salaryman</i>	Japanese	1	12	30—45	TV Tokyo	Japan
6	<i>The Worst Witch</i>	English	3	38	30—45	CBBC & ZDF (Cop)	Germany
7	<i>Million Yen Women</i>	Japanese	1	12	30—45	TV Tokyo	Japan
8	<i>Alias Grace</i>	English	1	6	30—45	CBC	Canada
9	<i>Erased</i>	Japanese	1	12	30—45	Kansai TV	Japan

as Kyodo Television for the launch of *Samurai Gourmet*, TV Tokyo for *Kantaro: The Sweet Tooth Salaryman* and *Million Yen Women* or Kansai TV for *Erased*. The English language co-productions this year stand out for their Canadian origin, derived from alliances with the CBC with results such as *Anne with an E*, *Alias Grace* or the historical drama *Frontier*, co-produced with Discovery Canada. In Spanish, the year 2017 left us the television drama *El Chapo*, assuming the first collaboration between Netflix and the production company Univision of USA, this would open a repeated trend in recent fiction that is similar to serial fiction and close to the biopic (Table 3)

All the series co-produced in 2017 generally belong to the dramatic genre, with the exception of the production made with CBBC (United Kingdom) and ZDF (Germany) entitled *The Worst Witch*, a youth-style series belonging to the fantastic genre that featured three seasons and 38 chapters in total, and the comedy *Kantaro: The*

Sweet Tooth Salaryman (TV Tokyo). Innovative subtopics are introduced, such as supernatural dramas (*Erased*, Kansai TV) or historical dramas (*Frontier*, Discovery or *Anne with an E*, CBC) but always under the title of the dramatic genre, highlighting little involvement in the co-production of comedies.

This year's series are still short-lived, if we consider that more than half of the co-productions (5 cases) hardly have a season and coincide in number of chapters (12), establishing a possible new standard. However, it is detected that among the series with more than one season (*Frontier*, 3 seasons; *El Chapo*, 3 seasons; *The Worst Witch*, 3 seasons and *Anne with an E*, 2 seasons), there is not a large volume of chapters that range from 17 to 38 chapters throughout the series. Regarding the duration of the chapters, the standard of 30-45 minutes is maintained, only exceeded in the case of *El Chapo* (50 minutes of average duration) and

Table 4

Co-productions of 2018

	SERIES	LAN-GUAGE	Nº SEA-SONS.	Nº CHAPT.	DURA-TION	NETWORK	COUN-TRY
1	The End of the F***ing World	English	1	8	20-30	Channel 4	UK
2	<i>Mob Psycho 100</i>	Japane-se	1	12	20-30	TV Tokyo	Japan
3	<i>Damnation</i>	English	1	10	50-60	USA Network	USA
4	<i>Collateral</i>	English	1	4	50-60	BBC Two	R.Unido
5	<i>Requiem</i>	English	1	6	50-60	BBC One	R.Unido
6	Troya: La caída de una ciudad	English	1	8	50-60	BBC One	R.Unido
7	<i>The Letdown</i>	English	2	13	50-60	ABC	Austra-lia
8	<i>Las nuevas leyendas de Mono</i>	English	1	10	20-30	ABC/Austra-lia & TVNZ	Austra-lia
9	<i>Safe</i>	English	1	8	50-60	C8	Francia
10	<i>Bésame primero</i>	English	1	6	50-60	Channel 4	R.Unido
11	Soy un asesino	English	1	10	50-60	Crime + Investi-gation	R.Unido
12	<i>Wanderlust</i>	English	1	6	50-60	BBC One	R.Unido
13	<i>Robozuna</i>	English	2	20	50-60	CITV	R.Unido
14	<i>Pine Gap</i>	English	1	6	50-60	ABC	Austra-lia
15	<i>El perfume</i>	German	1	6	50-60	ZDFneo	Alema-nia
16	La colina de Watership	English	1	4	50-60	BBC One	R.Unido

again, detecting a possible influence of the Latin American fiction market that is committed to longer chapters. A case with a shorter duration is glimpsed in *Samurai Gourmet* with chapters of around 20 minutes.

It could be said that, with the arrival of the year 2018, the co-productions reached their moment of splendor with a total of 16 programs on the global Netflix network, being the year with the highest volume recorded (see Table 4). English is again the prevailing language in the co-productions of the year, appearing in

14 of the 16 recorded series. In addition to English, the series originally produced in German entitled *Perfume* stands out, it was carried out in collaboration with the ZDFneo network (Germany). The remaining non-English language series corresponds to a Japanese anime titled *Mob Psycho 100*, in collaboration with TV Tokyo, which is characterized by being a drama adaptation of a successful webcomic in Japan (Table 4).

Table 5

Co-productions of 2019

	SERIES	LAN-GUAGE	Nº SEA-SONS	Nº CHAPT.	DURA-TION	NETWORK	COUN-TRY
1	Black Earth Rising	English	1	8	45-60	BBC Two	UK
2	Nightflyers	English	1	10	45-60	Syfy	UK
3	Northern Rescue	English	1	10	45-60	CBC	Canada
4	Traitors	English	1	6	45-60	Channel 4	UK
5	Tijuana	English	1	11	45-60	Univision	USA
6	Undercover	Dutch	1	10	45-60	Eén	Belgium
7	Designated Survivor: 60 days	Korean	1	16	45-60	TVN	South Korea
8	The Spy	English	1	6	45-60	Canal+	France
9	Interior Design Masters	English	1	8	45-60	BBC Two	UK
10	Drug Squad: Costa del Sol	Spanish	1	13	45-60	Mediaset España	Spain
11	The Bonfire of Destiny	French	1	8	45-60	TF1	France

(ABC, Australia) and *Robozuna* (CITV, United Kingdom) present a structure in two seasons in the current year. In addition, it is worth noting that the duration in chapters of the seasons is less than in previous years, maintaining an average frequency of duration of between 6 and 10 chapters. A trend is detected to fewer episodes per season but of longer duration, registering an increase in the average duration of the individual episode that is around 50 minutes for 2018, much higher than the co-productions of previous years. Only three series (*The New Legends of Monkey* from ABC Australia, *Mob Psycho 100* from TV Tokyo and *The End of the F***ing World* from Channel 4, United Kingdom) have a shorter duration of around 20 minutes, a significant difference if we consider that this duration is below the standard detected in previous years.

While in the previous years the dramatic genre had characterized the globality of Netflix co-productions, as of 2018 we found a timid commitment to television comedy with cases such as *The End of the F***ing World* (Channel 4, United Kingdom) or *The Letdown* (ABC, Australia). In addition, the commitment to fantasy genre fiction series deserves to be noted. These follow the example of *The Worst Witch* (2016) and begin to have a place on the Netflix co-production snapshot with titles like: *The New Legends of Monkey* (ABC Australia), *Robozuna* (CITV, United Kingdom) or *Watership Down* (BBC, United Kingdom). Historical dramas continue to have a presence, although there is no significant increase in their production despite having examples such as *Damnation* (USA Network, USA) or *Troy: Fall of a City* (BBC One, UK).

The supernatural drama co-produced with TV Tokyo, *Mob Psycho 100*, is noted and it is something that had already been glimpsed in 2017 through collaboration with another Japanese network (Kansai TV) with the release of *Erased*.

The year 2019 reduces the number of global Netflix co-productions in its catalog to 11, despite the introduction of significant issues and features (see Table 5). Firstly, co-productions are beginning to be broadcast in languages other than the usual ones (English, Japanese and some isolated cases in Spanish or German), as evidenced by examples such as *Undercover* in Dutch, co-produced with Eén (Belgium), *Designated Survivor: 60 days* in Korean (TVN, South Korea) or *The Bonfire of Destiny* in French (TF1, France). Production in Spanish is limited to the case of *Drug Squad: Costa del Sol* with the collaboration of Mediaset (Spain). It is committed to innovative genres that have been little exploited in previous years (except for the example of *Dirk Gently: Holistic Detective Agency* in 2016), such as science fiction with examples like *Nightflyers* (in collaboration with Syfy from the USA) or television fiction series based on reality TV with the example of *Interior Design Masters* with BBC Two (United Kingdom). Beyond new thematic additions, the core genre in global terms remains to be drama, significantly leaving out comedy co-productions (Table 5).

It is curious how all the series co-produced in 2019 only have one season and an average of 8 or 10 episodes per season, with a duration close to the standard of 45-60 minutes. Due to the recent nature of the data, it is likely that these series have new seasons to premiere in the coming years, since we only have evidence of the cancellation of *Nightflyers* and *The Spy* (Canal +, France), while others such as *Undercover* have already announced their renewal.

5. CONCLUSIONS

It has become clear that the co-production of serial television fiction products is a strategy present in the creation of own production on the Netflix platform. Through this formula, they not only manage to participate in the creative process and the production of the fictions that they will later broadcast, they also lower costs and work side by side with professionals in the audiovisual sector, promoting local fictional development.

As stated in the results presentation, Netflix has opted for co-production in the English language, which is logical considering that it is the majority language globally. However, it is curious how other languages, such as Spanish, are not a representative alliance in Netflix's co-production strategy. Seen from a different perspective, the Japanese co-production offers the most data. There is an interest on the part of the company in strengthening alliances with the Japanese networks to be participants in production processes that are more external to the creative knowledge of the company.

A commitment to co-production in non-majority languages is detected, especially, through alliances with European countries. This fact, despite the fact that at the moment it is still an incipient phenomenon, responds to the importance that the company is giving to minority markets.

On the other hand, we highlight the contribution of a standard that is progressively consolidating as the years of the company's history progress: while the first co-productions were

committed to the longevity of the series (both in number of seasons and chapters), the most recent years reflect a change of course with increasingly shorter series and with fewer seasons and chapters. To the detriment of the serialized character, something intrinsic to the series themselves, they bet on a greater quantity compared to their longevity. This causes distributive possibilities to multiply and in turn adds an important handicap to the transmedia narratives of each fiction.

At the content level, a commitment to drama is evident, although comedy begins to have a timid place in the global co-productions of the company. The reason stems from the global nature of the drama compared to the humorous peculiarity of comedy, which is more difficult to understand in a globalized market with significant cultural differences between countries. In addition, co-productions echo thematic innovation if we take into account the emergence of specific themes such as science fiction, fantasy or specific dramas (see historical dramas or youth dramas), although a strong innovative commitment is not perceived in the co-productions themes.

All these conclusions allow us to detect that production for the global market of Netflix is based on local parameters and standards that, without a doubt, are directly related to the concepts of "cultural proximity" (Straubhaar, 2003) and "indigenization" (Buonanno, 1999). Globalization and the global functioning of audiovisual content promoters does not stop, but new digital audiences continue to demand aspects of

traditional television audiences, such as close, identifiable and understandable content, as well as the cultural proximity that guarantees an adequate connection between content, perception and reception in audiences.

In short, this work provides a snapshot of what has been and is currently the co-production on Netflix series and provides taxonomic data on the commitment to shared production made by the network. However, these results raise new questions that open future lines of monitoring and research, including the need to compare co-productions with other original Netflix distribution formulas, which allow for a significant expansion of the platform's map of interests, in what to original distribution refers.

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